

Oxford University Centre for Educational Assessment



Annual Report 2013-14

June 2014

Jo-Anne Baird, Therese Hopfenbeck, Daniel Caro and Joanne Hazell



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Foreword

As Chair of the Joint Advisory Board of the Centre I am very pleased to be introducing this annual report. It documents another year of significant progress under the leadership of Professor Jo-Anne Baird. The following pages support that conclusion with a wealth of informative detail.



As someone who is not involved in the day to day running of the Centre two things stand out for me from this report. The first is OUCEA's growing international reach. On one level that can be evidenced by the diverse backgrounds of the academic staff, the graduate students and the research associates. The growth in complement over the year is in part a reflection of that. However, in this regard it is important to note the variety of the research projects being undertaken and completed which range widely, both geographically and across the Centre's research themes. That observation is reinforced by noting the numerous conferences and publications which have enabled the work of the academic staff and the researchers to be presented. As I remarked last year, impact is high on the agenda.

The second striking feature is the significance of the projects summarised in the future research programme. Also encouraging is the number of bodies which see merit in funding OUCEA projects, quite apart from the ongoing support of Pearson plc whose donation in 2008 to the University of Oxford enabled the Centre to be established.

I am very grateful to my fellow members of the Advisory Board for their continuing interest in, and support of, OUCEA. They continue to offer make very helpful inputs to consideration of the Centre's future priorities and strategies.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Jonathan Phillips'.

Sir Jonathan Phillips
Warden of Keble College, University of Oxford

Director's Overview



Professor Jo-Anne Baird and Andreas Schleicher (OECD) at the Association for Educational Assessment - Europe's 14th Annual Conference in the Sorbonne, Paris, November 2013

This year OUCEA has published reports on two major funded research projects:

- Predictability of the Leaving Certificate in Ireland
- Assessment and Learning: a state-of-the-field review

We have published 7 papers in international peer-reviewed journals and hosted 18 events with 280 participants. Dr Therese Hopfenbeck published a book in Norwegian, *Strategier for Laering (Strategies for Learning)*, which is the first book produced by the Centre. Notably, Professor David Andrich gave the St. Anne's Plumer lecture in October 2013. We won the PIRLS 2016 National Centre research bid, in partnership with Pearson UK. As President of the Association for Educational Assessment-Europe, together with the French Ministry (DEPP) and AEA-Europe colleagues, I was privileged to host the 14th Annual Conference at the Sorbonne, Paris in November 2013. Dr Daniel Caro was awarded a prestigious OECD Fellowship, which he will take up in October this year. Dr Therese Hopfenbeck

gave a Keynote presentation at the Feedback for Better Learning Conference in Denmark. Yasmine El Masri was awarded an ETS Internship, which she will take up in the summer of 2014 and she was an invited scholar with Professor Art Graesser at the University of Memphis. Jeanne Ryan won the poster award at the AEA-Europe conference. Dr Daniel Caro has successfully given workshops on his R package to analyse international test data at the AEA-Europe and AERA conferences and at the EERA Spring School and will be giving a workshop on his software at the EARLI conference in Southampton on 27 August.

This year, Dr Jenny Lenkeit was appointed as a part-time Research Officer to the John Fell project on ethnicity gaps in educational attainment. Jenny brought a great deal of knowledge and skills with international test data and made a huge contribution to the work of the Centre. The Centre grew from 30 to 39 people over the past year, with several new Research Associates joining us: Professor Roger Murphy (University of Nottingham), Isabel Nisbet (A-Level Content Advisory Board), Associate Professor Astrid Tolo (University of Bergen) and Dr Jon Twing (Pearson US).

Next year's AEA-Europe conference will be in Tallinn, Estonia on 6 – 8 November, with the theme being 'Assessment of Students in a 21st Century World'. As Chair of the Scientific Programme, I have the pleasure to announce that our Keynote Speakers are Dr Randy Bennett (ETS), Professor Patricia Broadfoot (University of Bristol) and Professor Art Graesser.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Jo-Anne Baird'.

Pearson Professor of Educational Assessment
Professorial Fellow of St. Anne's College, University of Oxford

The Centre

Altogether, OUCEA was composed of a community of 40 researchers this academic year. Our Centre comprises five people who are directly employed in the Centre: academic staff (4) and an administrator. Additionally, there are doctoral students (10), master's students (7), departmental associates (8) and external research associates (16). Interactions between staff, students and associates enhance the quality of the research programme – there are many examples of how those conversations have generated new ideas or challenged existing ones.



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Research Themes

The Centre's overall aim is to investigate the impact of educational assessment. Connections between policy, assessment theory and practice need to be elucidated, researched and critiqued for assessment to play a better role in improving education.

The Centre's main research priorities are to:

- Conduct research into the role of assessment in developing, implementing and monitoring **system-level change**.
- Develop **models of educational assessment** to increase understanding of learning processes, resource use and outcomes in education systems.
- Undertake systematic analyses of **assessment, public policy and the interaction between them** in various sectors of education and subject domains. For example, the use of international test data within and across education systems.
- Investigate **how assessment is perceived and used by stakeholders** (learners, parents, institutions, employers, policy-makers) within education systems.
- Critically examine notions of **validity, reliability and standards** in relation to different modes of assessment and to different purposes.
- Evaluate the potential for **the use and application of psychometrics** to enhance the validity and reliability of educational assessment.
- Explore the opportunities for, and the impacts of, **new assessment technologies** in test design, test distribution, test administration and results delivery.

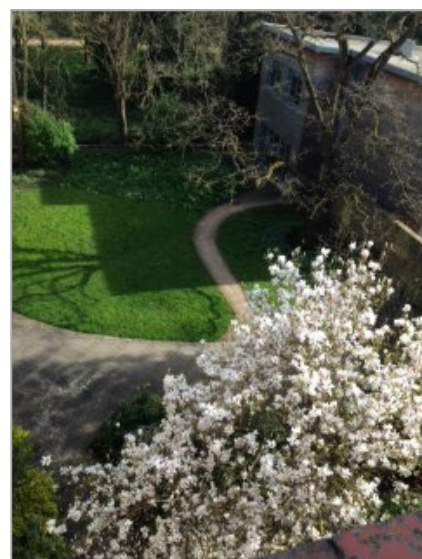
Governance

The Centre holds Management Group meetings termly, with the following representatives:

- Department of Education Director
- OUCEA Director
- Department of Education Administrator
- OUCEA Administrator

In addition, we hold an Advisory Board meeting twice a year, with the following members:

- Sir Jonathan Phillips (Chair), Warden, Keble College, University of Oxford
- Mark Anderson, Managing Director, Pearson UK
- Professor Jo-Anne Baird, Director, Oxford University Centre for Educational Assessment
- Professor Richard Daugherty, Honorary Professor, Cardiff University and Senior Research Fellow, University of Oxford
- Professor John Gardner, Deputy Principal (Education and Students), University of Stirling and Visiting Professor, University of Oxford
- Professor Caroline Gipps, Visiting Professor, Institute of Education, University of London and former Vice Chancellor, University of Wolverhampton
- Professor Ernesto Macaro, Director, Department of Education, University of Oxford
- Dr Kathleen Quinlan, Head of Educational Development, Oxford Learning Institute
- Professor Jim Tognolini, Senior Vice President, Research and Assessment, Pearson plc



Department of Education garden

Staff



Jo-Anne Baird's research interests include examination standards, policy and systemic aspects of assessment, e-assessment and human judgment in assessment. Her background is in academia (Bristol; Institute of Education) and in industry (Head of Research at the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance). Jo-Anne is a Visiting Professor at Queen's University, Belfast. College: St. Anne's



Therese Hopfenbeck conducts research on international tests, especially the relationship between student motivation and results on the tests. She is also interested in classroom assessment and self-regulation. Therese is the Research Manager of PIRLS 2016 and has also been appointed by the Norwegian Minister of Education to chair the board of the Norwegian Centre for Learning and Behavioral Research in Education. College: St. Anne's



Daniel Caro's primary research interests reside in the areas of educational inequality, international large-scale assessment studies, mixed models in cross-sectional and longitudinal settings, and causal inference with observational data. He is also developing a package in R ('intsvy') for analysing international assessment data from PISA, TIMSS and PIRLS. Daniel has been awarded OECD's prestigious Thomas J. Alexander Fellowship.



Jenny Lenkeit is a Researcher at the OUCEA. She is also a post-doctoral researcher at the Centre for Inequality Studies and the Department of Child Development and Education at the University of Amsterdam. Jenny's research interests include methodological approaches in effectiveness research, cross cultural comparisons, impacts of international large scale assessments on educational policy, and ethnicity related inequalities in education.



Joanne Hazell is the OUCEA Administrator and supports all of the activities of the Centre. Jo deals with contractual and budgetary matters, as well as research proposal processes, personnel matters, organisation of events and support for students and visitors. She also maintains the website. Jo works part-time at the Centre and is assisted by doctoral students with some of these activities.

Teaching

Staff contribute to teaching in the Department of Education on the MSc in Education, MSc in Learning and Teaching and the Post-Graduate Certificate in Education.

Research Assistants

The Centre has employed the following people as research assistants over the past year:

- Ana-Maria Aricescu
- Carol Brown
- Jessica Chan
- Yasmine El Masri
- María Teresa Flórez
- Anna Niedbala
- Lorena Ortega
- Christine Paget
- Jeanne Ryan
- Natalie Usher

Research Students

There are currently ten D.Phil students and seven Master's students supervised by staff at OUCEA.

Master's students graduated 2013

- Hiren Koyani: Raising attainment of gifted and talented learners in science
- Joshua Long: Raising achievement in religious education: An inquiry into the use of classroom dialogue as an assessment tool for boys' learning in RE lessons
- Natalie Usher: Assessment for learning in secondary writing classrooms

Master's students supervised 2014

- Charles Cahill: Teacher and student perceptions of written feedback in religious education: evaluation of intervention (working title)
- Jae Chang: Mathematics and written feedback: A study of year 9 students on how written feedback may influence and develop mathematical thinking
- Shabana Jabine: Students' perceptions of AfL: purpose, effectiveness and self-efficacy
- Emer Jones: Developing self-assessment in science: an action research project to improve formative assessment in the classroom (working title)



Department of Education

Carol Brown

Year	2nd Year DPhil
College	Wolfson
Nationality	British
Education & degrees	Graduate Teacher Programme leading to Qualified Teacher Status, 1999 Master of Science, Applied Social Studies, University of Oxford, 1998 Diploma in Social Work, University of Oxford, 1998 Bachelor of Science, Psychology, Royal Holloway, University of London, 1995
Previous experience	Oxon Psychology – own company offering research, tuition, course design, 2009+ Research Assistant, SSAT project – underachievement of white working class boys, 2011 Head of Psychology, Marlborough School, Oxfordshire, 2009-2012 Teacher of Psychology, D'Overbroecks College, Oxford, 2003-2008 Teacher of Psychology, Chenderit School, Northamptonshire, 1998-2003

Working title

Eccles' Theory of Identity and Achievement: A Study of Students Preparing for High-Stakes, A-level examinations

Supervisors

Dr Therese Hopfenbeck and Professor Jo-Anne Baird

Progress on the thesis

In October I completed my Transfer of Status examination (Examiners: Professor Anne Edwards and Professor Gordon Stobart). I am currently conducting fieldwork in schools across Oxfordshire. This involves using a mixed methods design. Fifteen hundred to two thousand students will complete a questionnaire examining the relationship between their A-level grades, socio-economic status and their expectations and values for both A-levels and their future life. Twenty interviews will further explore the relationships between identity, A-levels and achievement.

Other achievements this year

Publications

- *Who am I and what can I achieve?* The Psychologist (in press)
- *Who am I and what can I achieve?* Association for Educational Assessment-Europe Newsletter, Autumn 2013

International conference paper presentations

- *A Study of Students preparing for High Stakes Examinations.* Association for Educational Assessment-Europe Conference, 7-9 November 2013, Paris

Seminar presentations

- *Eccles' Theory of Identity and Achievement: A study of students preparing for high-stakes, A-level examinations*, STORIES (Student Conference), Oxford University Department of Education, 18 March 2014
- *What are the relationships between expectations, subjective task value and A-level achievement*, Mind, Brain & Behaviour Research Cluster, Wolfson College, Oxford, 14 June 2013

Projects

- Research Assistant, State Examinations Commission-funded project *Predictability of the Leaving Certificate in Ireland*, PI: Professor Jo-Anne Baird
- Chair of Student Assessment Network, Oxford University Centre For Educational Assessment
- Course designer; Developmental Psychology; Individual Differences – Oxford Royale



Year	4 th Year DPhil
College	St Anne's College
Nationality	Lebanese
Education & degrees	Master of Arts, 2009, American University of Beirut Teaching Diploma in science for secondary schools, American University of Beirut, 2006 Bachelor of Science, Biology, American University of Beirut, 2005
Previous experience	Science teacher, years 3 – 8, Abu Dhabi, 2008-2010 Biology teacher, years 7 – 9, Beirut, 2006-2008

Working title

Comparability of Science Assessment across Languages: The Case of PISA Science 2006

Supervisors

Professor Jo-Anne Baird and Dr Jane McNicholl

Progress on the thesis

In June, I completed with High Distinction the advanced online course on Rasch modeling offered by the University of Western Australia. I carried out most of my data analyses and successfully passed my Confirmation of Status examination (Examiners: Professor Steve Strand and Dr Jon Twing) in February. I am currently carrying out the last set of data analyses and am hoping to submit my thesis early next year.

Other achievements this year

International conference paper presentations

- *Does language affect the difficulty of science tests? A case study on PISA*, Association for Educational Assessment- Europe Conference, Paris, 7-9 November 2013
- *How invariant are language versions of the same science test? A PISA 2006 case study*, International Objective Measurement Workshop (IOMW) Conference, Philadelphia, 31 March – 2 April 2014

Seminar presentation

- *How invariant are different language versions of the same science test? A PISA 2006 case study*. Quantitative Special Interest Group Seminar Series (QuantSIG), Oxford University Department of Education, 10 February 2014

Visiting Scholar

- Institute for Intelligent Systems, University of Memphis, April 2014. Professor Art Graesser hosted this visit to enable me to develop new techniques for my qualitative data analyses.
- Educational Testing Service Global, Amsterdam, June – July 2014. Working alongside Peter van Rijn on a project: *Single Stage vs. Two-stage Estimation of Latent Regression IRT Models*

Projects

- Editorial Assistant, *Assessment in Education: principles, policy & practice* since February 2013
- Member of the organising team, AEA-Europe annual conference
- Coordinator of the doctoral network of AEA-Europe since March 2012
- Member of AEA-Europe Professional Development Committee (PDC) since September 2013
- Research Assistant, Norwegian Research Council-funded project *Assessment and Learning: a state-of-the-field review*, PI: Dr Therese Hopfenbeck



Year	4th Year DPhil
College	St Cross College
Nationality	Chilean
Education & degrees	Master in Literature with a major in Literary Theory, 2008 Bachelor in Education and Secondary Education Spanish Teacher, 2002 Bachelor in Hispanic Language and Literature with a Major in Literature, 2000
Previous experience	Coordinator, Lecturer and Tutor of the Language area in the Programme for Continuous Teacher Education (PEC), University of Chile, 2001-09 Consultancy work for various units and programmes of the Ministry of Education (Textbook Unit, Assessment and Curriculum Unit and CPEIP) through PEC and the Centre for Advanced Research in Education (CIAE), University of Chile, 2006-09 Item constructor for the area of Language in the National University Selection Test (PSU), 2008-09 Content support for the website www.educarchile.cl – development of online tools related to lesson planning and assessment, 2003-06 Spanish Teacher in pre-university courses and different secondary schools in Santiago, 2001-05

Thesis title

Assessment Reform in Chile: a Contested Discursive Space

Supervisors

Professor Gordon Stanley and Professor Jenny Ozga

Advisor

Professor John Gardner

Progress on the thesis

I have successfully completed my DPhil. My viva examination took place the 24th January 2014 with Professor Richard Daugherty and Professor Gemma Moss as my examiners. I have recently received my leave to supplicate letter, and am now in the process of disseminating my work through publications and presentations, as suggested by my examiners, given the importance of my findings and the multiple strands of enquiry that can be derived from my study.



Professor Jenny Ozga, supervisor, with Dr María Teresa Flórez

Other achievements this year

Publications (titles in Spanish have been translated into English)

Academic

- Flórez, T (2013) Critical Analysis of the Validity of the National Curriculum Assessment System (SIMCE) in Chile (final report). Santiago, CNED
- Flórez, T (2013) Book review of Assessment reform in education: policy and practice, *Assessment in Education: principles, policies and practice*, 20(3), 369-372
- Flórez, T & Sammons, P (2013) A literature review of Assessment for Learning: effects and impact. University of Oxford, Department of Education and CfBT
- Hopfenbeck, T, Tolo, A, Flórez, T & El Masri, Y (2013) *Balancing trust and accountability? The Assessment for Learning Programme in Norway. A Governing Complex Education Systems Case Study*. Paris, OECD

Press and others

- Flórez, T (2013) The (mis)uses and abuses of assessment data. *Oxford Magazine* N° 338, Eighth Week, Trinity Term, 2013
- Flórez et al (2014) SIMCE: A pointless tool for Chilean education. *Ciper Chile*, 19 February
- Flórez et al (2014) SIMCE: Political usefulness above technical quality. *Ciper Chile*, 23 March

Presentations

- Presenter at *Critical analysis of the validity of the National Curriculum Assessment System (SIMCE) in Chile*, Society of Educational Research about Chile (SEARCH), Institute of Education, University of London, 21 March 2014
- Presenter at *Assessment reforms in Chile: the need for a complex (historical, ideological and systemic) approach*, Oxford Latin American Centre D.Phil seminar series, 26 February 2014

Projects

- Research Assistant, *Bilateral Sweden: Governing by Inspection and Education Governance in Scotland, England and Sweden*, PI: Professor Jenny Ozga
- Research Assistant, *Developing Innovative Methods for Configurative Capture of the Cultural Value of Arts and Humanities Research*, PI: Dr Alis Oancea
- Principal Investigator on the project *Critical analysis of the validity of the System for the Measurement of Quality in Education (SIMCE)*, funded by the National Council for Education, Chile
- Research Assistant on the OECD-funded project *Governing Complex Education Systems: Norwegian case study*, PI: Dr Therese Hopfenbeck
- Research Assistant on an international literature review on *Research evidence on the role of Assessment for Learning*, PI: Professor Pam Sammons

Yanhong (Rose) Li

I joined OUCEA as a D.Phil student (St. Anne's College) in October 2008. My research focuses on grade inflation problems in UK higher education and my supervisor is Professor Ken Mayhew.

Prior to this, I worked at Oxford Brookes University, Middlesex University and Portsmouth University. I have researched and published on issues around performance measurement and assessment in both the public and business sectors. My previous research experiences include:

- Assessment and marking practices in higher education
- Service quality in higher education
- International students' learning experiences
- Assessing supply chain performance – application of data envelopment analysis



Christine Paget



After completing an MSc Education in Research Design and Methodology in 2012 at Oxford (Kellogg College), I moved into the DPhil Education programme in October 2013. My research is focused on educational policy as intended by policy makers and as experienced by teachers and students. Mixed methods are used to address the research questions. My doctoral research is supervised by Professor Pam Sammons and Professor Jo-Anne Baird and my studies are partly funded by the Kellogg Progress Scholarship.

I hold two Bachelor degrees from the University of British Columbia, Canada (BA History & Geography and BEd), as well as a Master of Arts in Curriculum Studies and Educational Administration from the same university. I have over a decade of teaching experience including two years in Rio de Janeiro and nine years in West Vancouver.

Agni Paramita

Year	2 nd Year DPhil
College	St Anne's College
Nationality	Indonesian
Education & degrees	Master of Arts in Southeast Asia Studies and International Economics, Fulbright Scholarship recipient, Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, 2009 Bachelor of Political Science, Airlangga University, 2004 Certificate in International Conflict Studies, Uppsala University, 2001
Previous experience	Program Development Officer for the Community and Education Program in Aceh, Australian-Indonesia Partnership for Reconstruction and Development, 2006-07 Researcher, The World Bank, Jakarta, 2004-06

Working title

School-level Use of National Exams Data in Indonesia: A mixed-methods exploratory study

Supervisors

Professor Jo-Anne Baird & Professor Pamela Sammons

Progress on the thesis

I successfully transferred to DPhil Student status in October. My examiners, Professor Ian Menter and Professor Steve Strand, provided useful feedback on my proposed study plans and believe that the study will make a valuable contribution to our understanding of the use of assessment in the education system of a developing country.

I am currently based in Jakarta, Indonesia to conduct my fieldwork. At the beginning of this year, I attended my first academic conference in the field of education: the 27th International Congress of School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI), held in Yogyakarta. In addition to gaining a deeper and broader understanding of the field, I established productive connections with an ICSEI network of researchers interested in assessment data use, and with education practitioners and researchers based in Indonesia. Working with Indonesian principals and teachers from the ICSEI network, I piloted my qualitative data-collection instrument, both to refine my interview protocol and to gather early insight into school-level use of the national exams data.



An interesting preliminary finding is the practice of public schools engaging private tutoring institutions to improve exams results, as an outcome of the school's analysis of the exams data. Similar practice is evident in the United States; the No Child Left Behind Act stipulates that districts must provide funding for private tutoring to students in schools that have failed to raise exam scores. Such a mandate, however, does not exist in Indonesia. Thus, the study will need to gauge the prevalence of this type of engagement and take into account the rationale and opportunity costs that underlie it.

Other achievements this year

Projects

- Chair of the Student Assessment Network, 2012-14
- Media appearance: Television of Republic of Indonesia (TVRI), interviewed for segment on school implementation of lesson study, 8 January 2014

Jeanne Marie Ryan

Year	1 st Year DPhil
College	St Edmund Hall
Nationality	US
Education & degrees	Master of Science in Comparative and International Education, University of Oxford, 2013 Master of Philosophy in General Linguistics and Comparative Philology, University of Oxford, 2011 Bachelor of Arts in Classical Languages and Psychology/Neuroscience, Bryn Mawr College, 2006
Previous experience	Teacher of Latin and Spanish, The Peddie School, NJ, 2007-2008

Working title

Of words and washback: how has PISA influenced the assessment of reading ability in national contexts?

Supervisor

Dr Therese Hopfenbeck and Dr Alis Oancea

Progress on the thesis

As I am yet in the early stages of my DPhil, I have unsurprisingly devoted much of this year to reading across fields of literature and to grappling with my research questions. Concurrently, I have been working to improve upon the methodology of assessment analysis which I previously used in my MSc on PISA Reading Literacy and GCSE English materials from 2000 onwards. In the upcoming months, I hope to apply said methodology towards a preliminary analysis of materials used in the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). And, following the completion of this pilot period, I hope to complete my Transfer of Status in Michaelmas 2014.



Other achievements this year

Winner of international conference poster presentation

- *Analysing national assessment systems for washback from PISA: A Knowledge Protocol Association for Educational Assessment-Europe*, Paris, 7-9 November 2013
- Attended lectures and discussions which were highly relevant to my thesis (given the conference theme of international surveys, policy borrowing and national assessment)

Student Assistant, World Literacy Summit

- Met with representatives from multiple international organisations addressing the issue of literacy around the world, World Literacy Summit, Oxford, 14-16 April 2014
- Assisted in the drafting of the Oxford Declaration 2014

Seminar presentation

- *A Knowledge Protocol: analysing national assessment systems for PISA washback*, St Edmund Hall Graduate Seminar Series, 2 December 2013

Projects

- Organiser of cross-divisional seminar series SPELL: Seminars in Psychology, Education, Linguistics and Literacy, University of Oxford (commencing Michaelmas 2014)
- Research Assistant, State Examinations Commission-funded project *Predictability of the Leaving Certificate in Ireland*, PI: Professor Jo-Anne Baird
- Research Assistant, Norwegian Research Council-funded project *Assessment and Learning: a state-of-the-field review*, PI: Dr Therese Hopfenbeck

Year	3 rd Year DPhil (part-time)
College	Kellogg
Nationality	British
Education & degrees	Bachelor of Science, Psychology, University of Sheffield, 2003 MRes/Psychology, University of Manchester, 2005
Previous experience	Senior Research Associate, AQA, Manchester, 2012-present Research Associate, AQA, Manchester, 2009-2012 Research Assistant, AQA, Manchester, 2006-2009

Working title

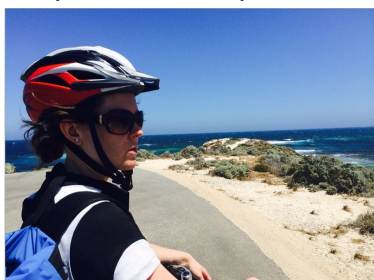
Challenges to maintaining standards at GCSE during the presence of strategic entry behavior

Supervisors

Professor Steve Strand and Professor Jo-Anne Baird

Progress on the thesis

In June, I successfully passed my Transfer of Status examination (Examiners: Dr Therese Hopfenbeck and Professor Pam Sammons). Following this, I completed the qualitative data collection for my DPhil. This complements the quantitative techniques I have already used and offers a mixed-methods approach to studying strategic entry patterns at GCSE and the implications of this.



The qualitative aspect involved interviews with GCSE mathematics teachers based in schools across England. I am currently analysing the qualitative data generated by my interviews using thematic analysis and am hoping to complete a written draft of this chapter of the thesis shortly. The findings from the qualitative phase will inform the final quantitative phase of my research, where I hope to model the impact of strategic entry patterns on national examination outcomes.

Employment

Alongside studying for my DPhil, I am also employed as a Researcher at the Centre for Education Research and Practice at AQA. Within this role, I am involved in a number of research projects and activities that support the operational activities of the business. During the past few months, this has included supporting the development of new A-level qualifications which are due for first teaching in 2015. Each year, I also provide technical support and guidance for awarding, the process by which standards at GCSE and A-level are set and maintained.

Other achievements this year

Publications

- Using the theory of planned behaviour to understand students' subject choices in post-compulsory education (in press) *Research Papers in Education*

Year	2 nd Year DPhil
College	Wolfson
Nationality	Canadian
Education & degrees	Master of Science, Educational Research Methodology, University of Oxford, 2012 Master of Arts, Economics, University of Saskatchewan, 2003
Previous experience	Social Policy Officer, United Nations Children's Fund, 2005-2009

Working title

Opportunities to learn: the effects of poverty on children's development and learning in Ethiopia

Supervisors

Dr. Lars-Erik Malmberg and Dr Maria Evangelou

Progress on the thesis

I successfully transferred from Probationary Research Student to DPhil candidate in July. Before going on maternity leave in October, I completed some preliminary growth modeling of the children's developmental trajectories. I have returned to my research in April. For the rest of the current academic year I plan to focus on contextualizing the study, modeling and further data analysis. I also hope to follow the Rasch Analysis courses offered by the University of Western Australia.



Other achievements this year

Following the transfer of status, I was awarded the Patrice L. Engle Dissertation Grant which is sponsored by the Society for Research in Child Development. I was also granted an Economic and Social Research Council studentship for the remainder of the DPhil study.



Year	1st year DPhil
College	Wolfson College
Nationality	British
Education & degrees	Master of Science, Education (Research Design and Methodology), University of Oxford, 2013 Master of Arts (Oxon) University of Oxford 2009 PGCE English Methods, University of Bristol, 2007 Bachelor of Arts (Hons) English and Modern Languages (French), University of Oxford, 2005
Previous experience	Teacher of English for Academic Purposes, University of Durham pre-session course, 2012 and 2013 Teacher of English, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Chile, 2010-11 Teacher of English, Drama and Media Studies, 11-18 age range, London, 2007-09 English Assistant, Teacher Training College, France, 2005-06

Working title

The role of formative assessment and self-regulation in writing development at the transition between school and university

Supervisors

Dr Therese Hopfenbeck and Dr Kathleen Quinlan

Progress on the thesis

In 2013, I won an ESRC studentship to conduct my DPhil work. Prior to starting my DPhil in October, I was an MSc student, supervised by Dr Therese Hopfenbeck. My MSc dissertation, *Assessment for Learning in Secondary Writing Classrooms*, was awarded a distinction and I will present on it at the EARLI Writing SIG Conference in Amsterdam in August 2014. I will also attend the Research School and present on the research design for my DPhil project. My thesis will look at the role of formative assessment and self-regulated learning in students' academic writing development during the transition between school and university. My main focus so far has been reviewing the extensive literature in these areas and my project is now in the design phase.



Other achievements this year

Seminar and poster presentations

- *Assessment for Learning in Secondary Writing Classrooms*, Seminar Presentation, Student Assessment Network, OUCEA, 5 December 2013
- *Assessment for Learning and writing lessons: tensions between performance and learning in classroom practice*, Poster presentation, STORIES conference, Department of Education, Oxford, 18 March 2014

Projects

- Research Assistant, State Examinations Commission-funded project *Predictability of the Leaving Certificate in Ireland*, PI: Professor Jo-Anne Baird
- Research Assistant, Assessment policy processes in Norway

Other

- Organised and facilitated writing retreat days for the first year doctoral cohort in the Department of Education

Assessment for Learning and writing lessons: Tensions between performance and learner autonomy in classroom practice

Natalie Usher, OUCEA

Introduction

Assessment for Learning (Afl) is a pedagogic process that aims to foster learning and autonomy (Black and Wiliam, 2009). A key principle is that notions of quality are shared and co-constructed, which is particularly useful for writing (Timperley and Parr, 2009). However, implementing Afl in ways that promote learner autonomy is challenging, particularly in England, where policy prioritises performance in assessments that are high-stakes for both students and schools (Marshall and Drummond, 2006; Swaffield, 2011; Ofsted, 2013).

This study, conducted in April – June 2013, aimed to explore teachers' and students' uses of Afl in writing lessons. The research question addressed here is: how do uses of Afl interact with the summative assessment system?

Research design

Case studies of 3 English teachers at 3 different secondary comprehensives in the South of England. Qualitative data collected:

- 17 open-ended lesson observations with classes from the 11-15 age range (Years 7-10)
- 7 semi-structured interviews with teachers
- 6 semi-structured interviews with a total of 11 students from Years 7, 8 and 9 (2 schools).
- Samples of writing and teaching documents.

Analysis: iterative and predominantly inductive coding in NVivo. Some theory-driven codes from formative assessment theories (Pryor and Crossouard, 2008; Black and Wiliam, 2009). Both within-case and cross-case comparisons were made.

Findings

A focus on performance criteria in tension with creative, expressive writing
All three teachers reported that they valued Afl for learner autonomy but voiced that the required focus on external assessment criteria presented some constraints. Lesson observation data shows how the scope of some activities, particularly at Schools 1 and 3, were constrained by an emphasis on assessment criteria.

An example lesson sequence: Year 8 murder scene writing



Task: a descriptive recreation of the scene of Colonel Mustard's murder (School 3)

Framing by the teacher: 'a stimulus to refine our writing skills.'

Notions of good quality writing: shared as success criteria. 'Accurate punctuation, varied sentence lengths, varied vocabulary, key descriptive techniques, accurate paragraphing.' These are based on the Key Stage 3 Assessing Pupils' Progress criteria. The teacher told the class: 'I haven't made it direct because I don't want you thinking you have to work to the Afs... I don't want it to be prescriptive.'

Paul's writing: arriving at the crime scene

Following the agonized screams, I run towards the gleaming mahogany door of the lounge, certain that something horrible has happened. I throw the door open, ignoring the protesting creaks of the fake-gold hinges as the door weakly bounces off the back wall. Despite working for M15 for thirty years, I'm far from ready for what I see. After all, I'm retired now, and this is meant to be a party.



Peer assessment of Paul's writing... and Paul's response

☆ You have accurate punctuation
☆ You have very good varied sentence lengths.
Wish: Put paragraphs in your story. - FINE!

Here, Paul's classmate is responding not as a reader but as an assessor. This was consistent across all the samples from this class. Note that s/he has commented on the first two success criteria given by the teacher, which focus on surface features of the writing rather than the imaginative content. In fact, Paul already had paragraphs in his work. His frustration is evident in his own comment – 'FINE!'

... as you're writing, though, you have to try and remember the PEEC, don't you, because even though you think to yourself, "oh I don't want to do the same as everyone else. I want to do something a bit different", Miss has told us that's going to get us our grades, so if we do it like that, and we write it well enough, it won't be like everyone else's, it will be what we want it to be.

Pebble (Year 9, School 1), on her IGCSE coursework

Discussion

Pebble's comments reflect the tensions in many lessons between writing for personal expression and enjoyment and writing to fulfil the assessment criteria. While teachers valued learner autonomy, they also saw Afl practices such as peer assessment as a way of showing observers, including Ofsted, that students were meeting assessment criteria. Given the imperative to comply with Ofsted's (2013) inspection criteria, it seems that it may be challenging for teachers to find space for 'authentic' Afl that privileges learning and autonomy (Swaffield, 2011).

References

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Marshall, B. and Drummond, M. (2006) How teachers engage with Assessment for Learning: lessons from the classroom. *Research Papers in Education* 21 (2), 133-149.
Ofsted (2013) School Inspection Handbook. Available at: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/school-inspection-handbook> [Accessed: 10 July 2013]
Pryor, J. and Crossouard, B. (2008) A socio-cultural theorisation of formative assessment. *Oxford Review of Education* 34 (1), 1-20.
Swaffield, S. (2011) Getting to the heart of authentic Assessment for Learning. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice*, 18 (4), 433-449.
Timperley, H. and Parr, J. (2009) What is this lesson about? Instructional processes and student understandings in writing classrooms. *The Curriculum Journal*, 20 (1), 43-60.

Contact: natalie.usher@education.ox.ac.uk

Natalie Usher STORIES poster

Departmental Associates

Members of the Centre from the Department of Education and their research areas are:

- Dr Chris Davies – ICT in education
- Dr Jane McNicholl – science education
- Dr Alis Oancea – research policy and governance
- Professor Jenny Ozga – policy in education
- Professor Pam Sammons – accountability and management
- Professor Judy Sebba – policy, assessment, learning
- Professor Steve Strand – equity in assessment
- Professor Kathy Sylva – early years and children's development

Honorary Research Fellows

Visiting Professors, Honorary Research Fellows and Visiting Associates of the Centre are:

- Professor David Andrich (University of Western Australia) – Rasch measurement
- Professor Richard Daugherty (formerly University of Aberystwyth and currently Honorary Professor, Cardiff University) – assessment for learning and assessment policy
- Professor Jannette Elwood (Queen's University, Belfast) – gender and children's rights in assessment
- Professor John Gardner (University of Stirling) – assessment for learning and teachers' understanding of assessment
- Professor Art Graesser (University of Memphis) – cognitive science and large-scale assessment (he is currently serving as Chair of the Framework group in PISA Collaborative Problem Solving 2015)
- Dr Jenny Lenkeit (University of Amsterdam) – inequalities in education
- Dr Michelle Meadows (Assessment and Qualifications Alliance) – assessment reliability and validity, qualification design, education policy
- Professor Roger Murphy (Independent Educational Consultant) – educational assessment and evaluation
- Isabel Nisbet (A Level Content Advisory Board) – qualifications regulation
- Lucy Simpson, doctoral student at the University of Bristol researching trust in assessment
- Professor Gordon Stanley (University of Sydney) – public examinations
- Professor Gordon Stobart (Institute of Education, University of London) – assessment for learning
- Professor Jim Tognolini (Pearson International) – Rasch measurement, standard-setting and public examinations
- Associate Professor Astrid Tolo (University of Bergen) – assessment policy
- Dr Jon Twing (Pearson) – measurement in assessment
- Dr Ed Wolfe (Pearson Assessment & Information) – measurement, rater effects



Department of Education Library

Research Visits

OUCEA hosted the following academics:

- Professor David Andrich (University of Western Australia)
- Dr Peter Gu (University of Wellington)
- Dr Joshua McGrane (University of Western Australia)
- Dr Ed Wolfe (Pearson Assessment & Information)



University Parks

Research Programme

Projects

Research projects underway in the Centre in the period of this report are detailed below.

A State of the Field Review: Assessment and Learning

OUCEA won a competitive tender to produce a state-of-the-field review for the newly established Knowledge Centre for Education in Norway, led by Professor Sølvi Lillejord. The review encompasses the theme of 'Assessment and Learning', looking at the relationships between theories of learning and assessment theory and practice. Two major areas of research activity in the field of assessment were identified this century; international testing and assessment for learning. The review looks at the extent to which these areas relate to particular views of learning. We also investigated the number and range of doctoral theses on the topic of assessment that were published in Norway over the past 20 years. We conclude that the literature in this field is fragmented, often without clear links to theory. As was the case at the beginning of this century, cognitive learning theory was the dominant paradigm, although we recognise that a number of authors are making in-roads using socio-cultural theory. Education has been characterised by some as an immature field. If we are to grow up, we conclude that thematic reviews like this, which draw the field together, are important. Further information about this review can be found at: <http://oucea.education.ox.ac.uk/research/recent-research-projects/> and <http://www.forskningssenteret.no/prognostikk-kunnskapssenter/Forside/1247146831358>.

Funder: Knowledge Centre for Education, Research Council of Norway

Principal Investigators: Professor Jo-Anne Baird & Dr Therese Hopfenbeck

Collaborators: Professor Paul Newton (Institute of Education, University of London), Professor Gordon Stobart (Institute of Education, University of London), Anna Steen-Utheim (BI LearningLab)

Advisory Group: Professor David Andrich (University of Western Australia), Professor Mary James (University of Cambridge), Professor Dylan Wiliam (Institute of Education, University of London)

Investigation into the predictability of the Irish Leaving Certificate Examinations

Many nations have concerns about whether their children are learning the right things, in the right way to compete in the knowledge economy of the future. These concerns arise in conceptually distinct guises which are often related in public narratives: concerns about standards, the content of the curriculum, the thinking skills being developed in the education system, preparation for work or higher education or the predictability of the examinations. It was the latter public narrative that was the focus of this research, although the underlying concerns related also to whether the Irish school examinations provoked rote learning that did not prepare students well for the future. OUCEA was commissioned by the State Examinations Commission in Ireland to investigate the predictability of Irish Leaving Certificate examinations. Three studies were conducted to investigate the issues: an expert review of examinations materials in five subjects, an analysis relating students' examination grades with their views on predictability of three examination subjects and interviews with students and teachers. Despite the concerns in the media, we did not find that the examinations were predictable in general. We developed a scale for the evaluation of students' perceptions of predictability, which proved to be invariant over three subject areas and

we found that students' views on narrowing of the curriculum were related to lower examination scores. Very few teachers said that the examinations were predictable and they often argued that they needed to know what would be assessed broadly to prepare students for the examination. The findings have implications for many examination systems internationally, as we draw upon the literature on coaching, rote learning, higher order thinking skills, backwash, curriculum alignment and measurement-driven-instruction to produce an analysis of elements of predictability of examination systems. We also produced a student perceptions of predictability scale. More information about this review can be found at: <http://oucea.education.ox.ac.uk/research/recent-research-projects/investigation-into-the-predictability-of-the-irish-leaving-certificate-examinations/>.

Funder: State Examinations Commission, Ireland

Principal Investigator: Professor Jo-Anne Baird

Collaborators: Professor Jannette Elwood (Queen's University, Belfast), Dr Therese Hopfenbeck, Dr Daniel Caro, Dr Ayesha Ahmed (CamExam)

With Anamaria Aricescu, Rhian Barrance, Roy Bowden, Quintin Brewer, Carol Brown, Daniel Cowling, Roger Firth, Jacqueline Gray, Steve Harrison, John Hoyes, Mary Jay, Malcolm Johnson, Jane McNicholl, Robert Miller, Aisling O'Boyle Christine Paget, Jeanne Ryan, John Smith, Stephen Turner, Natalie Usher and Eileen Velarde

Advisory Group: Professor Richard Daugherty (Honorary Research Fellow, University of Oxford), Dr Anne Looney (NCCA), Hugh McManus (SEC), Dr Michelle Meadows (Assessment and Qualifications Alliance), Professor Roger Murphy (Honorary Research Fellow, University of Oxford), Professor Paul Newton (Institute of Education, University of London), Brid Uí Riordáin (SEC), Professor Gordon Stobart (Honorary Research Fellow, University of Oxford; Emeritus Professor, Institute of Education, University of London)



François Weil, Rector of the Academy & Chancellor of the Universities of Paris and Professor Jo-Anne Baird at the AEA-Europe Conference, Sorbonne, Paris, 2013

Progress in International Reading Literacy 2016 National Centre

PIRLS 2016 will be the fourth cycle of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement assessment of reading comprehension. This assessment investigates levels of reading comprehension at five-year intervals and has been in operation since 2001. It is conducted with children who have received four years of primary schooling and is accompanied by a questionnaire that enables researchers to investigate connections between home support for literacy, curriculum and curriculum implementation, instructional practices and school resources and outcomes in the tests. These outcomes and relationships can be compared between participating countries. In partnership with Pearson UK, OUCEA won a competitive tender to provide the services of the PIRLS National Centre to the Ministry in England. Dr Kath Thomas (Pearson UK) is the National Research Coordinator for the project and OUCEA will produce the PIRLS Encyclopaedia chapter for England, the National Report, a matched NPD dataset and will disseminate the findings in a range of ways. Dr Therese Hopfenbeck is the Research Manager responsible for all aspects of the research. More information about this review can be found at: <http://oucea.education.ox.ac.uk/research/recent-research-projects/>.

Funder: Department of Education, England

Principal Investigators: Dr Kath Thomas (Pearson UK) & Dr Therese Hopfenbeck

Collaborators: Dr Daniel Caro & Pearson UK staff

Advisory Group: Professor Jo-Anne Baird, Professor Art Graesser (University of Memphis), Professor John de Jong (VU University Amsterdam)

Assessment policy processes in Norway

The OECD-funded project Governing Complex Education Systems explores which different governance mechanisms and knowledge options facilitate effective steering of complex education systems. Dr Therese Hopfenbeck was commissioned by the Norwegian government and OECD to conduct the Norwegian case study in this project. Similar case studies have so far been conducted in the Netherlands and Poland. This Norwegian case study investigated how the educational programme Assessment for Learning – a four-year programme (2010-2014) involving more than 400 schools – has been implemented in Norway. Preliminary analyses were presented for the Ministry of Education in Norway in March 2013, at a joint Unesco and OECD conference in Paris in June 2013 and at the AERA conference in Philadelphia in April 2014. The report is available on the OECD website at: <http://www.oecd.org/edu/ceri/governingcomplexeducationsystemsgces.htm>.

Funder: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

Principal Investigator: Dr Therese Hopfenbeck

Collaborators: María Teresa Flórez, Yasmine El Masri & Associate Professor Astrid Tolo (University of Bergen)





Associate Professor Astrid Tolo presenting the findings of the OECD Norwegian case study in Uni Research, Rokkan Centre

Ethnicity gaps in educational attainment

This research project on ethnicity gaps in educational attainment is a pilot initiative in England that will guide the preparation of a grant proposal for a larger-scale study involving an international collaboration between England, Germany, and the Netherlands. The objectives of the project are (1) to evaluate the validity of cultural, social, and economic constructs across native students and students from underachieving ethnic groups, and (2) to propose a set of items that capture specific social stratification mechanisms for underachieving ethnic groups. One research article will be submitted during the course of this project. A grant proposal for a larger study will be submitted by August 2014.

Funder: John Fell Fund

Principal Investigator: Dr Daniel Caro

Co-PI: Professor Steve Strand

Researcher: Dr Jenny Lenkeit

Teacher Evaluation

Dr Therese Hopfenbeck contributed to a systematic review on teacher evaluation, and whether it can have any positive impact on school quality. The report was launched the 24th of April 2014 in Oslo. See the following link for further details (in Norwegian): <http://www.forskningsradet.no/servlet/Satellite?c=Rapport&cid=1253995757963&lang=no&pagenam e=kunnskapssenter%2FHovedsidemal>.

Funder: The Research Council of Norway

Principal Investigator: Professor Sølvi Lillejord

Collaborators: Dr Therese Hopfenbeck, Associate Professor Astrid Tolo (University of Bergen) & staff at the Norwegian Knowledge Centre for Education

R package

Dr Daniel Caro is developing 'intsvy', a statistical package to manage and analyse data from international assessments (PISA, TIMSS and PIRLS) using the R language and environment: <http://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/intsvy/index.html>. Standard software cannot handle the complex study designs (eg two-stage sampling and rotated test forms) of international assessments. Package 'intsvy' takes into account these complexities in the calculation of statistics and associated standard errors. 'intsvy' and the R software are freely available and can be shared and modified by the users.



Dr Daniel Caro and Dr Christian Bokhove's presentation at AERA, Philadelphia, April 2014

Causal inference in educational studies with observational data

Dr Daniel Caro is investigating statistical techniques to establish causation with educational data. There is great interest among educationalists in techniques, such as instrumental variables, regression discontinuity, and propensity score matching. Daniel has presented a review of these techniques at two Quant SIG sessions in 2013. This causal approach, however, has been criticised for not being able to identify the mechanisms at work behind causal effects, which is particularly relevant in educational settings, where effects are the result of complex interactions between different actors (eg students, families, teachers). Recent work in political science proposes a causal mediation approach to study the mechanisms behind effects in causal terms. Daniel is preparing a research article that explores the value of causal mediation techniques in educational research.



Publications in 2013-14

A number of articles were submitted for peer review during this period and the following were in print before the end of June 2014. Publications are available on the OUCEA website.

Guest-edited Special Issues

Elwood, J. & Baird, J. (2013) (Eds) [Students: researching voice, aspirations and perspectives in the context of educational policy change in the 14–19 phase](#), *London Review of Education*, 11 (2), Special Issue

Peer-reviewed journal articles

Caro, D.H., Cortina, K.S., & Eccles, J. (2014) [Socioeconomic Background, Education, and Labor Force Outcomes: Evidence from a Regional U.S. Sample](#), *British Journal of Sociology of Education* [online]

Caro, D. H., Sandoval-Hernandez, A., & Lüdtke, O. (2013) [Cultural, Social and Economic Capital Constructs in International Assessments: An Evaluation Using Exploratory Structural Equation Modeling](#), *School Effectiveness and School Improvement* [online]

Hopfenbeck, T.N. (2013) [Students' voice, aspirations, and perspectives: international reflections and comparisons](#), *London Review of Education*, 11 (2), 179-183

Lenkeit, J., & Caro, D.H. (2014) [Performance status and change – Measuring education system effectiveness with data from PISA 2000-2009](#), *Educational Research and Evaluation*, 20 (2), 146-174

Olsen, R.V., Hopfenbeck, T.N. & Lillejord, S. (2013) [Elevenes læringssituasjon etter Kunnskapsløftet](#) (Students' learning situations after the 'knowledge promotion' reform), *Norsk Pedagogisk Tidsskrift*, 6 (Norwegian Journal of Education)

Mirazchiyski, P., Caro, D.H., Sandoval-Hernandez, A. (2014) [Youth Future Civic Participation in Europe: Differences between the East and the Rest](#), *Social Indicators Research*, 115(3), 1031–1055

Rose, J. & Baird, J. (2013) [Aspirations and an austerity state: young people's hopes and goals for the future](#), *London Review of Education*, 11 (2), 157-153. Special Issue: Students: researching voice, aspirations and perspectives in the context of educational policy change in the 14–19 phase

Editorials

Baird, J. (2014) [Assessment and Attitude](#) (Editorial), *Assessment in Education: Principles, policy and practice*, 21 (2), 129-132

Baird, J. (2014) [Editorial](#), *Assessment in Education: Principles, policy and practice*, 21 (1), 1-3

Baird, J. (2013) [The currency of assessments](#) (Editorial), *Assessment in Education: Principles, policy and practice*, 20 (2), 147-149

Baird, J. (2013) [Judging students' performances](#) (Editorial), *Assessment in Education: Principles, policy and practice*, 20 (3), 247-249

Single-authored books

Hopfenbeck, T.N. (2014) *Strategier for læring: Om selvregulering, vurdering og god undervisning*. Oslo, Universitetsforlaget (Strategies for Learning: self-regulation, assessment and good teaching). Oslo, Universitetsforlaget

Book chapters

Hopfenbeck, T. & Lillejord, S. (2013) Vurdering i kunnskapsløftet (Assessment in the reform Knowledge Promotion). In: R.J. Krumsvik & R. Säljö (ed.) *Praktisk-pedagogisk utdanning: En antologi*. Bergen, Fagbokforlaget

Book reviews

Hopfenbeck, T.N. (2014) Book Review of 'PISA, power and policy: the emergence of global educational governance' by H. Meyer & A. Benavot, *Journal of Education for Teaching*

Public reports

Hopfenbeck, T.N., Tolo, A., Florez, T. & El Masri, Y. (2013) [Balancing Trust and Accountability? The Assessment for Learning Programme in Norway](#). Report for OECD

Baird, J., Hopfenbeck, T., Elwood, J., Caro, D. & Ahmed, A. (2014) *Predictability in the Irish Leaving Certificate*. Report commissioned by the State Examinations Committee

Baird, J., Hopfenbeck, T., Newton, P., Stobart, G. & Steen-Utheim, A. (2014) State of the field review: Assessment and Learning. Report for the Norwegian Knowledge Centre for Education, Research Council of Norway (case number 13/4697)

Lillejord, S., Børte, K., Ruud, E., Hauge, T.E., Hopfenbeck, T.N., Tolo, A., Fischer-Griffiths, P., Smeby, J. (2014) *Former for lærervurdering som kan ha positiv innvirkning på skolens kvalitet: En systematisk kunnskapsoversikt*. Kunnskapssenter for utdanning. Oslo

Web publications and podcasts

Hopfenbeck, T. (2014) Making assessment reform stick, AQA, Centre for Education Research and practice website, 7 January 2014, <https://cerp.aqa.org.uk/perspectives/making-assessment-reform-stick>

Hopfenbeck, T. (2014) Podcast on how to develop students' self-regulation and link it to assessment, Norwegian Ministry's Directorate of Education and Training, <http://www.udir.no/Vurdering-for-laring/Eksempler-fra-praksis/Film-I-6-Egenvurdering-og-selvregulert-laring/>



Symposium on Assessment and Learning at St Anne's College with colleagues from Norwegian Knowledge Centre for Education, Research Council of Norway, February 2013

Research dissemination

Staff have presented at the following external events.

Presenter(s)	Event	Date	Title
Caro	European Educational Research Association Spring School, Oslo	5 May 2014	Introduction to R and examples with international assessment data
Baird	Central Board of Secondary Education and the Centre for Assessment, Evaluation and Research International Conference 'Global Trends In Large Scale Assessment', Delhi	28–29 April 2014	Standards in large-scale testing: effects of predictability on assessment of higher order skills
Hopfenbeck, Tolo (University of Bergen), Florez	American Educational Research Association Conference, Philadelphia	5 April 2014	The Norwegian implementation of Assessment for Learning: Trust, Communication, and Mutual Learning - Roundtable discussion
Caro	American Educational Research Association Conference, Philadelphia	2 April 2014	Workshop: Analyzing International Large-Scale Assessment Data with R
Hopfenbeck	Copenhagen	21 March 2014	Keynote: Feedback – and assessment for learning, an introduction
Hopfenbeck	Aarhus	20 March 2104	Keynote: Feedback – and assessment for learning, an introduction
Lenkeit & Caro	Institutions, Inequality and the Life Course Seminar Series, Amsterdam Centre for Inequality Studies, University of Amsterdam	February 2014	Performance status and change – measuring education system effectiveness with data from PISA 2000 to 2009.
Lenkeit, Rau & Jordan	Continuation Event of the Amsterdam Centre for Inequality Studies, University of Amsterdam	January 2014	Teachers' instructional profiles and (reading) achievement across educational systems.
Baird	Association for Educational Assessment-Europe Conference, Paris	7–9 November 2013	Opening and Closing Addresses
Elwood, Barrance, Lundy (Queen's University), Eklof (Umea University) & Hopfenbeck	Association for Educational Assessment-Europe Conference, Paris	7–9 November 2013	Symposium: Students researching views, opinions, perspectives and voice in assessment policy and practice


Presenter(s)	Event	Date	Title
Hopfenbeck	Association for Educational Assessment-Europe Conference, Paris	7–9 November 2013	Implementing Assessment for Learning in Norway – an OECD case study
Lenkeit and Caro	Association for Educational Assessment-Europe Conference, Paris	8 November 2013	Education system effectiveness. Studying trends in international large-scale assessments – the example of PISA
Caro	Association for Educational Assessment-Europe Conference, Paris	6 November 2013	R workshop – Using R for analysing international assessment data
Hopfenbeck	Literacy, Foundation Learning and Assessment in Developing Countries Conference, St John's College, Oxford	13 September 2013	Discussant on session Assessment and Learning: What to measure and why
Baird	Pearson Invited Symposium on qualification reform and standards, London	15 July 2013	Return of the GCSE: will a reference test end the debate on standards?

OUCEA Events

Eighteen events were held this year, with approximately 280 students, academics and professionals attending in total.


19 Mar 2014	PISA Debate: 10 criticisms of the supranational PISA. Baird, Caro, Lenkeit and Professor John de Jong (VU University Amsterdam)
4 Feb 2014	Seminar on teacher evaluation with colleagues from Norwegian Knowledge Centre for Education, Research Council of Norway
3 Feb 2014	Symposium on Assessment and Learning at St Anne's College with colleagues from Norwegian Knowledge Centre for Education, Research Council of Norway
27 Nov 2013	Seminar by Professor Arthur Graesser, University of Memphis, <i>Learning and Assessment with Conversational Agents and Automated Measurement of Text Characteristics</i>
23 Oct 2013	Plumer Lecture at St Anne's College by Professor David Andrich, <i>Controversy in constructing measurements in the social sciences</i>
12 Sep 2013	Research exchange symposium with staff and students from OUCEA and the Research Center for Examinations and Certification, University of Twente

In 2013 Professor Andrich was elected to a Plumer Visiting Research Fellowship at St Anne's College. As part of this Fellowship he gave a lecture entitled *Controversy in constructing measurements in the social sciences* during his visit last October, which was popular and very well received across the disciplines in the social and medical sciences. Professor Andrich is one of the foremost researchers internationally in psychometrics and specifically on Rasch modelling. He applies this technique across disciplines and is interested in the broader effects of measurement, as well as the technical issues. Professor Andrich's Plumer lecture is typical of his work in that it is well grounded in technical matters, but also speaks to the history, philosophy and modern day applications of measurement.



Plumer Lecture
St Anne's College

Wednesday 23rd October 2013
5.00 pm
Tsuzuki Lecture Theatre

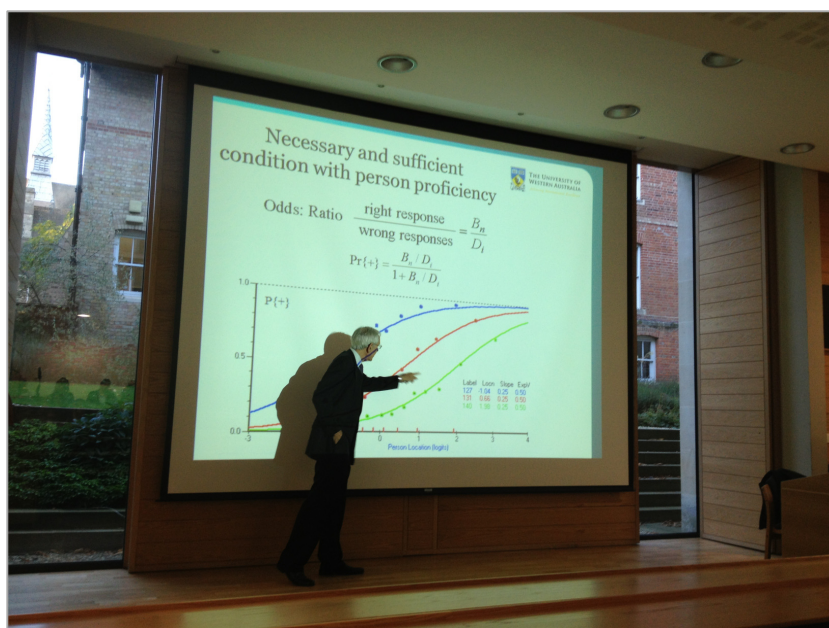


Controversy in constructing measurements in the social sciences

Professor David Andrich has the Chapple Chair in Education at the University of Western Australia. He is one of the foremost researchers internationally in psychometrics and specifically on Rasch modelling. He applies this technique across disciplines and is interested in the broader effects of measurement, as well as the technical issues. David's lecture is typical of his work in that it will be well grounded in technical matters, but also speaks to the history, philosophy and modern day applications of measurement. David is a Visiting Professor at the University of Oxford Centre for Educational Assessment. He has previously held visiting research positions at the University of Trento in Italy and at the Danish Institute for Educational Research. His PhD was from the University of Chicago. David was previously Dean of Education at Murdoch University and he has contributed to many national programmes on educational measurement in Australia.

Faculty web page: <http://ocea.education.ox.ac.uk/about-us/directory/professor-david-andrich/>

To register your interest, please email joanne.hazell@education.ox.ac.uk



Plumer Lecture flyer

Professor David Andrich presenting Plumer lecture, St Anne's College, October 2013

Department of Education Public Seminar

2 June 2014

Baird, Hopfenbeck & Caro, *Predictability in high-stakes assessment: students' approaches to learning*

Department of Education Quantitative Methods Special Interest Group Seminars

2 Dec 2013

Caro, *The mediating role of early literacy skills in the relationship between family SES and academic achievement: an investigation of causal mechanisms with international assessment data*

13 May 2013

Lenkeit, *How effective are education systems?*

Student Assessment Network

The Student Assessment Network (StAN) is a student-led network of graduate students who have an interest in assessment. StAN is chaired by a student and meets two or three times a term to discuss issues around educational assessment. The network is aimed at all students in the Department and beyond whose research interests include or overlap with assessment and who may also be members of other research groups. Many of StAN's members are also members of the AEA-Europe's Doctoral Network.

StAN organises at least one informal student-led meeting each term, where students present and discuss their work and receive constructive feedback from peers and academics in the field of assessment. It also hosts at least one more formal meeting where an outside speaker or an academic member of the Department is invited to present on an aspect of their research. StAN also holds reading groups and writing groups, and weekly informal lunch meetings. For details, see: <http://oucea.education.ox.ac.uk/students/student-assessment-network/>.

The current Chair is Carol Brown, who took over from Agni Paramita in Michaelmas 2013. Eleven Student Assessment Network events have been held this year, details of which are below.

15 May 2014	Professor Roger Murphy, University of Nottingham – Evaluating educational assessments within their particular contexts
19 May 2014	Dr Peter Gu, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand – Classroom assessment literacy for EFL teachers
29 May 2014	Writing Group 1
5 Jun 2014	Student presentations from Gemma Bellhouse, <i>Investigating Washback: Teaching and Learning Realities of an English Oral addition to the French National Secondary School Exiting Exam</i>
19 Jun 2014	Writing Group 2
6 Mar 2014	Student presentations from Gill Clarke, <i>How examiners judge the achievement of PhD candidates in the final examination</i> and Lydia Townsend, <i>Student perceptions of the purposes of examination</i>
5 Dec 2013	Student presentations from Natalie Usher, <i>Assessment for Learning in writing lessons</i> and Lucy Simpson, <i>Public Trust in A-levels</i>
12 Nov 2013	Dr Therese Hopfenbeck, <i>Reading and critiquing research – lessons learned from two papers on assessment</i>
31 Oct 2013	Feedback on presentation skills in preparation for Association for Educational Assessment-Europe conference in Paris, presenters: Yasmine El-Masri, <i>Can Language Maintain a Leveled Playing Field in International Comparative Science Assessment? An analysis of PISA science 2006 Cognitive Items</i> and Carol Brown, <i>Eccles' Theory of Identity and Achievement: A Study of Students Preparing for High-Stakes, A-level examinations</i>
24 Oct 2013	Dr Ed Wolfe on <i>Policy and process in scoring performance assessments in the US</i>
15 & 17 Oct 2013	Professor David Andrich, <i>Introduction to Rasch Models</i>



Carol Brown presenting at AEA-Europe Conference, Paris, November 2013



Professor Jo-Anne Baird Opening Address at AEA-Europe Conference, Paris, November 2013

Wider contributions to the field

We have contributed to the following groups this year:

Baird

- President of the Association for Educational Assessment-Europe
- Standards Advisory Group, Ofqual, England
- National Reference Test Expert Panel, Ofqual, England
- Academy of Finland panel on 'The future of learning, knowledge and skills research programme'
- Pearson expert group on Literacy assessment, England

Hopfenbeck

- Chair of the Norwegian Centre for Learning Environment and Behavioural Research in Education

This year we have reviewed for the following journals and funders:

- *Assessment in Education: Principles, policy and practice*
- *Comparative Education Review*
- *Education Inquiry*
- *European Educational Research Journal*
- *European Journal of Psychological Assessment*
- *Journal of Cognitive Education and Psychology*
- *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*
- *Journal for Educational Research Online*
- *Learning Culture and Social Interaction*
- *Oxford Review of Education*
- *Norsk Pedagogisk Tidsskrift*
- *Psychology Press*
- The Nuffield Foundation
- Research Council of Canada
- *The Curriculum Journal*
- *World Education Research Yearbook*

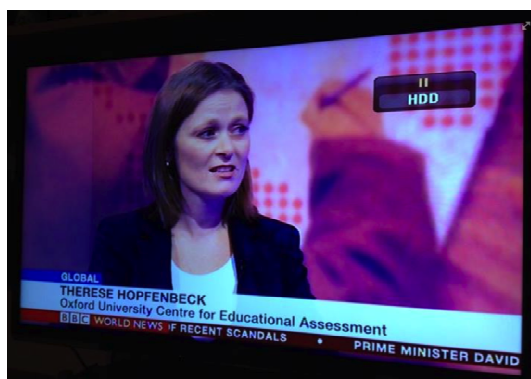


Professor Jo-Anne Baird in India for the CBSE-CAER International Conference, April 2013

Media

April 2014: Jo-Anne Baird, 'Reforms based on PISA tests alone won't fix GCSE standards', *The Conversation*. See: <https://theconversation.com/reforms-based-on-pisa-tests-alone-wont-fix-gcse-standards-25251>

February 2014: Jo-Anne Baird quoted in *Times Higher Education* article, Gove tight-lipped on A-level revamp cost, see: <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/news/gove-tight-lipped-on-a-level-revamp-cost/2011435.article>



December 2013: Therese Hopfenbeck TV interview on PISA 2012 results in England, BBC World (see photo left)

November 2013: Jo-Anne Baird, 'New-look exams from Gove, same old political ambition', *The Conversation*. See: <https://theconversation.com/new-look-exams-from-gove-same-old-political-ambition-19785>

October 2013: Assessment Reform Group response to primary assessment and accountability arrangements.

Letter to Michael Gove on BERA website and discussed by Warwick Mansell in his regular Guardian briefing column (see: <http://www.theguardian.com/education/2013/oct/07/academies-ofsted-results-poor>) and regular NAHT blog.

June 2013: Therese Hopfenbeck interview on being a researcher in Oxford, *Skolelederen* (School Leader journal) page 16. Issue available at: http://www.nslf.no/images/Marketing/skolelederen/2013/Skoleleder_6_2013_korr3.pdf

November 2013: Astrid Tolo interview on the OECD report Balancing Trust and Accountability, *Skolelederen* (School Leader journal) page 16. Issue available at: http://www.nslf.no/images/Marketing/skolelederen/2013/96199_Skolelederen_9_13_web.pdf

April 2013: Therese Hopfenbeck interview on the OECD GCES case study, *Bedre Skole*

OUCEA has a presence on both LinkedIn and Twitter. The LinkedIn group is called [Oxford University Centre for Educational Assessment](#) and the Twitter account is @Baird_jo_anne.



Dr Jenny Lenkeit presenting at AEA-Europe Conference, Paris, November 2013



(L-R) Natalie Usher, Jeanne Ryan, María Teresa Flórez, Jenny Lenkeit, Daniel Caro, Jo-Anne Baird, John de Jong (VU University Amsterdam), Peter Gu (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand) and Dave Leach (Pearson Education)

Appendix: Abstracts

Abstracts from journal articles published 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014

Caro, D.H., Cortina, K.S., & Eccles, J. (2014) [Socioeconomic Background, Education, and Labor Force Outcomes: Evidence from a Regional U.S. Sample](#), *British Journal of Sociology of Education* [online]

This paper examines the long-term association of family socioeconomic status (SES), educational, and labor force outcomes in a regional US longitudinal sample (N = 2264). The results offer insights into the mechanisms underlying the role of family SES in transitions from secondary schooling to early work experiences. It was found that the academic achievement gap associated with SES widens during secondary schooling due in part to course-level tracking. Family SES relates to college enrollment mainly via its association with academic gains in school, but also through family income and father's occupational status. Family SES is weakly but significantly related to adult offspring's earnings but more strongly related to occupational status. Educational qualifications and cognitive skills make independent contributions to the explanation of labor force outcomes.

Caro, D. H., Sandoval-Hernandez, A., & Lüdtke, O. (2013) [Cultural, Social and Economic Capital Constructs in International Assessments: An Evaluation Using Exploratory Structural Equation Modeling](#), *School Effectiveness and School Improvement* [online]

The article employs exploratory structural equation modeling (ESEM) to evaluate constructs of economic, cultural, and social capital in international large-scale assessment (LSA) data from the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2006 and the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2009. ESEM integrates the theory-generating approach of exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and theory-testing approach of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). It relaxes the zero-loading restriction in CFA, allowing items to load on different factors simultaneously, and it provides measurement invariance tests across countries not available in EFA. A main criticism of international LSA studies is the extended use of indicators poorly grounded in theory, like socioeconomic status, that prevent the study of mechanisms underlying associations with student outcomes. This article contributes to addressing this criticism by providing statistical criteria to evaluate the fit of well-defined sociological constructs with the empirical data.

Hopfenbeck, T.N. (2013) [Students' voice, aspirations, and perspectives: international reflections and comparisons](#), *London Review of Education*, 11 (2), 179-183

The findings in this special issue, gives a strong evidence for students' capacity both to contribute with insight on their own teaching and learning, as well provide suggestions and solutions on how to improve the education system. But the data from the Centre Research Study also indicates that even if many institutions have systems where they consult students about the changes in education programs, students experience much of it as 'tokenistic' and lacking credibility. This is particularly evident in the cases of assessment and qualification. Compared to Norwegian students, English students seem to lack real influence of many aspects of their own education.

Lenkeit, J., & Caro. D.H. (2014) [Performance status and change – Measuring education system effectiveness with data from PISA 2000-2009](#), *Educational Research and Evaluation*, 20 (2), 146-174

Reports of international large-scale assessments tend to evaluate and compare education system performance based on absolute scores. And policymakers refer to high-performing and economically prosperous education systems to enhance their own systemic features. But socioeconomic differences between systems compromise the plausibility of those comparisons and

references. The paper applies conceptual and methodological approaches from educational effectiveness research to investigate how effectively education systems perform and how effectively they change their performance over time by accounting for socioeconomic differences between systems and cohorts (assessment cycles). Data from 4 cycles of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) are analysed. Results indicate that the quality of systems is evaluated differently if assessed by absolute performance scores or effectiveness measures. The study contributes to methodological developments of effectiveness research in international large-scale assessments and provides relevant information for policymakers to further look into policies, structures, and reform measures that have favoured effectiveness.

Olsen, R.V., Hopfenbeck, T.N. & Lillejord, S. (2013) [Elevenes læringssituasjon etter Kunnskapsløftet](#) (Students' learning situations after the 'knowledge promotion' reform), *Norsk Pedagogisk Tidsskrift*, 6 (Norwegian Journal of Education)

Har elevenes læringssituasjon endret seg etter innføringen av Kunnskapsløftet (K06)? Eller, mer konkret, har reformen ført til en bedre kultur for læring og bedre læringsutbytte for elevene? I lys av Kunnskapsløftets intensjoner er det rimelig å stille slike spørsmål. En viktig del av reformen var etableringen av et nasjonalt system for kvalitetsvurdering som skulle gjøre det mulig å undersøke om man når sentrale reformmål. Dette var utgangspunktet for en syntese som sammenfatter sentrale tema fra evalueringsstudiene av elevenes læringssituasjon etter innføringen av Kunnskapsløftet (Bakken 2009, 2010, Bakken og Danielsen 2011, Bakken og Elstad 2012, Frøseth mfl. 2008, 2010, Hodgson mfl. 2010a, 2010b, Hodgson mfl. 2012, Høst og Evensen 2009, Rønning mfl. 2008, Vibe mfl. 2011, Vibe mfl. 2012). Denne artikkelen oppsummerer og sammenfatter funn fra forskning om elevenes læringssituasjon etter innføringen av Kunnskapsløftet. Vi har supplert de studiene som hadde et formelt oppdrag om å evaluere reformen med annen forskning som dekker samme tema og tidsrom. Drøftingen er organisert rundt fire temaer: Læringsresultater i grunnskolen, vurdering av og for læring, tilpasset opplæring og elevenes læringsmiljø. I den opprinnelige synteserapporten som artikkelen bygger på, er også disse to temaene behandlet: overganger og gjennomføring i videregående skole og mangler ved evalueringen av K06 (Olsen mfl. 2012).

Mirazchiyski, P., Caro, D.H., Sandoval-Hernandez, A. (2014) [Youth Future Civic Participation in Europe: Differences between the East and the Rest](#), *Social Indicators Research*, 115(3), 1031–1055

European countries were economically and politically separated during the Cold War, but since its end processes of globalization and the formation of the European Union have contributed to blur the borders. Previous studies suggest that the social transformations have affected differently civic participation of youths, but shortage of more recent data has precluded researchers from examining the differences in a country-comparative fashion. Along these lines, this paper has two main objectives: to explore the differences in the levels of expected civic participation across Europe, and to evaluate the fit of a theoretical model of civic participation in regard to the different points in time their democracies were established. To achieve these goals, data from 22 European educational systems (9 post-communist and 13 established democracies) participating in the International Civic and Citizenship Study (2009) conducted by International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement is used. The results, in accordance with the literature, suggest differentiated patterns of future civic participation between the new and established democracies, but they are not that clear, suggesting that convergence between the two groups is ongoing. However, the tested empirical model of civic participation functions in a better way in the established than in the new democracies. In contrast with previous findings, differences in levels of expected civic participation seem to be related not only with the countries' experience with democracy, but also with their cultural similarities and common history.

Rose, J. & Baird, J. (2013) [Aspirations and an austerity state: young people's hopes and goals for the future](#), *London Review of Education*, 11 (2), 157-153. Special Issue: Students: researching voice, aspirations and perspectives in the context of educational policy change in the 14–19 phase

Survey findings from 1701 Year 11 and Year 13 students across 35 English educational institutions are reported, which indicate young people's hopes and goals, and the ways in which their institutions support them in their aspirations. This research adds to the literature empirical findings using a methodological stance on the study of aspirations that is open to broader perspectives of young people's agendas for their lives. The majority of young people reported high-educational (e.g. university) and career (e.g. a professional or well-paid job) aspirations. Life satisfaction and developing relationships was also high on the agenda of many young people.



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