

# Research News

## Cambridge Assessment Conference

The 4th Cambridge Assessment conference will take place on Monday 19th October 2009 at Robinson College, Cambridge, UK. The theme will be, *Issues of control and innovation: the role of the state in assessment systems*.

The conference marks a key point of the Cambridge Assessment Network's annual programme, bringing together leading analysts and commentators to scrutinise current developments. It will harness the insights of public policy experts, educationalists and assessment specialists to make a radical contribution to discussion and critique of issues of control of assessment. The timing of this conference is important: major changes to regulation, the shape of agencies, and to allocation and form of responsibilities are underway – mapping the consequences and implications of these changes is a vital process.

A great deal is at stake in the management of large and complex systems such as educational assessment; sophisticated commentary is an essential part of both understanding the operation of new arrangements and increasing public accountability. The conference will make a major contribution to thinking in the area.

Leaders from many areas within education are invited to attend, including senior managers from schools, colleges and universities, as well as those working for national and local education bodies, professional organisations, political parties, the media, awarding bodies and employers' organisations.

The keynote speakers will be Professor Alison Wolf of King's College London and Professor Robin Alexander from the University of Cambridge. Professor Wolf will discuss, *The role of the State in educational assessment*. Professor Alexander, who is also Director of the Cambridge Primary Review, will give a presentation entitled, *Whose education system is it? Lessons on standards, quality and accountability from the Cambridge Primary Review*. There will also be eight discussion seminars, covering a range of subjects within the main conference theme. For further details see [www.assessnet.org.uk/annualconference](http://www.assessnet.org.uk/annualconference). Delegates will have opportunities to comment and ask questions during the sessions, to debate issues during their choice of seminar sessions, and to network at lunch and coffee breaks, as well as at the drinks reception at the close of the conference.

### Fees

Early bird rate (for bookings received on or before 31 July 2009) £150  
Standard rate (for bookings received after 31 July 2009) £180

For more information or a booking form, please contact:

Cambridge Assessment Network  
1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU, UK

Email: [thenetwork@cambridgeassessment.org.uk](mailto:thenetwork@cambridgeassessment.org.uk)

Tel: +44 (0) 1223 553846

Fax: +44 (0) 1223 552830

[www.assessnet.org.uk/annualconference](http://www.assessnet.org.uk/annualconference)

## Conferences and seminars

### Successful Thinking Skills for All

In January OCR hosted a conference for teachers at Rugby School in Warwickshire on successful thinking skills. Beth Black from the Research Division, Cambridge Assessment, gave the keynote address on *What do we know about Critical Thinking?*

### American Educational Research Association

In April Jackie Greatorex attended the American Educational Research Association conference in San Diego and presented a paper entitled, *How do examiners make judgements about grading standards? Some insights from a qualitative analysis*. The theme of the conference was *Disciplined Inquiry: Education Research in the Circle of Knowledge*.

### International Amsterdam Multilevel Conference

In May John Bell attended the International Amsterdam Multilevel Conference and presented a paper on *Evaluating multilevel models used for examination subject difficulty*.

### Design & Technology Association Education and International Research Conference

Gill Elliott attended the Design & Technology Association Education and International Research Conference in Loughborough in June and presented a paper on *Issues associated with teaching practical cookery in UK schools*.

## Publications

The following articles have been published since Issue 7 of *Research Matters*:

Crisp, V. (2009). Does assessing project work enhance the validity of qualifications? The case of GCSE coursework. *Educate*, 9, 1, 16–26.

Crisp, V. & Novaković, 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.