

Using online assessment to inform teaching and learning in primary and secondary classrooms



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Professor Tognolini is the Research Director (System and School Testing) and General Manager of ACER's Sydney office. He has extensive experience in the areas of educational measurement, psychometrics, planning, survey research and quantitative research methodology. For over 20 years he has provided psychometric advice, research and project management, Government testing program management and co-ordination. He has been a consultant to Victorian Board of Studies – Computer Adaptive Testing Project, the Ministry of Education - WA MSE, the Secondary Education Authority of WA, Board of Studies, NSW, Department of Education and Training, NSW and the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority

Professor Tognolini has extensive experience in liaising with representatives at all levels of government and education both within Australia and overseas on assessment and research related issues.

Professor Tognolini has just produced the Report of the Consultancy to Research International Best Practice in Outcomes-based Assessment Related to Post-Compulsory Education in conjunction with Professor David Andrich and Professor Sam Ball.

Abstract

In the 1980's there was a conscious effort around Australia and in many other countries around the world to shift the focus in assessment from notions of passing and failing to those of monitoring growth; from comparing students against each other to building up an image of what it is that students know and can do at particular stages in their development; and, from collecting marks to summarise performance to providing students and teachers with information from assessment activities that can be used to help diagnose potential weaknesses and strengths and lead to improved learning.

The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) has recently developed an online assessment instrument that takes advantage of the latest advances in psychometric theory to provide schools and students with a powerful tool to support learning at school and at home.

The instrument provides

- an online testing program in mathematics and English for the equivalent of Years 3 to 10;
- tests that assess the generic skills that underpin learning in the subject areas of English and mathematics;
- tests that are tailored to the individual needs of children;
- instantaneous feedback using student reports and progress maps to show where a child is located on a continuum of performance that is linked directly to learning in the classroom; and,

- users with the ability to monitor student progress over time.

This presentation will describe instrument and its underlying rationale, show how the feedback can be used to inform teaching and learning, and discuss ways that the instrument and the feedback might be developed further in the future to ensure that the advantages that accrue from information technology are being fully harnessed in an attempt to continually improve learning.