

**Abstract for a discussion group at the annual conference of
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**International perspectives on assessment in vocational qualifications
(ages 14-19): What can we learn from each other?**

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In the White Paper '*14-19: Education and Skills*' (February 2005), the UK Government has outlined its plans to reform vocational qualifications in England. We will begin this discussion with an update on the debate that surrounds these proposals, highlighting the issues involved.

We will then offer a broad international overview of participation in vocational training schemes in the 14 to 19 age group. Assessment systems across a range of countries will be explored, and from the research literature, we will identify examples of 'good practice' in valid and reliable assessment. The discussion that follows will consider implications for those involved in the development of systems for vocational qualifications. During the course of the discussion, the topics of accessibility, validity, reliability, and parity of esteem will be explored.