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Cambridge research papers at
AEA-Europe 2025

Wednesday 5 November

09:00 – 16:30 Pre-Conference Workshop 5

Room: Eindhoven

Establishing valid qualification equivalency with qualitative judgement



Georgie Billings, Head of Assessment Quality, Assessment Reform, International Education



Stuart Gallagher, Head of Assessment Delivery, Assessment Reform, International Education

Where statistical equating methods are not available, through lack of common items or common candidates, but equivalency between two qualifications is required, it can be difficult to provide robust evidence. Session 1 of the workshop focuses on a novel standard setting methodology that allowed for IGCSE scores to be translated into Mississippi end-of-course performance levels and integrated into the state accountability system. The method draws on aspects of both Body of Work (BoW) and Bookmarking methods to create an operationally feasible process. Section 2 explores why there is a need for qualification equivalency, how a qualification can be broken down into content, demand and awarding standards, and some possible methodologies for establishing standards equivalency when the data for psychometric equating is not available. The practical activity will involve delegates becoming comfortable with using the CRAS framework to evaluate the demand of questions, and how to set up, run and evaluate a comparative study using the No More Marking platform. We will discuss the benefits and limitations of this methodology for establishing demand equivalency, and what follow up work can usefully be done with the results.

Thursday 6 November

10:45 – 12:00 Poster Presentation

Room: Holland Hall

Facilitating Learner Reasoning: Digital Annotation Tools for High-Stakes Assessment



Abdullah Khan, Digital Assessment
Lead, Education Digital Products and
Services Division

Research by Cambridge University Press & Assessment (CUP&A) demonstrates that learners actively engage with examination items rather than passively reading them. On paper assessments, learners highlight keywords, strike out improbable multiple-choice options, and mark up diagrams to create connections between different components. Our in-depth classroom observation and follow-up interviews with learners indicate these annotation practices aid their comprehension and recall, suggesting that the absence of such tools in digital exam platforms could negatively affect candidate experience and potentially compromise test validity.

This poster will outline the development of an annotations toolkit designed to aid learners' cognitive processes during digital examinations. The toolkit—developed through collaboration between assessment researchers, practitioners, UX designers, and developers—follows an iterative product development approach involving rapid prototyping and continuous testing with learners. The toolkit currently includes functionalities such as a rule-out tool, highlighter, and image markup tool, with future enhancements such as an equation writer also planned. Ultimately, the aim of this toolkit is not merely to replicate paper-based annotation processes, but to deliver a digital solution that minimises construct-irrelevant variance and enhances overall candidate performance by providing a streamlined exam experience in which learners can focus purely on demonstrating their content knowledge.

10:45 – 12:00 Poster Presentation

Room: Holland Hall

Cambridge Early Adopter Programme: building a pathway to digital exams



This poster highlights Cambridge's Early Adopter Programme (EAP) as a strategic initiative trialling digital Exams across international centres ahead of full implementation in 2026. Drawing on the feedback from 31 EAP schools across Europe, MENA, SSA, Pakistan and the US in 2025, this study interrogates the pedagogical, infrastructural, and institutional dynamics shaping the digital exams landscape. Findings demonstrate strong stakeholder engagement and positive learner experiences are key to digital adoption; however, key constraints—such as BYOD limitations, the need for hybrid exam administration, and concerns around technical resilience—underscore the complexity of system-wide readiness. In response, Cambridge is pursuing a phased and scalable strategy grounded in customer feedback: the expansion of familiarisation tools, the communication of updated exam administration guidance and a comprehensive training and support model for educators and invigilators. By integrating short feedback loops into the design cycle, this work illustrates how assessment reform can serve teachers and students, ensuring that these audiences are at the heart of development that can provide examples such as improved accessibility features and accessing resources on the platform such as the periodic table. The project emphasises inclusivity, and stakeholder trust, emphasising the importance of co-design in shaping the future of assessment.

10:45 – 12:00 Poster Presentation

Room: Holland Hall

Predictive Validity of Digital Mock Assessments



Carmen Vidal Rodeiro, Principal
Researcher, Research Division

Mock exams are low-stakes assessments designed to mimic the format, content, and conditions of the examinations students are preparing for and can have a big impact on how teaching and learning are approached in the classrooms. In particular, they can help teachers know the strengths and weaknesses of their students and identify areas of content which need greater emphasis or clarity. Mock exams can also inform teachers of how students might do in live examinations.

In the context of transitioning from paper-based to digital assessments, Cambridge University Press & Assessment offers a Digital Mocks Service for schools in England and around the world. Using data from assessments delivered via this service (in qualifications such as Computer Science, English Language, Psychology), we investigated how well performance in digital mocks predicts performance in live exams. The digital mocks were based on exams delivered on paper in previous live sessions or on practice/sample papers.

The research findings show high correlations between mock and live assessments, indicating good levels of predictive validity in most qualifications. The predictive validity of mock exams is important as it helps to validate their use as a diagnostic tool that can have a positive impact on learning.

10:45 – 12:00 Poster Presentation

Room: Holland Hall

Utility of expert judgement for setting grade boundaries in England



Alejandra Miranda, Researcher,
Research Division

High-stakes assessments impact students' paths; therefore, setting high-quality standards is essential. Each year, grade boundaries are set using statistical evidence and subject expert judgement. Experts review marked scripts to decide whether scripts accurately represent the corresponding grade following a 'top-down bottom-up' approach.

The study statistically examines these judgements for grade awarding, as there are no recent reviews of their value. The analysis reviewed 676 grade boundary decisions from 2024. Most used three experts who each reviewed two scripts per mark.

We analysed various ways expert judgement could be used in awarding. First, we explored different approaches to defining a zone of uncertainty within which the real boundary should lie. We found that certain (highly plausible) approaches failed to generate a zone at all almost half the time. However, under the best definition, the real grade boundary was within the zone 86% of the time. We also explored formal statistical approaches to generating boundaries from expert judgements. These were within 1 mark of operational boundaries 71% of the time. However, they were often more generous than operational boundaries for grades relating to high levels of performance. The study concludes with a discussion of the utility of expert judgement for awarding.

10:45 – 12:00 Poster Presentation

Room: Holland Hall

The Impact of Accessibility Features in GCSE Science Assessments



This study looks at how accessibility principles have been built into GCSE Science assessments in the UK education system for students aged 14-16 years old and what impact they have had. The focus is on updates to language, visuals, structure, and content support in papers from 2018 to 2024, across foundation and higher tiers. Findings show consistent use of simpler language, more effectively broken-down questions, and improved contextual support. Since 2022, there's also been a noticeable increase in the use of diagrams, improving visual accessibility. Statistical analysis of item performance in these question papers shows that overall difficulty has stayed consistent. Specifically, this analysis looked at item facility, discrimination and how often students don't attempt an item. However, questions worth more marks are better at distinguishing between students of different ability levels—suggesting that accessibility changes haven't affected the difficulty of the exams. These changes align with key accessibility principles such as consistency and familiarity, helping to remove unnecessary cognitive hurdles while keeping academic standards high. This research highlights how thoughtful exam design can make assessments more inclusive—offering valuable lessons for future practice and contributing to the broader goals of equity and fairness in education.

10:45 – 12:00 Poster Presentation

Room: Holland Hall

AI-Powered Language Assessment: Can Linguistic and Cognitive Features Predict Item Difficulty and Discrimination?



Lina Loxley, Senior Research and Data Analyst, Cambridge English

In many assessment contexts, items are trialled before they are used in live examinations. Within an Item Response Theory (IRT) paradigm, pre-testing is essential to estimate item parameters, i.e. difficulty and discrimination, and ensure item quality. Yet, conventional methods require lengthy and expensive processes/pilots to collect response data from a representative population of prospective candidates, which do not easily/always yield enough observations. The aim of this project is to understand whether, and if so how, it is possible to leverage recent technological advancements to improve item parameter estimation, at pre-testing and in live testing, in the context of English language assessment. More precisely, we are using Natural Language Processing and other AI tools to retrieve the salient features of test items and establish ways to augment the information provided by candidates' responses, thus reducing the sample size needed for live pre-testing. By utilising data from our item banks, we retrieved linguistic and cognitive features of items that can be used to supplement the information provided by candidates' responses. Embedding a novel computational approach to psychometrics within our existing IRT framework will also provide useful insights into our item banks and refine guidelines for item development.

12:30 – 13:00 Assessment of Practical Skills I

Room: Amsterdam 3

The validity of virtual labs for assessing science practical skills



Emma Walland, Senior Researcher,
Research Division

Various methods to assess secondary school science practical skills exist, each has a different impact on teaching and learning. Direct assessment of practical skills through physical lab work is not always possible for schools. Alternative to practical exams, where students do a written paper instead, are an option. However, such written exams do not require students to manipulate equipment and there is potential for negative washback.

Our study uses a critical literature review to explore virtual labs as a potential means to assess science practical skills. Virtual labs are a popular teaching tool, however, in assessment they have received less attention. We focused on exploring the validity of virtual labs for the summative assessment of science practical skills. Using the Crooks et al. (1996) chain model as a theoretical framework, we elucidate threats, benefits and opportunities for the validity of virtual labs in summative assessment comparing physical labs and alternative to practical exams.

We argue that virtual labs can potentially assess a subset of science practical skills, and because they require virtual manipulation of equipment, they represent an improvement over written examination. However, there are several threats to validity that would need to be carefully considered, including the impact on classroom practices.

12:00 – 12:30 e-Assessment I

Room: Rotterdam I

Are schools ready for digital exams? – Creating a framework to evaluate digital readiness



Sanjay Mistry, Head of Digital Insight and Impact, Education Digital Products and Services Division



Stephen Kemmery, Digital Development Lead, Education Digital Products and Services Division

This session explores the readiness of schools across UK and international markets to deliver and sit digital exams, using a bespoke readiness framework developed internally. The research aimed to map the current landscape of digital exam preparedness, assess the integration of digital tools in teaching and learning, and establish a scalable model for ongoing market analysis.

A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining an online survey with in-depth interviews. The framework assessed eight key areas: hardware, connectivity, resources, student readiness, digital teaching, readiness timescale, risks, and willingness. Each area was scored on a scale of 1 to 4, with willingness to offer digital exams evaluated separately.

Findings revealed broad acceptance of digital assessments, though significant regional disparities in readiness and willingness were evident. Only 22% of schools achieved high readiness scores, highlighting substantial variation. Key barriers included financial constraints, concerns about efficacy, resource demands, and implementation complexity.

This session will present regional data across the readiness dimensions and discuss implications for digital exam rollout. The study concludes that a phased adoption strategy is essential for Cambridge, supported by robust training and guidance to overcome practical and attitudinal challenges.

12:30 – 13:00 e-Assessment I

Room: Rotterdam I

Assessment mode effects and their relationship with item characteristics



Carmen Vidal Rodeiro, Principal Researcher, Research Division



Carmen H.J. Lim, Senior Researcher, Research Division

Digital exams are becoming part of the future assessment landscape. They are being gradually rolled out and are mostly delivered alongside paper versions. However, offering exams simultaneously in both modes raises comparability concerns: will the same items in different modes assess the same constructs and function similarly? Ensuring students are not disadvantaged by assessment mode and everyone benefits equally from technological innovation is important.

This research investigated Differential Item Functioning (DIF) by mode (i.e., mode effects), using Partial Credit Models and data from Cambridge University Press & Assessment's digital mocks and paper tests in subjects including Computer Science and English Language. Items in both modes were also reviewed and classified according to their characteristics to investigate whether certain types were more likely to drive mode effects.

Our findings suggest that mode effects exist but are not extensive. Additionally, whether items were harder on paper or on-screen was not consistent within or across subjects, indicating that students are unlikely to be systematically disadvantaged due to assessment mode. On item characteristics we found, amongst other things, that reading items requiring "accessing and retrieving" information from a text were about twice as likely to exhibit DIF compared to items involving other text interactions.

12:00 – 12:30 Holistic Assessment

Room: Eindhoven I

Debunking a dichotomy: An analysis of future skills in knowledge-rich qualifications



Irenka Suto, Head of Secondary Curriculum, International Education

A holistic education should nurture skills that are essential for thriving in a fast-changing world, such as systems thinking, kind and wicked problem-solving, and metacognition. These ‘future’ skills are deeply intertwined with conceptual and factual knowledge and should not be assessed in isolation. Curricula that are structured around long-established subject disciplines within the sciences, humanities, and languages, and assessed via written examinations, are often considered ‘knowledge rich.’ This paper investigates how they also foster future skills.

We conducted a systematic analysis of international A level qualifications in English Language, Geography, Physics, and Psychology. To syllabuses, specimen examination papers, and mark schemes, we applied a coding framework based on Marzano and Kendall’s (2007) New Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, which encompasses problem-solving and metacognitive skills. We incorporated additional codes for systems thinking components from the relevant domain of an environmental sustainability framework.

The study revealed a broad and rich coverage of higher-order thinking skills, with variation across subjects. For example, although systems thinking is absent from formal assessment objectives, it is present in Geography, Physics, and Psychology examinations. The study also highlighted that general and subject-specific exam techniques inherently demand many higher order skills, further demonstrating the skills’ integration within these qualifications.

12:30 – 13:00 Holistic Assessment

Room: Eindhoven I

Understanding the construct of ‘future skills’: some critical reflections emerging from a comparison of recent and older future skills frameworks



Filio Constantinou, Senior Researcher,
Research Division



Alejandra Miranda, Researcher,
Research Division

A key mission of education is to equip learners with ‘future skills’, namely, skills essential for navigating the future. To evaluate whether education has succeeded in achieving this mission, appropriate assessment instruments need to be developed. This paper seeks to inform the assessment of students’ preparedness for the future by sharing some critical reflections on the construct of future skills. The reflections emerged from a study which aimed to investigate whether any new future skills arose in recent years. The study, which took the form of a systematic review, identified 35 future skills frameworks developed during 2021-2024. It subsequently mapped the 562 skills constituting these frameworks to an existing meta-framework. The reference meta-framework resulted from the analysis of older frameworks (2002-2021) and, as such, served as a useful benchmark for assessing the novelty of the skills in this study. The mapping process led to several interesting observations about the construct of future skills. These observations were synthesised into a typology of attributes to help clarify the nature of the target construct. These attributes included: *responsive, evolving, heterogeneous, engineered, atheoretical, open-ended, elusive and repetitive*. This presentation will introduce and exemplify the typology and will also reflect on its implications for assessment.

14:30 – 15:30 Discussion Group 7

Room: Holland Hall

Artificial Intelligence for Holistic Learning: Challenges and Possibilities in Assessing Collaboration and Empathy



Irenka Suto, Head of Secondary
Curriculum, International Education

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly being used in education to plan and support teaching, personalise learning, automate feedback, and measure learning outcomes. However, its potential to support holistic assessment, which evaluates not only traditional 'academic' knowledge and skills, but also social and emotional skills, remains largely unexplored.

This discussion group will delve into AI's potential for assessing learning and development in this broader range of skills. In small interactive groups, participants will reflect on the challenges and opportunities of using AI for assessing collaboration and empathy, with an emphasis on practical and ethical considerations.

The session will consider what learning and progression in these skills might look like in educational settings from nursery through to colleges and the workplace, and whether and how AI can be integrated into existing assessment practices and contribute to ethical, human-centred approaches across these contexts.

Discussion will focus on the benefits, limitations and risks of assessment using AI, as well as the ethical, pedagogical and technical challenges, especially its possible impact on learners at different stages of their education. Participants will leave with practical insights and principles about responsibly integrating AI into holistic assessment practices, where they consider this approach might be practical and ethical.

15:30 – 16:00 Psychometrics and Test Development II

Room: Amsterdam 2

Assessing Beyond the Score: The Role of Differential Item Functioning in Valid and Fair English Language Testing



Joanne Topham, Senior Validation Manager, Assessment Measurement, Cambridge English

Cambridge University Press and Assessment has had an ongoing programme of work to collate and build the body of evidence on the validity of a suite of English language tests. Part of this work has been developing an operational Differential Item Functioning (DIF) analysis to assess bias toward, or against, gender, age and first language groups.

The aim of this presentation is to show how DIF analysis has been implemented in an operational context for English language tests, focussing on the methodologies used and the specific considerations required given the construct being measured. It will also summarise the processes followed once items have been identified as potentially disadvantaging candidates from a specific subgroup of the test taker population.

Operationalising DIF analysis has provided a wealth of data, giving an opportunity to monitor for long-term trends in bias. Therefore, this presentation will also explore over-time comparisons and the relationship between DIF outcomes and particular features of an item, such as test part or item type. It will be argued that these relationships can highlight ways in which tests may be unfairly biasing against certain groups, that may not be obvious when assessing individual items in isolation.

16:45 – 17:15 Artificial Intelligence and Assessment III

Room: Holland Hall

Evaluating AI assisted auto-marking systems using a range of item types



Mark Frazer, Digital Assessment Lead,
Education Digital Products and Services
Division



Sanjay Mistry, Head of Digital Insight
and Impact, Education Digital Products
and Services Division

This session describes how researchers from Cambridge University Press and Assessment conducted trials into the use of auto-marking systems to support examiners. Pilot studies were conducted with two commercial providers of AI assisted auto-marking technology to discover the effectiveness and potential utility of using their systems. Following the initial studies a second phase of exploration took place involving a wider range of item types.

In phase 2, one supplier was provided with a larger set of data relating to items taken from a wider range of papers. These data were digital responses provided by candidates participating in the Cambridge Digital Mocks Service January-March 2025 series.

Findings revealed that agreement between the marks awarded by examiners and by auto-markers was acceptable for some longer response format items and, in the first instance, auto-marking may in future be used to support the work of examiners in the Cambridge Digital Mocks Service.

17:15 – 17:45 Formative Assessment I

Room: Amsterdam 4

Learning Oriented Assessment at an institutional level: Key design and validity prerequisites for positive impact



Angeliki Salamoura, Head of
Operational Research, Cambridge
English

This paper presents a critical review of research on LOA conducted at institutional and national education levels, aiming to explore the factors that affect its validity. Although LOA best practice within the classroom is well documented, less attention has been devoted to its application in a wider context: at the school, university or national education system. Yet, recent models of learning programs highlight the importance of viewing assessment and any assessment reform as integral parts of the broader learning program or system they sit in (O'Sullivan, 2020). This perspective is essential for understanding the conditions that may lead to their successful or unsuccessful application and the impact they will exert.

This paper identifies four key prerequisites for ensuring LOA validity at the institutional level: establishing educational coherence, fostering an understanding of LOA principles among all key stakeholders (not just teachers), building collective teacher efficacy, and closing skill gaps for teachers. The discussion will highlight the importance of these prerequisites and examine how a lack of connection between them can threaten the integrity of LOA implementation. Building on this, the paper will argue for alignment not only between assessment and learning but also with teacher training and curriculum design.

Friday 7 November

09:00 – 09:30 Psychometrics and Test Development III

Room: Amsterdam 2

Exploring the impact of optimising the consistency of examiner scores used in model training on auto-marker performance



Trevor Breakspear, Senior Validation Manager, Assessment & Operations, Cambridge English

Whilst rightly emphasising the importance of data quality in automated essay scoring systems (AES), language assessment practitioners have tended to focus their attention on the quality of evaluation data. This study shows how practitioners can contribute to enhancing AES performance by optimising training data, presenting a novel yet easily implementable approach to optimising the consistency of examiner scores. Specifically, we incorporate a distance metric, Earth Mover's Distance (EMD), to create a subset of examiners based on the proximity between their individual scoring distributions and the overarching distribution of the population dataset, as sampled from a high-stakes, English language writing assessment. We create a randomly sampled control set with the same distribution and sample size as the optimised set. We train both classical, feature-based models and deep learning, LLM-based models on the control and optimised sets and evaluate them on an all-mark-all set of 1692 responses marked by 15 examiners.

Although the feature-based model did not benefit from the optimised data, the LLM-based model outperformed control across multiple metrics, including a 50% improvement in EMD. We conclude that optimising training data primarily using a distance metric has the potential to enhance LLM-based AES particularly in replicating the desired distribution of scores.

09:30 – 10:00 Assessment Cultures IV

Room: Rotterdam

Implementing an Assessment Framework in Cox's Bazar refugee camps: two years on



Georgie Billings, Head of Assessment Quality, Assessment Reform, International Education



Anita Oomeer, Senior Assessment Manager, International Education

In Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, a network of refugee camps operates for the displaced Rohingya from Myanmar. Just under a million people live in these camps, and around half are children. Most Rohingya here have no legal identity or citizenship and are entirely reliant on humanitarian assistance .

Cambridge University Press and Assessment have continued their work with UNICEF to develop and implement an assessment framework for children being educated in the camps, alongside a training programme and a baseline and endline evaluation of assessment practice.

This presentation will focus on the enactment journey, which has included extensive engagement within the vulnerable Rohingya community to design and implement an assessment framework that meets the needs of stakeholders and the reality of an astonishingly difficult environment. Challenges along the way have included managing stakeholder engagement, working with incomplete curricular, consistent assessment in an emergency context, upskilling of teachers, translanguaging, and high rates of community illiteracy.

Including authentic voices from numerous observations and focus groups, this paper aims to empower the community we are representing, as well as providing an interesting overview of implementing assessment in an emergency refugee context.

10:00 – 10:30 Artificial Intelligence and Assessment IV

Room: Holland Hall

The future of non-examined assessment (NEA) – malpractice detection and the challenges and opportunities of generative AI



Tony Leech, Senior Researcher,
Cambridge OCR



Raimonda Laugalyte, Research
Assistant, Cambridge OCR

Non-examined assessment (NEA) is any assessment not taken under controlled exam conditions, including what is commonly known as coursework.

The rise of generative AI in recent years poses potential threats to NEA validity, if

- a) it is possible for candidates to produce responses using such technology,
- b) such use contravenes regulations for that assessment, and
- c) this usage is undetectable.

In this presentation we will review evidence about how learners are engaging with AI, whether legitimately or illegitimately. Drawing on a multi-part programme of research, we will then look at what we know so far about how well illegitimate use of AI can be detected, either by software systems such as Turnitin's AI detection or by people, using methods such as comparison to examined work or looking for AI hallmarks.

Finally, in dialogue with wider literature, including from higher education contexts, and thinking more broadly about detectability, innovative assessment design and what constructs and skills we want NEA to assess, we will explore what these findings could imply for future NEA approaches.

11:45 – 12:15 Test Development

Room: Amsterdam 4

The impact of response format on performance in a maths test for gifted and talented primary children



Ellie Darlington, Senior Assessment Manager, International Education

This study investigates the impact of response formats on student performance in a mathematical reasoning test typically used to identify gifted and talented primary age children for selective education.

Two parallel trial tests were developed that were in a similar style to questions used in live mathematical reasoning tests. The 35-question tests were taken on an online platform familiar to participants. Test A employed a standard 5-option multiple choice format for every question. Test B asked the same questions, but with 29 questions using alternative response types. This included open-ended, multi-select and drag-and-drop ordering response formats.

Self-selecting participants the same age as the target candidature of the live tests completed the tests in exam conditions during the school day. The online platform recorded scores for each item, and the time participants took on each question.

The research aimed to determine whether response formats had a significant impact on performance and completion time. The results offer an insight into the use of varying response types in assessments of this type, particularly when considering the challenges associated with writing good assessment questions, compiling fair and balanced tests, and identifying those who are gifted and talented in mathematical reasoning.

14:45 – 15:15 Formative Assessment III

Room: Rotterdam I

Formative Assessment with Impact: What can we learn from different contexts



Brooke Wyatt, Head of Assessment Reform, International Education

The definition and demonstration of formative assessment varies across different countries. This paper explores how formative assessment is understood, applied, and supported in different contexts, and considers how these differences affect the impact on student learning.

Drawing on qualitative data from different education systems, the paper examines how perception, policy, and professional development influence the implementation of formative assessment. While the intent to improve learning using formative assessment is supported by all stakeholders in different contexts, practices differ due to conflicting factors and limitations.

Findings suggest that successful use of formative assessment depends on how well it is embedded in the wider system of curriculum and pedagogy and not just on policy. Factors such as teacher confidence, clarity of purpose, use of assessment information all influence whether formative assessment leads to meaningful learning.

This paper contributes to the wider picture of assessment reform and provides practical insights for policymakers, school leaders, and teachers.

14:45 – 15:15 National Tests and Examinations IV

Room: Eindhoven I

Raising educational standards in the Kingdom of Bhutan: a case study of an assessment framework



James Frith, Senior Assessment
Manager, International Education



Georgie Billings, Head of Assessment
Quality, Assessment Reform,
International Education

In 2024, a needs analysis was carried out in Bhutan at the invitation of the Ministry for Education to identify key actions towards achieving the aims of their 'Education Sector Strategy: Realising the Vision 2020'. As well as a desk review of key curriculum documents, this involved extensive engagement with officials, teachers and students. Following this, an extensive programme of work has begun to support these objectives.

This involves a multitude of activities including curriculum alignment, training of key ministry personnel, developing syllabuses and test specifications and improving assessment practices and instruments. The aim of this is to eventually allow benchmarking of Bhutan's Grade 12 leaving qualification with international standards and co-certification. As stated in their strategy, a key challenge is "the need for accreditation. Much work will have to be done to establish and provide programmes of international standing which will allow students to transfer credits to institutions abroad...".

This presentation will focus on the context of the project within the national education aims of Bhutan and will focus primarily on our approach to developing a coherent assessment framework. It will also discuss some of the key challenges faced in the work so far, including public perception, international standards alignment, recognition, ambitious timelines, and translanguaging.

¹ Department of Education Ministry of Health and Education (2024). Education Sector Strategy: Realising the Vision 2020. Available at <https://resources.norrag.org/resource/view/561/339>

