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Foreword

In this issue, Tom Bramley has used his editorial discretion to write a very detailed and cogent editorial. I shall exercise my discretion by balancing that with an unusually short foreword. We have written before that in respect of Comparative Judgement we are in part dealing with a paradigm shift. And typically these take time. While I don't entirely agree with Pierre Azoulay's brutal incarnation of Max Planck's argument – "Does science advance one funeral at a time?" – these insights from the philosophy and history of science suggest that radically new approaches and theorisations take time to become both established and elaborated. In this edition of *Research Matters* we are seeing significant refinement in both application and thinking associated with Comparative Judgement. Genuinely ground-breaking, the wide-ranging studies and projects examine its limits and processes as well as its relation to existing assessment approaches. There's one aspect of this edition which I really commend – it not only explores the characteristics of Comparative Judgement through carefully designed empirical work, it increases our understanding of the processes of human judgement within it. Many studies in assessment grapple with the question of "what are the measurement characteristics of the assessment?" without engaging with what might actually be happening – the mechanisms at play. The studies in this volume range freely over both – and that is extremely valuable for establishing the extent to which Comparative Judgement can both represent a new paradigm and offer new, more effective techniques in public testing and assessment.

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