Editorial

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This issue of *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability* marks the second in the volume and presents a wide-ranging world tour of current issues and trends in educational assessment and evaluation. While there is an unintended and serendipitous focus on higher education including the increasingly pressing issue of student experience, the influence of personality on performance on various assessment tools. Within the issue, there is also an important contribution that links school leader and teacher experience and interpretation with local implementation of a national policy.

In the first paper, Zhang, Hu and McNamara focus attention on the shifting global markets in higher education and draw our attention to China which is increasingly attracting international undergraduate students. Their paper, *Undergraduate student engagement at a Chinese university: a case study*, builds on an increasing global interest and awareness of how student experience of their undergraduate studies influences their performance. The authors, using interviews and focus groups, examine student and staff perspectives and identify external (contextual and institutional) and internal (personal) factors related to transition, lack of student-staff interaction and shock students. Their contribution provides an opportunity for reflection and consideration of university-level student experience for those within Chinese universities and more globally.

Moving from higher education student experience, in the second paper, Ekman, Davos and Tuitions bring the focus to Belgium in their paper, *The influence of teachers' expectations on principals' implementation of a new teacher evaluation policy in Flemish secondary education*. Recognising the inherent challenges of school-level policy implementation and the political and interpersonal challenges associated with teacher evaluation policy and practice, the authors examine the important relationship between teachers and school-level leaders in 13 schools using interviews. The author identify how the process of discrepancy reduction helps to understand variations in

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leader and teacher expectation of standard setting influence the overall experience and success with the implementation process.

The third paper refocuses the issues within universities and highlights an important issue of cumulative assessment. In *Exploring the impact of cumulative testing on academic performance of undergraduate students in Spain*, Domenech, Blazquez, de la Poza and Muñoz-Miquel examine overall student performance within an undergraduate discipline for students participating in on-going frequent assessment versus those with only the opportunity to write a single final exam. Their evidence found higher levels of achievement in those students participating in multiple assessments which may have implications for undergraduate course design in Spain, across Europe and internationally.

The fourth and final paper of the issue is entitled *Personality and student performance on evaluation methods used in business administration courses*. Shifting geographical focus again, Lakhal, Sévigny and Frenette are based in Quebec, Canada and share their findings related to student personality and their preference for and performance on different assessment strategies within their undergraduate business studies. The authors, controlling for age and gender, conducted multiple linear hierarchical regressions and found that the Big Five personality factors explain 6–13 % of student preference and performance. The paper provides a very interesting and nuanced consideration of how student personality may influence performance and proffers much food for thought for those who design and assess undergraduate programmes across all disciplines.

The April issue of EAEA traditionally arrives during a period of transition for our higher education-based readers. The end of term, in most regions of the world, signifies the arrival of student assessment tasks in the form of exams and papers. However, it also denotes the arrival of a period of reflection and pause as we consider the design and improvements in our own teaching, course design and assessment strategies. While many of us are bound by both tradition and regulatory restrictions on how we evaluate our students, there are valuable lessons in the papers in this issue that come at an important time in the academic year. Similarly, the reflections on school-level implementation and the importance of how different actors in the policy implementation process influence the outcomes also provides a moment of pause to consider how our own research, leadership and teaching influences the experience and lives of others. We hope you have found information and inspiration in this issue of EAEA and welcome your own submissions and contributions to the remaining two issues in the volume.