

## **Are all assessments equal? The comparability of demands of college-based assessments in a vocationally-related qualification**

**Victoria Crisp and Nadežda Novaković, Cambridge Assessment**

A paper presented at the British Educational Research Association Annual Conference, Edinburgh, September 2008.

### **Abstract**

The consistency of assessment demands is important to validity. This research investigated the comparability of the demands of college-assessed units within a vocationally-related qualification drawing on methodological approaches that have previously been used to compare assessments. Assessment materials from five colleges were obtained. After some initial familiarisation and the revision of a framework of demands, fifteen expert judges compared the assessment materials from pairs of colleges in turn. For each pair, each judge evaluated which college's assessment tasks they considered more demanding on a number of dimensions and overall. Analyses suggested that assessments were more demanding at some colleges than others but that differences were not large. An interview study was also conducted in four colleges. The interview data suggested substantial similarities between colleges in the assessment tasks conducted. However some differences that could affect demands were identified (e.g. degree of authenticity of tasks, availability of exemplars when writing reports).

Please note, this paper has now been published in 'Research in Post Compulsory Education:

Crisp, V. & Novakovic, N. (2009) Are all assessments equal? The comparability of demands of college-based assessments in a vocationally-related qualification, *Research in Post Compulsory Education*, 14(1), 1-18.