

# Research Matters / 32

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## Editorial

Our first article in this issue, by Tori Coleman, looks at what is meant by the term *social studies*. As you might expect, it's not entirely clear-cut, but investigations like this can help us to avoid misunderstandings and confusions in conversations with people from countries that use the term slightly differently.

Our second and third articles come from a collaboration with our researchers in Cambridge CEM (part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment since June 2019). They look at the impact of the drastic changes to school life created by the lockdowns imposed to manage the pandemic. The article by Joanna Williamson et al. looks at the effects on students—including what they most missed during lockdown and what they now feel they need more of. The article by Chris Jellis et al. considers teachers' perceptions of their wellbeing during and after lockdown.

Producing exam papers is a complex process involving many people with different roles. Everyone is committed to the quality of the end product—but very occasionally errors manage to evade all the checks and appear in front of candidates. But what exactly counts as an error? Our fourth article, by Nicky Rushton et al., looks at definitions of error in other industries and relates them to the perceptions and understanding of error among those with different roles in producing exam papers at Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

Our final article, by Tom Benton, shows that it is important to avoid "wishful thinking" when anticipating the benefits to reliability that adaptive testing might bring, in particular if tests made up of the kind of questions currently used in GCSEs and A Levels were to be administered adaptively.

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