

Assessment SIG 20/11/2016 Wellington

Attendees: Heleen Visser (NZCER), Mustafa Asil (Otago), Vicki Thorpe (Vic), Charles Darr (NZCER), Suzanne Trask (Waikato), Bronwen Cowie (Waikato), Kirsty Farrant (PPTA), Rose Atkins (MU), Mary Hill (Aklid), Anne Yates (Vic), Peter Rawlins (MU), Jenny Poskitt (MU).

1. Initial welcome and safety briefing (due to recent earthquakes in Wellington)
2. Introductions and brief updates of current research projects related to assessment.
3. Topics covered in 'round table sharing' discussions included:
 - NMMSA – data sets available for researchers
 - Assessment issues related to adolescents and music education
 - NZCER tools, collaborations between NMMSA and NZCER, adaptive tests development (online; adult PAT equivalents);
 - PhD projects – teacher judgments; progress and consistency tool; science learning in flexible learning environments (high stakes environment and NCEA science assessment implications); assessment in Social Sciences related to social action; concept of attention (assessment is attention, making judgements, time needed for reflection, thinking and creativity); Assessment in ECE settings, notion of learning stories/snapshots, summative/formative, hidden assessments missed by teachers who tend to focus on more formal tasks.
 - Assessment, teaching, curriculum nexus; formative assessment and summative assessment connections; preparing student teachers for assessment understanding and action in schools
 - Workloads associated with NCEA level 2 85% target
 - Assessment and equity; project rethinking ITE for equity (international) PL and preparing teachers for their assessment role.
 - Assessment capability needs attention, especially in relation to self-regulated learning, not learners who experience disadvantages and marginalisation; teacher educator conceptions and use of assessment; project with South Africa /Asia Pacific – how teachers learn about assessment by doing it rather than learning about it
 - Wonder about research evidence related to communities of learning.
 - Role of evidence in policy making? Improving assessment partnerships and links across the sector
 - Portfolio assessments – narrative and thinking helps learning and assessments. Changes to ITE courses as a result of that.
 - Assessing progress - what does it look like - academic, progress and capabilities – collaborative work; trials around what it might look like in primary – Level 1 - special education; within one level of the curriculum (staying there for a long time – exploratory work at the moment); progress at system level eg NMSSA work – progress is not what is expected between Y4-8. Curriculum not based on a linear, progressive model...
4. Potential advocacy role of the assessment SIG. Big picture (e.g. linking science and SS goals together in real contexts such as leaky homes)
5. Need to promote conceptual understandings and discussions across the sector related to the functions and consequences of assessment; and workplace nexus to provide assessment information that is useful for employees and employers.
6. NZCER updates. Notion of progress is uppermost. Also publicity around database of services from school e.g. from marking services can be used for research purposes (once data cleaning process

undertaken). Growing interest in computer adaptive testing. Maths underway and vocabulary likely to be next. NZCER built platform for online testing. Tools to assist teachers. NZCER developed calibration trial items for testing reading and maths and NZQA wants to run a pilot with it in term 1 and 2 to meet unit standards perspective. Literacy and numeracy – alternative ways of assessing for school leavers and providers other than schools being explored. Education Leadership Practices Survey to be reviewed and refreshed for potential expanded use by COLs. Starting to develop a Teacher Practices Survey for use at school and COL level. Initial thinking underway related to key domains to consider, related to evidence based research. Wellbeing at School tool (wellbeing and bullying), Me and MY school (school culture). Data requirements and needs for COLs; notions of capabilities and competencies within different contexts; new development in student engagement in Māori medium schools and a different version in English. School survey (every three years national survey to schools in term 3. Currently preparing reports related to National Standards (Linda Bonne) and COLs (Cathy Wylie). Next year the focus will be on pedagogy in curriculum, technology in curriculum, Te Reo Maori – small reports. New science (thinking with evidence) assessments for potential use in senior primary (Yr4-6) on-line assessments are being developed. The tool might be available mid to end of next year (standardisation trial in March). Information has been given to the Minister around use of PacT in schools.

7. Issues related to responses to assessment in times of emergencies/natural disasters (related to recent earthquakes and implications for NCEA and university examinations). Points were discussed around timeliness of communication; principles of fairness, equity, equality and consequences of assessment decisions.
8. COLs: achievement challenges. What national tools, assessment data are available? tensions between individual school and COL aggregate data; schools will have sub-issues – part of the point of the community is to share strengths and weaknesses and to share effective practice. Good assessment practice should involve good data. Trust has to develop. Collaboration has potential to share resources and decisions like enrolment zones – competition on the margins. Anecdotal increase in testing within COLs – need for robust baseline data.
9. Assessment issues. Anecdotally hearing stories of repeated testing and assessment practice and too many inappropriate uses and frequency of assessments. NZCER has experienced uptake in use of assessment tools.
10. Need for better education around assessment.
11. Questions raised about potential research access to MOE database of COLs achievement challenges and intended ways of assessing progress?
12. Issues discussed related to frequency of tool use, use to which data are put, consequences for students and teachers, labelling students, assessment fatigue... Homework and its minimal impact on achievement.
13. JP offered to table these concerns at next IES Advisory Group meeting. NZCER will recommend inclusion of questions related to frequency and use of assessment data in COLs in NMSSA.
14. Contributions to *Assessment Matters* by end of January to Prof Mary Hill (University of Auckland).
15. Timing of SIG meetings. Agreement to have 'during the year' SIG meeting and shorter meeting at NZARE 2017. Benefit of building community and relationships but difficulty to access funds. Mid year symposium – three parts: COLs, NCEA and broader issues to the day.
16. Convenor change – supposed to be two years. Poskitt & Rawlins have been co-convenors for four years. Call for expression of interest for change of convenors. Received interest from University of Waikato (Bronwen Cowie & Suzanne Trask)
17. Meeting finished 3pm.