INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM
DIAGNOSTIC TESTING IN EDUCATION

PROGRAM FEBRUARY 8, 9 AND 10
HOTEL MITLAND, ARIËNSLAAN 1, UTRECHT
Welcome to Utrecht and welcome to the international symposium on diagnostic testing in education.

This international symposium on the Diagnostic Educational Test (DET) (called ‘diagnostische tussentijdse toets’, or DTT in the Netherlands) is organized with partners from both the Netherlands and abroad. During this symposium, the Board of Examinations (College voor Toetsen en Examens, or CvTE) and its partners want to share the latest developments regarding the DET, reflect on the challenges, and discuss advancements of related innovations. The set-up of the program reflects the process of designing and developing the DET. It takes you along every step of the development of the DET, while every national partner explains their part.

The DET has been commissioned by the Dutch Government, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The DET is a computer-based, adaptive test. This means that the test adapts to the responses of the student. The test is aimed at diagnosing a student’s level of skill with regard to Dutch, English (reading and writing) and mathematics. For writing (Dutch and English) and mathematics, a fully operational adaptive test will be available in 2017. It is a test for students who are halfway through their secondary education. Students at all levels of secondary education in the Netherlands can take the test. After completing the test, students receive a diagnosis offering insights into their learning needs. This diagnosis can be used by teachers and students to improve the learning trajectory of the student.

The DET is intended as a tool to provide the student and teacher information about the student’s progress in the learning process. It aims to give teachers the tools to provide customized education and targeted feedback based on detailed information. Therefore, the DET is one of the resources which can be used in formative testing. The DET is being developed with support from the government, but it is not mandatory for schools to use. The development process will last until the end of the school year 2016-2017. During this final year, the government is exploring the possibilities to transfer the knowledge and – at the end of the development process – the prototype of the DTT to the market of educational publishers and providers of assessments.

### Wednesday, February 8th:
**Introduction and key notes**

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<td>16:15 – 17:00</td>
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Thursday, February 9th:
In-depth parallel sessions

**Time slot** | **Activity**
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09:00 - 09:30 | Opening

Start parallel sessions

09:30 - 10:00

1. Evidence-centered design of educational assessments in the context of diagnostic assessment  
   Speaker: Erik Roelofs (Cito)

2. Data teams  
   Speaker: Kim Schildkamp (Twente University)

10:00 - 10:45

1. Diagnostic testing of English writing skills  
   Speaker: Wilma Vrijs (Cito) and Margreet van Aken (Cito)

2. Diagnosing Dutch: A reflection on the syllabus, item construction and test implementation  
   Speaker: Uriël Schuurs (Cito)

10:45 – 11:15 | Coffee break

11:15 – 11:45

1. Complex text, proficient writer? Exploring the (im)possibilities of automated essay scoring in early secondary education  
   Speaker: Hiske Feenstra (Cito), Roelien Linthorst (Cito) and Karen Keune (Cito)

2. Automated scoring in mathematics: tinning intelligence?  
   Speaker: Paul Drijvers, (Utrecht University and Cito) and Johanna Hofstee (Cito)

11:45 – 12:30

1. Adjusting the CBT platform for diagnostic testing  
   Speaker: Johanna Hofstee (Cito) and Arjan Aarnink (Cito)

2. The psychometric model for the Diagnostic Educational Test  
   Speaker: Herbert Hoijtink (Utrecht University) and Daniel van der Palm (Cito)

12:30 – 13:30 | Lunch

**Time slot** | **Activity**
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13:30 – 14:15 | 1. Adaptivity in the Diagnostic Educational Test  
   Speaker: Sanneke Schouwstra (Cito), Johanna Hofstee (Cito) and Peter van Os (Cito)

2. DET testing at schools: communication, recruitment and the involvement of schools  
   Speaker: Pascalle Haenen, project manager DET (CvTE) and Kees-Jan Butter, implementation manager (CvTE)

14:15 – 14:45 | 1. Data handling and item analyses in the Diagnostic Educational Test  
   Speaker: Jesse Koops (Cito) and Daniel van der Palm (Cito)

2. Using the diagnostic test for school feedback  
   Speaker: Lex Borghans, Ron Diris, Raoul Haenbeukers and Trudie Schils (Maastricht University)

14:45 – 15:15 | Short break

15:15 – 15:45 | 1. Standard setting in DET  
   Speaker: Sanneke Schouwstra (Cito) and Jesse Koops (Cito)

2. Differences between marking schemes for writing assignments  
   Speaker: Roelien Linthorst (Cito), Rick Godschalk (Cito), Karen Keune (Cito)

15:45 – 16:15 | 1. Creating a new kind of outcome report for the Diagnostic Educational Test  
   Speaker: Sanneke Schouwstra (Cito) and Patrick de Klein (Cito)

2. Computer based testing using Facet  
   Speaker: Nynke de Boer (CvTE)

16:15 – 17:00 | Wrap-up and day closing  
   Speaker: Anne-Marie Anthonissen (Cito) and Anton Béguin (Cito)

17:00 – 18:00 | Drinks
Friday, February 10th:
Practical insights and the DET

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<td>Supporting schools in the implementation of formative assessment</td>
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Start "options"

| 10:15 - 12:00   | Option 1: Visit to DET pilot school and interview with teacher           |
|                 | Option 2: Diagnostic model                                               |
|                 | Speaker: Gerdineke van Silfhout (SLO) (national guests only)            |

| 12:00 - 12:30   | Closing symposium                                                        |
|                 | Speaker: Jacob Raap (CvTE)                                              |

| 12:30 - 13:30   | Lunch                                                                    |

About our partners

**The Board of Examination (CvTE)**
The Board of Examinations (College voor Toetsen en Examens, or CvTE) has been mandated by the government of the Netherlands to ensure the quality and proper administration of national examinations. At the moment, CvTE is responsible for national exams in general secondary education and adult education, exams for students of Dutch as a second language, and secondary-level state exams held outside of schools. Furthermore, CvTE is also responsible for exams in secondary vocational education.

**Cito**
Cito helps people to develop and achieve their true potential. Cito makes knowledge, skills and competences objectively measurable and follow people’s development – whether young or old – in education and their professional lives, so they can get the best out of themselves, make sound choices and more effectively manage their future. Cito supports public and private organizations worldwide by providing good and fair testing, and by remaining true to their core values as a capable, leading, honest, innovative and committed organization.

**Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW)**
The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science works to create a smart, skilled and creative environment in the Netherlands. Its mission is to ensure that everyone gets a good education and is prepared for responsibility and independence. The ministry also wants people to enjoy the arts, and aims to create the proper conditions for teachers, artists and researchers to do their work.

**National Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO)**
SLO serves as the national institute for curriculum development in the Netherlands. It is an independent, non-profit organisation, bridging the contexts of policy, research and practice. A major characteristic of the work of SLO is the interaction between various levels of curriculum development (national, school, classroom, pupil). A main challenge for SLO is the strengthening of (both longitudinal and horizontal) coherence of curricula. Their activities focus on primary, special, secondary and vocational education and comprise all subjects.

**Executive Agency for the Department of Education (DUO)**
The Executive Agency for the Department of Education (DUO) sponsors and facilitates students and educational institutions, and it organizes exams.
Abstracts of keynotes

Wednesday, February 8th
14:00 – 15:00

Keynote 1: “The story of the Diagnostic Educational Test: from blueprint to reporting personalized diagnoses”
Sanneke Schouwstra, senior research scientist, Stichting Cito

After a long tradition of using central examinations and tests focusing on assessment of learning, the Dutch educational community has started to become interested in formative assessment and assessment for learning. This growing interest fits in with the new focus on personalized learning. In the past few years, Cito, the institute for educational measurement, has been working on a national Diagnostic Educational Test for three subjects (Dutch, English and math). On commission of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, a prototype has been developed together with the educational field, under the direction of the Board of Examinations (CVTE). The diagnostic test aims to be useful for the key strategies of formative assessment that Black and William (2009) distinguish. It is an adaptive, computer-based assessment for students in five different educational tracks, halfway through secondary education. The Diagnostic Educational Test informs students and their teachers about the students’ strengths and weaknesses in such a manner that the learning process can be adjusted to their personal needs.

In 2012 we set out to create a blueprint of the DET using the evidence-centered design of Mislevy et al. (2006). Research and changes (innovations) in various areas – in test content, psychometrics, and technology – have surrounded and guided the entire development of this new diagnostic instrument since then. Among other things, student models have been developed (for example, based on Paul Deane’s (2011) cognitive models of writing), a new psychometric model has been developed using a Bayesian approach to testing diagnostic hypotheses and a new form of diagnostic reporting has been developed because the way a test outcome is presented can have a powerful influence on learning. Also, a lot of research has been done into the development of relevant question types and the automatic processing of the student answers. These various lines of research and innovations took place simultaneously and in close interaction.

To meet new political requirements and changing wishes from the educational field, we have to develop tests faster, in a more flexible and interactive way. In this presentation I will talk about this flexible process of developing the diagnostic test and I will illustrate and discuss some of the research and innovations that have taken place. In the course of the presentation, the sessions of the second day of the symposium will be introduced.
Keynote 2:
“Frameworks, Methodologies, and Applications of Cognition in Diagnostic Educational Testing”
André A. Rupp, Research Director, ETS, USA

The innovative edges of the field of diagnostic testing are evolving rapidly. Most notably, there has been a shift to embrace more complex ways of thinking about the relationship between core competencies, behaviors, and performances of learners at various developmental levels across the lifespan. These new ways of thinking have been fueled by new models of cognition that are increasingly more inclusive and accepting of correlates of basic knowledge and skill sets, including non-cognitive and socio-cognitive factors. Assessing these skills at various scales – regionally, nationally, and internationally – and in various modes – static and dynamic – is becoming increasingly a reality due to interdisciplinary advances in various foundational sciences as well as advances in delivery technology and data analytics. In this talk, I provide a crosswalk of some key advances while specifically focusing on the role that models of cognition and validation processes play in informing theoretical frameworks, methodological advances, and innovative applications. The crosswalk is based on my new co-edited Handbook of Cognition and Assessment (2016), which was just published by Wiley-Blackwell.

Keynote 3:
“Competency-based Curriculum and Formative Assessment: Developments in Switzerland”
Urs Moser, Titular professor, Universität Zürich, Switzerland

In recent years, there are have been efforts for harmonizing the Swiss school system by developing national minimum educational standards and setting up a new curriculum for the German-speaking area. The curriculum is entirely based on competency. The framework of competencies (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) comprises three cycles ranging from Kindergarten to the end of compulsory school. Competencies outline what is expected of students and what they should be able to attain upon completion of each cycle. No provision is made for further differentiation, for instance a breakdown of competencies by grade.

As a consequence of the new curriculum, initiatives for assessing and monitoring the competencies of students are started. Four cantons joined forces and initiated the development of a tool for formative assessment for learning support. It is supposed to help students and teachers influencing learning processes by giving immediate feedback about current competencies.

The tool – which is currently under development – is an online item bank that is available for teachers and students at all times. The intention of the online item bank is to allow students and teachers to evaluate the learning processes and performance progress whenever they deem it necessary or useful. The item bank was designed to correspond one-to-one with the framework of competencies of the new curriculum. Feedback is provided on three levels: subject, competence and task.

A short overview over the current developments in Switzerland and the assessment tool will be presented. The focus lies on the presentation and discussion of three different applications with corresponding feedback and on the related psychometrical challenges.
2. 
**Data teams**

**Kim Schildkamp, researcher (Twente University)**

Schools these days are confronted with an abundance of data, which they have to transform into information to be used for school improvement. Data-based decision making can lead to improved education, and improved student achievement. However, data use is not common practice in schools yet. Training or professional development in the use of data is crucial for effective data use. Therefore, we developed the so-called data team® procedure. A data team is a team consisting of 4-6 teachers, a data expert, an (assistant) school leader and a researcher, who work together to solve a certain educational problem, following a structured approach. This presentation will focus on the use of data in these teams, the functioning of the teams, the enablers of effective data use, and the effects of data use.

In the field of education there are clear developments that ask for rethinking the way we design assessments: There is an increasing blending of learning and assessment, as seen in examples of scaffolded assessments, embedded assessments, in addition to existing separated regimes. A result there is an increasingly frequent formative use of assessment results. In the strive for inclusive education, there is a need for extending the accessibility of assessments for students with special needs. These developments have implications for assessment design which may conflict with one another. On the one hand, there is a need for rich information about the details of student progress, which goes far beyond general comparisons with a reference group on a certain skill. Educators and other stakeholders need to know more about what the student is able to do under varying conditions of support during a learning trajectory. On the other hand, there is the requirement that decisions about follow-up activities are based on valid and fair inferences about the learner. The increasingly sophisticated assessments that are needed may introduce challenges regarding reliability, validity and fairness. The quality of assessment design needs to keep up with the additional new requirements. The evidence-centered design (ECD) model has been developed to meet both requirements, because it is intended to accomplish validity by design. The model assumes that every assessment departs from a well-articulated student model. The student model addresses what is to be measured in terms of students’ proficiencies. Aspects of proficiency should be consistent with what is known about it in the targeted domain, e.g. writing proficiency. An appropriate student model describes and explains the essential attributes and how these develop over a period of time, including possible barriers. Based on the student model, a task model, an evidence model and a reporting model are created to form the basic assessment design. In this presentation, the use of the ECD-model will be discussed and illustrated in the context of item design and development for the DET, a set of diagnostic tests with diagnostic purposes for math, Dutch (as mother tongue) and English (as a foreign language).
2. 
*Diagnosing Dutch: a reflection on the syllabus, item construction and test implementation*
*Uriël Schuurs, assessment expert (Cito)*

In this presentation we will discuss three topics related to the construction of the DET (Diagnostic Educational Test):
– the definition of sub-skills as a basis for testing and remediation;
– the item formats to be used;
– how the Diagnostic Educational Test and the test results can be used in school.

Taking the theoretical framework of Deane et al. (2008) as a basis, the relevant sub-skills in writing and in reading have been defined for the DET project. For each language skill we have distinguished 12 sub-skills, and prototypical test items have been constructed and pretested. The pretest results showed that this was a challenging process. We will give examples of several sub-skills and their operationalizations in the form of test items.

During the project one of the issues to be dealt with was how to test aspects of language production (i.e. sub-skills of writing) with the use of a computer/word processor. It was tempting to use an open test item format asking students to point out flaws in a text presented on the screen - and then to let them revise the errors discovered. Beforehand we realized that this approach might lead to practical problems, as all possible correct answers of the students would have to be incorporated in the computer program. The pretest results showed that this was an underestimated problem. Therefore we decided to make use of a large variety of closed test-item formats in the construction of item banks for reading and writing. Some of these item formats will be presented.

We will conclude by presenting the state of the art of the item banks and the Diagnostic Educational Test by answering the following questions: How do schools and students react to the pretests that have been organized? In what way can and should the Diagnostic Educational Test be used? And how can this test ultimately contribute to an improvement of the (development of the) writing and reading skills of 13- to 15-year-old students.
Thursday, February 9th
11:15 – 11:45

1. Complex text, proficient writer? Exploring the (im)possibilities of automated essay scoring in early secondary education
Hiske Feenstra, assessment expert (Cito), Roelien Linthorst, assessment expert Dutch (Cito) and Karen Keune, research scientist (Cito)

The evaluation of writing ability by human raters is a time-consuming process. Furthermore, a human rating is typically subjective, causing low inter-rater reliability. The assessment of writing ability is therefore likely to benefit from the use of an automatically generated and consistent metric, as is offered by tools for automated essay evaluation (AEE). In the present study, the use of AEE for writers in early secondary education is explored. By investigating the relation between text complexity and writing proficiency, we aimed at identifying valid descriptors of writing ability within a set of automatically evaluated complexity features. We explored features at the level of text coherence, sentence complexity and lexical complexity. Higher-order (content) features were not taken into account. In our presentation we will discuss the results and describe the (im)possibilities of developing a tool for AEE in the future.

2. Automated scoring in mathematics: tinning intelligence?
Paul Drijvers, professor mathematics education (Utrecht University) and researcher (Cito) and Johanna Hofstee, project manager (Cito)

Now that digital testing is wide-spread, and automated scoring of student responses is a prerequisite for adaptive tests, the challenge is to design “intelligent” scoring engines. This particularly holds in the case of mathematics. Multiple choice items and open single numerical answer items are not problematic, but how to automatically score a response that consists of a formula, a graph or a geometrical construction? And what to do with answers on multiple step items, that have a (minor) error in one of the steps, but are correct in the other steps? In this presentation, we will suggest different strategies to approach this issue. The strategies will be illustrated by prototypical examples, recently designed in the DET project.
1. **Adaptivity in the Diagnostic Educational Test**  
*Sanneke Schouwstra, senior research scientist (Cito), Johanna Hofstee, project manager (Cito) and Peter van Os, system developer (Cito)*

The administration of the Diagnostic Educational Test yields diagnoses of many sub-skills. One of the main challenges at the outset of the development was to devise a way to deliver many diagnoses within a reasonably testing time. One of the answers to this challenge was to make the DET adaptive. In this presentation we will discuss first how the adaptivity is shaped towards the purpose of the DET: delivering many accurate diagnoses of students’ sub-skills within a reasonable test delivery time.

Next we will discuss the implementation of the adaptivity. The adaptivity is implemented in the delivery-platform (Facet) through the integration of an adaptive module, developed by Cito. The psychometric algorithm is the core of the adaptive module. The adaptive module decides during delivery which item or block of items should be delivered next to the student and yields the diagnosis for each student when sufficient information is obtained. Main requirements of this module were compliancy to the Facet architecture on adaptivity and a high-speed performance.

The course of a specific adaptive DET is specified in a driver for each test. The driver contains all information that is required to determine the adaptive course. It contains, among other things, the item parameters, the adaptive design of a specific test, the stop criterion, and the reporting criterion. Each adaptive testpackage contains items, a driver and the adaptive module. The test packages are compliant to the QTI standard.

2. **DET testing at schools:**  
*communication, recruitment and the involvement of schools*  
*Pascalle Haenen, project manager DET (CvTE) and Kees-Jan Butter, implementation manager (CvTE)*

The development and implementation of the DET takes place in close cooperation with schools and the field of education. There is, among other things, an advisory board, representative of the pilot schools, which gives feedback about the content of the instrument, organizational elements and other aspects relating to the development and implementation of the DET. Panels of teachers and other experts focus on the content of the instrument and determine which test questions the DET contains. To be able to develop the DET it was required to recruit at least 15% of all Dutch schools for secondary education. This was a difficult task especially because all schools had to participate voluntarily. In this session you will gain insight into the different ways in which schools are involved in the DET pilot, on how we were able to recruit 25% of the schools and what we did to make their participation valuable both for them and for us.

1. **Data handling and item analyses in the Diagnostic Educational Test**  
*Jesse Koops, research scientist (Cito) and Daniel van der Palm, research scientist (Cito)*

Just like any other large and complex project in its development phase, data handling is a time-consuming and complicated undertaking. Standard procedures do not yet exist like they do for older projects, and interfaces to new and independently developed software can be strange and unwieldy.

The challenge for data handling in such a setting is to develop more or less standardized procedures in an ad hoc way. Procedures have to be correct, verifiable and repeatable. At the same time, data access for analysts should be easy, understandable and well documented. Since such an ad hoc system will be superseded and replaced in the future, preferably as little time as possible should be spent developing it.

In this 30 minute session we will try to give a brief overview of data handling and item analyses in the DET. Also for the item analyses some new ad hoc analyses were performed, as well as the standard item analyses. We will discuss some best practices and a small selection of specific challenges that had to be overcome.

2. **Using the diagnostic test for school feedback**  
*Lex Borghans, Ron Diris, Raoul Haenbeukers and Trudie Schils, researchers (Maastricht University)*

The recently developed Diagnostic Educational Test (DET) is mainly targeted at diagnosing the skills of students in secondary education. This diagnostic information is also very valuable for schools, to monitor their strengths and weaknesses, especially when the background of the students is also taken into account. In this talk we give an overview of our exploration of the possibilities the DET offers.

We will show how we constructed school level indicators and we will show how the measured skills relate to test scores obtained in primary school and student’ background, based on data from the OnderwijsMonitor Limburg.
will discuss the outcome of our study and the approach to improve human marking. In the presentation we also asked about their preference for a marking scheme. In the presentation we compared the time and efficiency of the three marking schemes were compared. The teachers were capable of automated scoring of writing quality. Furthermore, expectation is that marked texts are needed for the development of a reliable tool or component. The teachers were also asked about their preference for a marking scheme. In the presentation we will discuss the outcome of our study and the approach to improve human marking.

Differences between marking schemes for writing assignments
Roelien Linthorst, assessment expert Dutch (Cito), Rick Godschalk, assessment expert English (Cito) and Karen Keune, research scientist (Cito)

During the development of the Diagnostic Educational Tests students were given Dutch and English writing assignments to study various marking schemes. A lot of marked texts are needed for the development of a reliable tool or component capable of automated scoring of writing quality. Furthermore, expectation is that teacher’s evaluation of students work will remain crucial and necessary, even when automated scoring becomes possible. Three different marking schemes were studied: a global evaluation scheme, a scheme using exemplar texts and an analytical scheme. The interrater reliability and efficiency of the three marking schemes were compared. The teachers were also asked about their preference for a marking scheme. In the presentation we will discuss the outcome of our study and the approach to improve human marking.
Friday, February 10th

09:15 – 10:15

Joint session:

Supporting schools in the implementation of formative assessment
Bas Trimbos, project leader formative assessment (SLO)

The diagnostic test can be seen as one of the means to improve student achievement in a formative assessment culture. However, a formative assessment culture is not yet present in all Dutch schools. In order to enable schools to use the diagnostic test formatively, the start of the support is not the diagnostic test itself but the five key strategies of formative assessment, presented by Dylan Wiliam. In this presentation the five key strategies will play a central part. How can these strategies contribute to a formative assessment culture? What does it take to create a culture where all teachers improve so that all students succeed?

Implementation support of the DET through educational guidance
Ad Bijlard, implementation manager (CvTE)

CvTE helps schools in the implementation of the DET. The purpose of this support in implementation is to give schools, i.e. teachers and staff, students and their parents, sufficient insight into what is needed to establish more personalised education. Ultimately, this should lead to the enhancement of learning growth at the individual level. The DET has been designed to provide deeper knowledge of specific skills of each pupil individually in the following subjects: writing in Dutch, writing in English and mathematics. How do we tackle the questions which arise in schools to achieve this leap in learning growth?

Content: options

Friday, February 10th

10:15 – 12:00

Option 1: Visit to DET pilot school and interview with teacher

With a small group of international guests we will visit a DET pilot school. Afterwards, an interview will take place with two teachers about their expectations and experiences regarding the DET.

Option 2: Diagnostic model
(national guests only)
Gerdieneke van Silfhout, curriculum developer (SLO)

By means of the Diagnostic Educational Test (DET) CvTE intends to offer school managers, teachers and pupils a new instrument that complements the teacher’s personal assessment by offering a detailed insight into the underlying subskills and knowledge aspects required to realise learning growth in individual pupils. The test offers teachers and students the information and the opportunity for tailor-made teaching and learning.