

Education and Skills Committee
Scottish National Standardised Assessments

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The short answer is that Singapore currently does not overtly practice low stakes standardised assessment as defined in the OECD paper - "*... tests with no stakes for students are those in which results have no effect on the student's career, such as national tests used for monitoring purposes. From this point onward in the paper, the terms "standardised testing", "national tests", or "large-scale, standardised tests" refer to tests with no stakes for students (although there may be stakes for teachers and schools).*" So in that sense we would not have any experience or data that may be directly useful to the researchers.

However, if they were to be interested in considering the broader question of whether there are alternatives to high stakes testing in Singapore, even if such is not defined as low stakes assessment, then the following two observations might be of interest/use to them:

1. A select number of students perform in international assessments, such as TIMMs and PISA. They are not high stakes for the students since they do not affect each student's education or career, but neither are they national assessments for overt monitoring purposes. They are international in nature, although the results may be interpreted and use to monitor a variety of objectives. So although they are technically not 'low stakes assessment' because they are international rather than nation specific, the use of international assessment results to serve any monitoring function may render its purpose(s) to be similar to OECD's notion of low stakes assessment.
2. Responding that Singapore has no low stakes assessment may give the impression that all assessment is either high stakes assessment or directly formative for students (no stakes/consequences). The following are Karen's observations on whether/how assessment may be perceived as being high or low stakes in Singapore, and such perception of assessment having low stakes may not directly fit into OECD's definition of the same:

"Unlike the USA and UK, school assessment results in Singapore are not used to hire/fire teachers and principals. Neither are they used to close schools or determine the amount of funding. So we can say that assessment in Singapore isn't high stakes in that sense. But for students, because the assessments at the end of each key stage are used for course placement or admission into schools, assessments are high stakes from the student's point of view.

At the school level, assessments are not used to remove students from the school, but just for promotion (secondary level only) and sometimes, class assignment. Depending on (one's) perspective, these decisions made of assessment can be seen as high or low stakes. (Arguably), primary school assessments are largely low stakes. They don't even determine promotion as

students are automatically promoted. And the removal of all weighted assessments in lower primary will likely count these assessments as low stakes since the marks are only used for the planning of instruction. That said, would the placement of students into remediation classes (be perceived) as a high or low stakes use of assessment?