

Editorial

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Welcome to the April 2026 issue of *Research Matters*. You will notice that we have added a new section called *In This Issue*. Feedback welcome!

A learner's wellbeing can influence their educational success. Therefore, it is important for us to understand the factors that can influence wellbeing. In our first article in this issue, Carmen Lim and Pia Kreijkes explore links between amount of time spent gaming or browsing social media, and different aspects of wellbeing. Their analysis used questionnaire data from PISA 2022 to investigate associations and found some different patterns for boys and girls.

Our second article, by Tim Gill, reports an investigation of whether exam scheduling influences student performance in A Level exams. Using exam data, Tim compiled several measures such as the number of days since a candidate's previous exam and the number of exams taken so far in the exam series. Regression analysis was used to look for any relationship with exam performance, while controlling for other factors such as gender, centre type and wider attainment.

There is growing interest in increasing the use of digital exams in general qualifications. However, such change is likely to be gradual, meaning that both digital and paper-based exam routes may be required – and that care will be needed to ensure comparability between exam modes. In our third article, Carmen Lim, Carmen Vidal Rodeiro and Tim Gill use data from Cambridge's Digital Mocks Service and from live paper-based exams to explore differences in the difficulty of the same questions across modes. They also investigated whether particular characteristics of questions might influence the likelihood of differences.

In our fourth article, Annaliese Micallef Grimaud reviews the literature on factors that predict success in vocational education and training. The literature review is organised by types of predictors: prior attainment; cognitive abilities (such as verbal or numerical abilities); and non-cognitive traits (such as facets of personality). The apparent relationships between such factors and the choice to take vocational qualifications are also discussed.

Our issue finishes with an article focused on teachers' assessment literacy, by Victoria Coleman and Martin Johnson. Their research involved a questionnaire survey to gather views from teachers with professional experience of examining. The questionnaire explored their understandings of the term "assessment literacy", the perceived influence of their training, teaching and examining on their own assessment literacy, and the specific influence of examining on their assessment knowledge, skills and beliefs, and on their teaching practice.