

# A systematic review of research evidence of the impact on students in secondary schools of self and peer assessment

## Who wants to know and why?

The review was commissioned by the Department for Education and Skills (now the Department for Children, Schools and Families) who wanted to know what the benefits are to secondary school students of self and peer assessment. They also wanted to know whether the characteristics of the students or the particular approaches used make a difference. The conditions under which self and peer assessment have most benefit were also of interest.

## What did we find?

There is evidence that:

- Pupil attainment increased across a range of subject areas.
- Pupil self esteem increased.
- Pupils improved in learning to learn, especially goal setting, clarifying objectives, taking responsibility for learning and/or increased confidence. increased.
- The characteristics of students such as ethnicity, gender or prior attainment made no significant differences.
- The benefits of self and peer assessment did not vary significantly across different subjects.
- Self and peer assessment are more likely to impact on student outcomes when there is a move from a dependent to an interdependent relationship between teacher and students which enables teachers to adjust their teaching in response to student feedback.
- Involving students in 'co-designing' the criteria for evaluation helps them to develop a better grasp of

their own strengths and weaknesses. They need to be aware of the targets they are trying to achieve, and these should focus on outcome not process goals.

## What are the implications?

- Students need to be taught both the skills of self assessment and those required to work with others if peer assessment is to be further developed.
- Teachers, and other staff in integrated children's services, need pupil self and peer assessment issues to be further built into both initial training and continuing professional development.
- The relationship between the outcomes of attainment and other outcomes such as 'enjoyment' and 'well-being' will need to be clearly articulated.
- Increased teacher commitment is needed to learner control, developing a language for dialogue about learning and moving from a dependent to an interdependent relationship between teacher and students.
- Development and research are needed on measures relating to the Every Child Matters. outcomes and evaluating the impact of self and peer assessment longitudinally on these wider outcomes.

## How did we get these results?

Studies were identified through carrying out electronic searching, using keywords with bibliographic databases, handsearching, conference proceedings, citations and publications recommended by contacts. This resulted in 51 studies being identified for the systematic map and 26 for the in-depth review.

## Where to find further information

### For more information about the content of this review please contact:

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The results of this systematic review are available in four formats:

#### **SUMMARY**

Explains the purpose of the review and the main messages from the research evidence

#### **REPORT**

Describes the background and the findings of the review(s) but without full technical details of the methods used

#### **TECHNICAL REPORT**

Includes the background, main findings, and full technical details of the review

#### **DATABASES**

Access to codings describing each research study included in the review

These can be downloaded or accessed at  
<http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/cms/Default.aspx?tabid=2416&language=en-US>

Reports published by the EPPI-Centre in October 2008.

The EPPI-Centre's reference numbers for the reports of this review are 1614T (Technical Report) and 1614R (Report). The full citations are:

#### **TECHNICAL REPORT**

Sebba J, Deakin Crick R, Yu G, Lawson H, Harlen W (2008) Systematic review of research evidence of the impact on students in secondary schools of self and peer assessment. Technical report. In: Research Evidence in Education Library. London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education.

#### **REPORT**

Sebba J, Deakin Crick R, Yu G, Lawson H, Harlen W (2008) Systematic review of research evidence of the impact on students in secondary schools of self and peer assessment. Report. In: Research Evidence in Education Library. London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education.

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