

Exams and Continuous Assessment

Some people believe that exams are an inappropriate way of measuring students' performance and should be replaced by continuous assessment. Do you agree or disagree with this view?

There is some dispute whether the best method of assessing students is to use examinations or some form of continuous assessment. This is a complex issue and my belief is that there is probably no one method that applies to all educational systems.

There are three major arguments in favour of retaining exams. One is that they provide a clear and objective measure of what students have learned, whereas any form of continuous assessment is probably going to be far more subjective. An additional point is that testing tends to be an excellent way of motivating learners to study harder and to reward the students who do best. Likewise, examinations test the ability of students to work under pressure, and this is a vital life skill for their later careers.

On the other hand, there are still occasions when it can be better to relieve the students of exam pressure and to measure their abilities through continuous assessment. This is particularly the case in lower age groups where young children can be affected negatively by stress and under-perform in exams. It can also be argued that continuous assessment is a more effective way of testing some subjects such as design and technology, which are more creative and less academic. A further point is that often continuous assessment can allow teachers to reward students who work hard, but who may be less able and not do well in more formal testing.

In conclusion, while continuous assessment may be fairer in some contexts, there are still times when traditional exams may be more appropriate. A possible compromise would be to use both forms of testing together, allowing teachers to reward both ability and hard work.

(283 words)