

## **Connoisseurship, assessments of performance and questions of reliability**

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Increasing emphasis is being placed on the importance of personal qualities and attributes such as creativity, inter-personal skills, leadership, communication, or aesthetic awareness. These qualities and attributes are not amenable to current assessment processes that rely on specifications and the production of evidence or on more conventional types of examination. This paper describes applications of connoisseurship and construct referencing in assessing achievements of these or similar qualities through observed performance. Examples are drawn from assessments of performance in music and dance as well as from programmes concerned with emotional and behavioural development, employability and training for teaching and learning support. Questions relating to applications of connoisseurship and the reliability of assessment practices and results are considered. A brief description of methods used to express measures of reliability in aviation training and in precision engineering is given and their application to the reliability of assessments of performance considered. Results obtained over a three year period in the use of a method developed for monitoring assessor performance and the standardisation of results from assessments of performance by an awarding body in the United Kingdom is reported on together with some conclusions about its use and applicability in different settings.