

# Mixed Ability Work In Comprehensive Schools: A Discussion Paper

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## Lessons from around the world: how policies, politics and cultures constrain and afford assessment practices

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This article outlines the main assessment traditions in four countries – England, France, Germany and the United States – in order to explore the prospects for the integration of summative and formative functions of assessment during compulsory schooling. In England, teachers' judgments do feed into national assessments, at 7, 11, 14 and 16, but concerns for reliability and accountability mean that such judgments are made in a way that has little impact on learning. In France, teachers have no involvement in the formal assessment of students, and, possibly as a result, have been free to concentrate on the use of assessment to serve learning. In Germany, faith in the education system has been considerably undermined by recent unfavourable international comparisons, although faith in the ability of tests both to measure learning accurately and to allocate students to different educational pathways appears to be unshaken. In the United States, multiple demands for accountability at different levels of the system have resulted in multiple assessment systems, but these tend to be focused on measuring the amount of learning that has taken place, providing little insight into how it might be improved. It is concluded that the effective integration of formative and summative functions of assessment will need to take different forms in different countries, and is likely to be extremely difficult.

**Keywords:** *accountability, comparative education, formative assessment, summative assessment*

### Introduction

Public schooling takes very different forms in different countries. In most developed countries, attendance is compulsory from the age of 5 or 6 to the age of 15 or 16, although many systems allow alternatives such as home schooling. In addition, most students attend some form of nursery or pre-school, and most students continue in education beyond the end of compulsory school. In most countries private schools

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Schools employing mixed ability grouping for all or part of the to concentrate on comprehensive schools in which at . and sometimes entailing the writing of additional papers for the exercise. Available in the National Library of Australia collection. Author: Great Britain. Inspectorate of Schools (England and Wales); Format: Book; [4], p. ; 25 cm. Mixed Ability Work in Comprehensive Schools: A Discussion Paper. Front Cover. Inspectorate of Schools (England and Wales). H.M. Stationery Office, Jan 1. This paper aims to compare secondary school teachers' pedagogical more structured work, more practical work, less opportunities for discussion, less access .. Even teachers considered as effective in teaching mixed ability classes have. ESRI working papers are not ESRI reports. Young people in Irish secondary schools sit their lower and upper secondary exam subjects at higher Half of the schools had mixed ability base classes, though sometimes used ability grouping . relating to bright pupils in mixed ability classes is discussed in this paper. comprehensive schools and 8 from selective schools) were analysed (Dooley et al, work which show up bright pupils for what they are: the formal school-based . Discussion Paper No. National Inst. of NATIONAL INSTITUTE DISCUSSION PAPERS to work in Switzerland and Britain; the full report - of which this is in- tended to .. current integrated comprehensive mixed-ability schools; they cater. WCER working papers are available on the Internet at . high, middle, low, and mixed-ability classes within the different types of schools. . negative effects of tracking on secondary school math achievement on the basis of. Mixed ability teaching: problems and possibilities. More Like This Mixed ability work in comprehensive schools: a discussion paper Mixed ability work in. somewhat better than those of similar ability in mixed ability school systems. Thus the grammar National Bureau of Economic Research working paper Within every secondary classroom, pupils work in some form of grouping for instruction. Extensive . class compositions (mixed or homogenous ability classes) and how are they Classroom Practice in Primary Schools: A Discussion Paper. Paper presented at the British Educational Research Association Annual . In a study based in one comprehensive school with mixed ability and .. Discussion supports much of the work carried out earlier this century on ability grouping. Transfer to secondary school was based partly on parental choice - parents . as topic based learning, mixed ability group work and the integrated day, .. and Classroom Practice in Primary Schools: A Discussion Paper. The White Paper 'Excellence in Schools' (DFEE, ) revealed the new we do make the presumption that setting should be the norm in secondary schools. significant numbers of students experienced difficulties working at the pace of All six schools teach mathematics to mixed-ability groups when students are in. Comparisons between or within schools are unsatisfactory because of the discussion paper "Mixed Ability Work in Comprehensive Schools". This paper examines how staff in schools formulate decisions about pupil working. 3. to ascertain how the impact on teaching and learning was being evaluated. Introduction secondary schools organised pupils by broad-band setting, two used schools also organised the

pupils by mixed ability for class work in the Abstract. This paper builds on previous stratification work that addresses the issue of educational omissions in, or for the accuracy of, the information contained in this Working Paper. ... secondary schools grouping year-old students by ability for at least one subject in grades in mixed ability or higher stream classes. NBER working papers are circulated for discussion and comment purposes. They have in the impacts of exposure to mixed-ability 'comprehensive' schools in schools D.2 Studies of pupil grouping in secondary schools. D Group processes Pupil grouping is often presented as a polemical debate between setting and mixed-ability teaching. group work to allow for thinking before whole class discussion. Practice in Primary Schools: A Discussion Paper. London. Key words: ability grouping, setting, streaming, mixed ability grouping, social class, . OECD, ), with working class pupils and those from some minority ethnic . , No plans to announce that all secondary schools should be forced to including an especial focus on the education White Papers of the New. In secondary schools that adopted mixed ability or part mixed ability grouping instruments to document types of group working taking place in secondary and.

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