

# Research News

David Beauchamp Research Division

## Conference presentations

### European Association of Curriculum Studies (EuroACS)

The European Conference of Curriculum Studies conference took place in June 2019 at Maynooth University, Ireland, and gathered researchers from the European Association of Curriculum Studies research network. The themes discussed during the conference were the origins, trajectories and practices of Curriculum. Sinéad Fitzsimons from the Research Division presented work co-authored with colleagues Martin Johnson and Tori Coleman: *Curriculum Progressions in Education in Emergencies: Challenges, opportunities and theoretical underpinnings*.

### Global Perspectives: re-imagining education

This event took place in June 2019 at the University of Worcester, UK, and focused on themes related to the impact of globalisation and internationalisation on sustainable education. An adapted version of the paper above was presented by Tori Coleman: *Developing a learning framework for Education in Emergency contexts*.

### Journal of Vocational Education and Training (JVET)

The 13th Journal of Vocational Education & Training conference took place in Oxford in June 2019 and gathered researchers around the theme of *Researching Vocational Education and Training*. Martin Johnson and Sylvia Vitello from the Research Division presented the following papers:

Martin Johnson, Research Division and Neil Mercer, Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge: *Learning to think alike: Using Sociocultural Discourse Analysis to explore examiners' standardised professional discourse*.

Sylvia Vitello and Carmen Vidal Rodeiro, Research Division: *How do vocational qualifications fit into students' programmes of study following recent governmental reforms to 14–18 education?*

### Council of Chief State School Officers (CSSO) National Conference on Student Achievement (NCSA)

This annual conference was created in 1971 and draws attendees from various areas of assessment, including federal agencies, test publishers, educational consultants, university faculty and organisations supporting technology, education and business. This year's theme was: *Measure What Matters, and Create Accountability for Equity*. Thanos Patelis (HumRRO), Stuart Shaw (Cambridge Assessment International Education), Russ Keglovits (Nevada DoE), and Allison Timberlake (Georgia DoE) presented a paper: *The role of context on college and career readiness indicators in accountability systems*.

### Applied Human Factors and Ergonomics Conference

This conference took place in July 2019 in Washington, USA. Topics that were discussed included human performance, root cause analysis, automation error, and cognitive and statistical modelling of human error. Irenka Suto from the Research Division presented a paper (co-authored with Joanne Ireland): *'To err is human' but it's time to go deeper. An analysis of human and system level challenges in the educational testing industry*.

### IAFOR/The European Conference on Education

Held in July 2019 in London, the European Conference on Education was dedicated to the topic *Independence & Interdependence*. This conference is organised into thematic streams such as Teaching & Learning, Educational Structures, Community & Society, Language & Culture, Psychology, Mind & Brain, Innovation & Technology. Emma Walland from the Research Division presented a paper based on her research with colleague Ellie Darlington: *Impact of A Level reform on post-16 provision*.

### European Association for Learning and Instruction (EARLI)

This biannual conference was hosted at RWTH Aachen University, Germany, in August 2019. The researchers were given the opportunity to present ideas on the topic *Thinking Tomorrow's Education: Learning from the past, in the present and for the future*. Filio Constantinou, from the Research Division, shared her work: *Why are some subjects less popular than others? Extending the debate*.

### European Conference of Educational Research

This conference was held at the University of Hamburg, Germany, in September 2019, and focused on *Education in an Era of Risk – the Role of Educational Research for the Future*. Joanna Williamson from the Research Division presented a paper based on her research with colleague Simon Child: *How can mark scheme design support reliable and valid school-based assessment?*

### Cambridge Schools Conference

The triannual Cambridge Schools Conference allows teachers from various countries to gather and discuss common challenges in education and share knowledge and new concepts in order to achieve professional development. The theme for the conference that took place in Cambridge, UK, in September, was *Evaluating impact: how effective is our school and classroom practice?* Researchers from Cambridge Assessment International Education presented two papers:

Judith Roberts, Stuart Shaw, and Sarah Nelson, Cambridge Assessment International Education: *The Cambridge International Curriculum Impact Framework*.

Stuart Shaw, Cambridge Assessment International Education: *Measuring academic language proficiency - towards a new scale?*

## Second International Textbook Summit

In June 2019, together with the Icelandic Ministry of Education and Culture, Cambridge Assessment convened the second International Textbook Summit. With eight nations attending, it comprised a major contribution to the continued growth of interest in the form and function of learning materials, and the markets in which they exist. The addition of consideration of funding and sustainability of supply - summarised as 'market conditions' - was extremely important. While the first summit in England, held in 2018, considered quality and function, issues relating to the structure of funding and supply in different national settings have not previously been explored sufficiently, and are almost entirely absent from the dwindling body of textbook research. The second summit corrected this international omission, and dealt with key public policy matters of private-state relationships and sustainability of supply. A third summit for 2020 is being planned.

## Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring joins the Cambridge family

In June 2019 the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring (CEM) was jointly purchased by Cambridge Assessment and Cambridge University Press. Formerly part of Durham University, CEM is one of the largest and longest established research groups providing formative assessments for children of all ages and is used by education professionals in over 70 countries around the world. A not-for-profit organisation, CEM joins the Cambridge family following the successful conclusion of a consultation with employees. The CEM team will remain in the North East of England but work closely with new colleagues in Cambridge and around the world.

## Publications

The following reports and articles have been published since *Research Matters*, Issue 27:

- Child, S., & Shaw, S. (2019). A purpose-led approach towards the development of competency frameworks. *Journal of Further & Higher Education*. doi: 10.1080/0309877X.2019.1669773.
- Constantinou, F. (2019). The construct of language competence over time: using high-stakes tests to gain insight into the history of L1 education in England. *Language and Education*, 1–15. Available online at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/09500782.2019.1597106?needAccess=true>
- Crisp, V., Johnson, M. & Constantinou, F. (2019). A question of quality: Conceptualisations of quality in the context of educational test questions. *Research in Education*, 105(1), 18–41. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0034523717752203>
- Greatorex, J., Rushton, N., Coleman, T., Darlington, E., & Elliott, G. (2019). *Towards a method for comparing curricula*. Cambridge Assessment Research Report. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Assessment. Available online at <https://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/Images/549208towards-a-method-for-comparing-curricula.pdf>

- Johnson, M., & Mercer, N. (2019). Using sociocultural discourse analysis to analyse professional discourse. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction*, 21, 267–277. Available online at <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2210656118302940>
- Johnson, M., & Rushton, N. (2019). A culture of question writing: Professional examination question writers' practices. *Educational Research*, 61(2), 197–213. Available online at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00131881.2019.1600378>
- Vidal Rodeiro, C.L. (2019). *Popularity of A Level subjects among university students*. Cambridge Assessment Research Report. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Assessment.

Further information on all journal papers and book chapters can be found on our website: [www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/our-research/all-published-resources/journal-papers-and-book-chapters/](http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/our-research/all-published-resources/journal-papers-and-book-chapters/)

Reports of research carried out by the Research Division for Cambridge Assessment and exam boards, or externally funded research carried out for third parties, including the regulators in the UK and many ministries overseas, are also available from our website: [www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/our-research/all-published-resources/research-reports/](http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/our-research/all-published-resources/research-reports/)

## Data Bytes

**Data Bytes** is a series of data graphics from Cambridge Assessment's Research Division, designed to bring the latest trends and research in educational assessment to a wide audience. Topics are often chosen to coincide with contemporary news or recent Cambridge Assessment research outputs. All our *Data Bytes* can be found on our website: [www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/our-research/data-bytes](http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/our-research/data-bytes)

The following *Data Bytes* have been published since *Research Matters*, Issue 27:

- May 2019: *Summarising Parliamentary Questions*
- July 2019: *Students' favourite subjects around the world*

## Sharing our research

Cambridge Assessment is home to the largest research capacity of its kind in Europe. In addition to our research publications, we provide a wealth of resources on our website including:

- *Insights* – a platform for sharing our views and research on the big education topics that impact assessment around the globe at [www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/insights/](http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/insights/)
- *Research Bytes* – short presentations and commentary based on recent conference presentations at [www.youtube.com/user/CambridgeAssessment1](http://www.youtube.com/user/CambridgeAssessment1)
- *#CamEdLive* – our online live debates – at [www.youtube.com/user/CambridgeAssessment1](http://www.youtube.com/user/CambridgeAssessment1)
- Podcasts at [www.youtube.com/user/CambridgeAssessment1](http://www.youtube.com/user/CambridgeAssessment1)
- Blogs at [www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/blogs](http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/blogs)

You can also learn more about our recent activities from Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram.

Finally, a reminder that all previous issues of *Research Matters* are available to download, in full and as PDFs of individual articles, from our website: [www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/research-matters](http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/research-matters)