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From: [ACCESS I.](#)

Sent: Friday, July 04, 2014 2:08 PM

Subject: RE: : Freedom of Information Act

Thank you for your request for information from Durham University. Please see our response below.

1. Has the University of Durham got any evidence the 11+ selective grammar school tests do indeed test innate ability and are resistant to preparation.

Information not held. **The University does not claim to test innate ability.** The philosophy behind our approach is to design tests with the specific goal of minimising the impact of intensive coaching.

2. Please provide me with any evidence the University of Durham have that the 11+ tests they produce for selective entry in to grammar schools tests innate ability and are resistant to preparation.

See 1 above.

3. State whether any trials were undertaken Eg 2 groups of children were tested, with one group tutored or prepared for one year and one group not prepared and their results compared? Was there any significant different and to what statistically significance.

Trials have been undertaken as part of the development of each new assessment. **The trials do not cover the effects of tutoring.**

4. Were any trials or results or evidence scrutinised by any independent organisation?

Trial data was reviewed by an independent consultant appointed by a client.

5. Is there any evidence innate ability is related to social class or Pupil Premium status?

There is a large body of work investigating the links between socio-economic status and cognitive ability. The University does not believe it is for us to summarise such an extensive field of research.

6. Does the University believe Pupil Premium Children are at any disadvantage in its 11+ tests (consider the claim that the University claims tests are resistant to preparation, and tests innate ability and tuition is not required).

CEM is undertaking research in this area. The results of this research are not yet available.

7. Are the tests designed to be "class less", i.e. enable children of all socio-economic groups or social class to perform equally well and offer no advantage to any group?

Tests are designed to be fair and are structured to differentiate on cognitive ability only.

8. Are the tests gender neutral? Is there any evidence to substantiate they are neutral?

Yes. Yes.

9. Is there any explanation why boys seem to score higher marks than girls in certain regions?

Information not held.

10. Are the tests racially neutral? Is there any evidence to substantiate they are neutral?

Tests are designed to be fair and are structured to differentiate on cognitive ability only. Where ethnicity data have been made available, differential item functioning analysis between white British and non-white British candidates indicates no overall bias.

11. Are any tests standardised on parental income or education of parents of children sitting the tests?

No.

12. Please provide a list of local authorities, school consortium or individual schools that use 11+ selective tests from CEM Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring.

See attached.

13. Did CEM Centre provide its clients with evidence tests are resistant to preparation or tests innate ability?

Clients were briefed verbally on the Centre's approach to test design and delivery.

I hope this information is useful.

Yours sincerely,

Durham Burt
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