



involve checking *procedures* rather than *content* – an observation which is linked to our response to A).

6. Examining is a craft rather than a science. Despite the temptation to use the outputs of assessment for political purposes, examination results are never wholly reliable. An effective system requires an effective bureaucracy. But an effective bureaucracy is not sufficient: one still needs competent professionals to exercise judgement – both at the setting/checking and at the marking stages.

7. The use and abuse of league tables has obscured this inescapable feature of assessment, and has misled journalists and the public by concealing the extent to which the numbers emerging from any assessment process are *artefacts*. And this is especially true where the assessment process is so strongly constrained by political determination to ‘drive up standards’.

8. For decades, concerned teachers have written to exam boards each year complaining (often with considerable justification) of ~~inaccurate examination questions~~; and each year the exam board would consider carefully how to reply, and seek to learn whatever lessons needed to be learned. More recently such ‘errors’ have often been communicated directly to y xanda

13. To this has recently been added another concern – namely the i