

Research Article

Bridging the gaps: enhancing teachers' proficiency in marking and feedback practices for Uganda's competency-based curriculum

Charles Kyasanku*¹ Rose Costa Nakawuki*

* Makerere University

ABSTRACT

Uganda's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), introduced in 2020, aims to equip learners with 21st-century skills through learner-centred teaching, formative assessments, and criterion-referenced evaluation. Despite its potential, teachers in Mpigi District face significant challenges in implementing marking and feedback practices essential to CBC's success. This qualitative multiple-case study, grounded in Biggs' Constructive Alignment Theory, examined teachers' proficiency in these practices in two public lower secondary schools. The findings revealed systemic gaps, including inconsistent marking methods that rely on traditional practices, limited use of rubrics for competency-based evaluation, and generic, non-actionable feedback. Structural constraints, such as oversized classes, inadequate training, and resource shortages, exacerbate these issues, undermining CBC's intended objectives of fostering critical thinking and problem-solving. Recommendations include mandatory rubric training, targeted continuous professional development (CPD), collaborative marking systems, resource investments, and efforts to reduce class sizes. Addressing these issues is critical to bridging the policy-practice gap, aligning formative assessment practices with CBC's transformative goals, and improving educational outcomes in secondary schools across Uganda.

KEYWORDS

Competency-based curriculum; formative assessment; teacher proficiency; marking and feedback; formative assessment literacy.

¹ CONTACT Kyasanku Charles ✉ kyasanku.charles@mak.ac.ug

© 2026 AFTAP

This article is published under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence (CC BY 4.0), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution, and reproduction in any medium or format, provided appropriate credit is given to the original author(s) and source.

Received: 12.11.2025 Accepted: 15.01.2026 Published: 01.02.2026

To Cite This Article: Kyasanku, C. & Nakawuki, R. C. (2026). Bridging the gaps: enhancing teachers' proficiency in marking and feedback practices for Uganda's competency-based curriculum. *African Nexus Quarterly*, 1(1), 8-27.

Introduction

The adoption of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Uganda's secondary education system in 2020 signifies a significant shift from traditional content-focused approaches to learner-centred paradigms that emphasise the acquisition of practical skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values (MoES, 2020; NCDC, 2019). Influenced by thinkers such as John Dewey (1916) and Benjamin Bloom (1956), global educational trends highlight real-world application and 21st-century skills, including critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and innovation (Voogt & Roblin, 2012; OECD, 2008). At its core, formative assessment plays a vital role in CBC, functioning as an ongoing process to monitor learner progress, identify gaps, and modify instruction accordingly (Vegilante, 2025).

In Uganda, the CBC framework incorporates formative assessment through projects, portfolios, Activities of Integration (AOI), observations, and rubrics, aiming to demonstrate mastery of competencies rather than rote memorisation (NCDC, 2020; UNEB, 2023). However, effective implementation depends on teachers' proficiency in key assessment components, particularly marking (scoring) and feedback. Marking in CBC involves criterion-referenced evaluation using rubrics to assess performance against predefined competencies, while feedback must be timely, specific, and actionable to assist learners' improvement (Wandera et al., 2025). Despite policy directives, challenges remain in Ugandan secondary schools, especially in rural districts such as Mpigi, where resource limitations, large class sizes, and limited professional development hinder teachers' ability to align assessment practices with CBC objectives (Atuhura & Nambi, 2024; Ahabwe, 2022). Mpigi District in Central Uganda, with seven public secondary schools, exemplifies these issues, as shown by poor performance in the Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) and inconsistent adoption of the CBC (UNEB, 2022). Teachers often revert to traditional summative methods, undermining the potential of formative assessment to promote learner autonomy and skill development (Wambi et al., 2024).

This study examined teachers' ability to mark and give effective feedback within CBC formative assessment practices. Marking and feedback are linked processes vital for constructive alignment, as per Biggs' theory (1996, 2014), ensuring that assessments reflect intended outcomes and promote deep learning. Poor skills in these areas weaken CBC's effectiveness, leading to misaligned instruction and suboptimal learner results.

The introduction is structured as follows: first, it provides historical and contextual background on CBC in Uganda; second, it outlines the problem statement; third, it states the purpose and scope; and fourth, it discusses the significance and justification. Uganda's education system evolved from colonial rote-learning models to post-independence reforms emphasising professionalisation (Gyagenda, 2023; MOES, 1992). The 2019 National Teacher Policy and the 2020 CBC launch aimed to address gaps in teacher competency, aligning with SDG 4 and Vision 2040 (MoES, 2019; UNESCO, 2015). However, formative assessment implementation remains fragmented, with teachers struggling to mark against competencies and to provide feedback that promotes self-regulation (Namaalwa et al., 2024). The problem lies in teachers' limited ability to mark and provide effective feedback, often resulting in

subjective scoring and vague comments that fail to guide improvement (Stiggins, 2017). This misalignment risks undermining CBC's goals and contributes to Mpigi's low UCE results (UNEB, 2022). The purpose is to examine this proficiency and inform interventions to improve alignment. The scope is limited to two public secondary schools in Mpigi, focusing on marking and feedback from 2020 to 2025.

The importance lies in enhancing teacher assessment literacy, improving learner outcomes, and supporting policy refinement by MOES, NCDC, and UNEB. It adds to the literature on CBC in Sub-Saharan Africa by applying Biggs' theory to secondary education settings. The rationale is the need to bridge policy-practice gaps, ensuring that CBC promotes 21st-century skills and national development (MOES, 2023; Vision 2040).

Theoretical Review

This study is based on Biggs' Constructive Alignment Theory (Biggs, 2014), which states that effective education requires coherence among intended learning outcomes (ILOs), teaching and learning activities (TLAs), and assessment tasks (ATs). In CBC, ILOs are competencies such as problem-solving and collaboration; TLAs involve active, learner-centred methods; and ATs, including marking and feedback, must demonstrate achievement. Constructive alignment draws on constructivism, where learners build knowledge through engagement and alignment, ensuring that all elements support deep learning (Preeti, 2019). For marking and feedback, this involves using rubrics to assess competencies and providing feedback that supports improvement, aligning with CBC's focus on formative assessment (NCDC, 2020). Strengths include promoting coherence (Hamdoun, 2023) and learner-centred pedagogy (Prosser & Trigwell, 2014). In Uganda, it supports CBC's focus on authentic tasks, such as projects. However, criticisms highlight its assumption of linear learning and its limited attention to teacher capacity (Nakawuki, Kyasanku, & Tebenkana, 2025). In low-resource settings, large classes and an exam-oriented culture hinder alignment. Applied to objective three, the theory frames marking as a rubric-based evaluation aligned with ILOs and feedback as a tool for knowledge construction. Misalignments, such as generic scoring, reveal gaps in teacher proficiency and guide recommendations for CPD to improve alignment.

Although the CBC outlines ILOs that emphasise 21st-century competencies, problems arise when assessments fail to reflect these outcomes due to systemic barriers. This framework sets the stage for examining gaps in Mpigi teachers' marking and feedback practices and their implications for constructive alignment.

Literature Review

The literature on teachers' ability to mark and provide feedback in CBC formative assessment highlights ongoing challenges in assessment literacy, consistency, and alignment with competencies.

Marking and Scoring in Competency-based Curriculum

The Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) fundamentally shifts assessment from norm-referenced, content-heavy evaluation to criterion-referenced approaches that measure learners' mastery of specific competencies, skills, values, and attitudes (Wandera et al., 2025; KNEC Competency-Based Assessment Framework, 2021). Central to this paradigm is the use of rubrics as structured scoring tools that define clear performance criteria, achievement levels, and descriptive indicators, enabling transparent, objective, and formative feedback to guide learner improvement rather than mere ranking (Wandera et al., 2025; Cañadas, 2021; learnercentered.org on competency-based progressions). Despite these theoretical advantages, empirical evidence indicates persistent implementation challenges, particularly concerning teachers' capacity for reliable, consistent rubric-based scoring. Teachers often lack adequate training in developing, applying, and interpreting rubrics, which leads to inconsistent application and diminished assessment validity (Schneider & Bodensohn, 2017). In Sub-Saharan Africa, where CBC reforms have been widely adopted (e.g., in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Tanzania), teachers frequently default to familiar, traditional, norm-referenced, or exam-oriented marking practices due to limited preparation, resource constraints, and entrenched habits (Andiema, 2020; Namaalwa et al., 2024; studies on CBC challenges in SSA). Pre-service and in-service teachers often express uncertainty about CBC grading mechanisms, frequently citing the absence or inadequate provision of standardised rubrics and guidelines (Aheisibwe & Barigye, 2023). Efforts to improve scoring reliability include collaborative task design and joint rubric development among educators, which have shown potential to enhance inter-rater agreement (Ling, 2024). However, practical barriers such as heavy workloads, large class sizes, time constraints, and insufficient institutional support often undermine collaborative approaches (multiple SSA implementation studies highlight overcrowded classrooms and resource shortages).

Assessment tools, such as the Teacher Feedback and Assessment Practices Scale (TFAPS), have been utilised to examine teachers' practices, revealing strong cultural and contextual influences on how scoring is perceived and enacted (Yan & Pastore, 2022). Emerging technologies offer supplementary support for scoring efficiency and consistency (e.g., automated or digital rubric tools), yet human professional judgement remains indispensable for interpreting complex competencies, providing nuanced feedback, and ensuring fairness across diverse educational settings.

Overall, although criterion-referenced, rubric-based marking aligns closely with CBC's emphasis on authentic competency demonstration and continuous improvement, effective implementation in contexts such as Sub-Saharan Africa requires sustained teacher professional development, accessible resources (including exemplar rubrics), collaborative structures, and policy alignment to overcome entrenched challenges and realise the curriculum's transformative potential.

Feedback Provision in Competence-based Curriculum

Effective feedback is a fundamental element of successful learning within competency-based curriculum (CBC) frameworks. Mandouit & Hattie (2023) emphasise that feedback must be timely, specific, and forward-looking, focusing on learners' current progress, future goals, and how to close the gap to maximise its impact on achievement. However, empirical evidence from low-resource and Sub-Saharan African contexts highlights ongoing challenges in achieving these ideals. Studies often report generic, delayed, or infrequent feedback, which reduces its formative value (e.g., Kidega et al., 2023; Rahman et al., 2021). In Rwanda, formative assessment practices, including feedback, remain uncommon and largely ineffective, often overshadowed by traditional teacher-centred approaches and insufficient pedagogical support (Kazinyirako et al., 2024; Ukobizaba et al., 2023). Factors related to teachers further influence the quality of feedback. Self-efficacy significantly affects the effectiveness with which educators deliver constructive feedback (Schütze et al., 2017), and emerging evidence suggests that digital tools offer potential for scaling personalised and timely feedback (Voogt et al., 2018). Systemic constraints exacerbate these issues. Large class sizes, heavy workloads, and scarce resources reduce teachers' ability to provide individualised, actionable feedback (Dayal, 2021). In Uganda, feedback practices within CBC implementation often lack clarity and actionability, tending toward vague, oral comments that do not adequately guide learner improvement—a pattern consistent with broader observations of generic oral feedback in this study.

Despite the increasing adoption of CBC across Sub-Saharan Africa, significant research gaps remain. There is limited empirical focus on the relationship between marking practices and feedback processes in CBC settings, especially in low-resource regional contexts. This study aimed to fill these gaps by analysing feedback dynamics in Ugandan CBC classrooms, thereby offering a more detailed understanding of how to improve formative practices within contextual constraints.

Objectives

To examine how teachers' marking and scoring practices align with the principles of Uganda's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC).

To assess the quality of feedback provided by teachers and its effectiveness in supporting student improvement.

Research Questions

How do teachers' marking practices align with CBC's emphasis on competency-based assessment?

How effective is the feedback provided by teachers in addressing student strengths, weaknesses, and next steps?

Methodology

Research Design and Approach

This study employed a qualitative multiple-case study design to provide an in-depth exploration of the phenomenon in its natural setting (Yin, 2018; Stake, 1995). A case study approach was selected for its ability to deliver a holistic examination of complex social processes, such as teachers' assessment practices, within bounded contexts, specifically two public lower secondary schools in Mpigi District. The design focused on multiple cases (the two schools) to enable comparison and triangulation, thus enhancing the depth and transferability of findings. The approach was interpretive and phenomenological, aiming to understand participants' lived experiences, perceptions, and challenges in implementing CBC formative assessments (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Data were collected iteratively between September 2024 and January 2025, allowing emergent insights to inform subsequent data collection and focusing on post-roll-out maturity. The researcher adopted a reflexive stance, maintaining a research journal to document biases (e.g., prior experience in Ugandan education) and decisions, thereby promoting transparency.

Population and Sampling

The target population consisted of stakeholders directly involved in CBC implementation in public lower secondary schools in Mpigi District, Central Uganda. This included teachers, school administrators (headteachers), and national education officials from the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) and the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB). A purposive sampling strategy was employed to select participants with relevant expertise and alignment with the research objectives (Patton, 2015). Two SEED (Secondary Education Expansion and Development) schools were purposively selected: one in Muduuma sub-county (rural, resource-constrained) and one in Kiringente sub-county (semi-urban, slightly better resourced) to capture contextual variation. Within these schools, five teachers were selected (three from arts subjects and two from sciences) based on criteria such as at least 5 years' experience teaching under the CBC, involvement in formative assessments, and willingness to participate. Additionally, the two headteachers were included to oversee their roles. At the national level, one NCDC curriculum specialist and one UNEB assessment expert were purposively sampled through official channels to provide policy perspectives. The total sample comprised nine participants (five teachers, two headteachers, and two officials), determined by data saturation, with recruitment ceasing when new interviews yielded no additional insights (Saunders et al., 2018). This non-probabilistic approach ensured the inclusion of information-rich cases but limited broader generalisations beyond similar contexts. The study concentrates on two public lower secondary schools within Mpigi District, Uganda. This focus reflects a deliberate choice to explore gaps in marking and feedback practices in specific settings, prioritising qualitative depth over quantitative breadth. Furthermore, secondary school teachers in rural areas face systemic challenges, including large class sizes and limited professional

development opportunities, which are critical factors in evaluating proficiency. Selecting two schools aligns with available research resources, facilitating targeted data collection and analysis (Economic Policy Research Centre, 2025).

Inclusion Criteria

Participants had to be certified teachers holding at least a bachelor's degree in education or an equivalent qualification. They must have at least five years of teaching experience in secondary schools implementing the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). They needed to be employed full-time in public secondary schools within Mpigi District. Participants had to be willing to take part in the study and provide written informed consent. Priority was given to teachers who had attended training or workshops on Competency-Based Curriculum principles organised by the Ministry of Education or other educational partners.

Exclusion Criteria

Teachers employed as part-time or temporary staff were believed to have limited involvement in assessments. Teachers who had recently transferred (within the last six months) to a CBC school were considered unlikely to have had significant interaction with CBC assessment practices. Teachers unwilling to participate or to give informed consent were excluded.

Data Collection Methods

Data were gathered using a triangulated approach that combined in-depth interviews, non-participant lesson observations, and documentary reviews to enhance validity and provide multifaceted perspectives (Denzin, 2017). All data collection occurred on-site at the schools or through face-to-face meetings with officials.

In-Depth Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted individually with all nine participants to explore their perceptions and experiences. The interview guide included open-ended questions (e.g., "Describe your process for marking a formative assessment task under CBC") and prompts for elaboration (e.g., "Can you give an example?"). Interviews lasted 45-60 minutes, were audio-recorded with consent, and transcribed. Teachers and headteachers were interviewed in school offices for privacy; officials were interviewed face-to-face. A total of nine interviews were completed, scheduled at participants' convenience to minimise disruption.

Non-Participant Lesson Observations: Observations were carried out in classrooms to record real-time marking and feedback practices. A structured observation schedule focused on key indicators, including the use of rubrics, scoring consistency, and feedback delivery. Each observation employed a four-point rating scale: Highly Effective (HE: practice fully aligns with CBC principles), Effective (E: practice mostly aligns), Developing (D: practice partially aligns), and Not Evident (NE: practice does not align). Five lessons were observed (three in the arts and two in the sciences), each lasting 40-80 minutes, across the two schools. The researcher sat unobtrusively at the back, taking field notes without intervening. Observations were scheduled in advance and focused on formative assessment activities, such as Activities of Integration (AOI) and group projects.

Documentary Review: Relevant documents were examined to verify interview and observational data. A structured review guide evaluated evidence of marking proficiency on a three-tier scale: Yes (clear and thorough), Partial (some evidence), and No (not evident). Documents included schemes of work, lesson plans, student work samples (e.g., portfolios, AOI tasks), assessment records, and feedback notes from the past two academic terms (Feb-August 2024). With the headteacher's permission, approximately 7 documents per school were accessed, reviewed on site, and photographed for analysis, with sensitive information redacted.

Ethical protocols included verbal and written informed consent, assurances of confidentiality (using pseudonyms), and the right to withdraw. No incentives were offered, and data were stored securely on password-protected devices.

Data Quality Control

To ensure the study's trustworthiness, multiple strategies were used to enhance the credibility, dependability, transferability, confirmability, and authenticity of the data. The credibility and validity of the instruments were assessed with input from experts in teacher proficiency and Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) assessment. Transferability was supported by detailed descriptions of the research context, participants, interpretations, and theoretical foundations (Drisko, 2024). Dependability was achieved through repeated transcript reviews to reach saturation and objective supervisory checks to reduce bias (Stahl & King, 2020). Confirmability was demonstrated by verifying that interpretations aligned with participants' responses and the research aims. Authenticity was maintained by including direct quotations from participants to accurately represent their lived experiences (Chambers & Broadbent, 2025). Reflexivity was practised through a research diary to examine researcher assumptions, power dynamics, and biases (Olmos-Vegas et al., 2023; Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2017). Prolonged engagement in school settings helps build trust and minimise reactivity. Triangulation combined semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and observations for cross-validation (Dado et al., 2023).

Data Analysis

This study employed a rigorous qualitative analysis to interpret rich information gathered from multiple sources. All data from in-depth interviews, non-participant lesson observations, and document reviews were transcribed verbatim. The transcripts and observation notes were then imported into ATLAS.ti for systematic coding and analysis. A comprehensive thematic analysis was adopted as the primary method. Initial open coding identified emerging concepts directly from the raw data. These were grouped into focused codes and organised hierarchically into main themes and sub-themes that aligned directly with the research objective: teachers' proficiency in marking and scoring CBC formative assessments. A coding framework was developed inductively, remaining consistent with the study's conceptual framework and Biggs' Constructive Alignment Theory, and was verified against patterns observed during lessons and evidence from documents. Triangulation was central to enhancing credibility: insights from interviews were cross-analysed with data from document review (schemes of work, lesson plans, student work samples,

AOI tasks, and assessment records). Documents were skimmed, read thoroughly, and interpreted iteratively, with information organised into predefined and emergent categories related to the research questions. Predefined codes from interview transcripts were applied consistently to documentary data to ensure coherence across sources. Frequencies of key codes and co-occurrence patterns were examined to identify dominant issues, recurring challenges, and variations in practice. Irrelevant or off-topic data that did not clarify teachers' proficiency in marking and scoring CBC formative assessments were systematically excluded. Verbatim quotations were retained to preserve participants' authentic voices and provide illustrative evidence. This iterative, multi-source thematic process ensured a trustworthy, transparent, and comprehensive interpretation of teachers' proficiency in marking and scoring CBC formative assessments in the selected schools.

Findings and Discussion

Findings from interviews, observations, and document reviews indicate underdeveloped proficiency. The findings show that teachers' competence in marking and scoring Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) formative assessment tools remains significantly underdeveloped. Multiple sources of evidence, including lesson observations, document reviews of student work and assessment records, and interviews with teachers and education officials, consistently point to inconsistent, mostly traditional scoring practices that do not align with CBC principles.

Theme 1: Inconsistent and Traditional Marking and Scoring Practices

Triangulation reveals a widespread dependence on outdated, binary, or numerical scoring methods that emphasise factual recall over demonstrating competence. Document reviews of student work samples, assessment records, schemes of work, and Activities of Integration (AOI) tasks showed a consistent use of ticks, crosses, numerical marks (e.g., 8/10), or right/wrong judgments, with no evidence of rubrics, performance descriptors, levelled criteria, or progression indicators. Lesson observations confirmed this in real time: for instance, during a Physics practical activity, learner participation was not assessed using checklists or competency-aligned recording, leaving performance undocumented despite active engagement. Interviews with teachers described occasional attempts at advanced marking guides or peer discussions to ensure fairness, but these were neither observed nor documented. When asked about the strategies used to ensure consistency when scoring learners' responses, one teacher participant noted that.

"By making a marking guide before marking, one can help with scoring. Also, involving learners in scoring through a discussion with learners so that it is fair... engage learners in scoring and emphasise the key points".
(TAS)

However, these practices (marking guides and involving learners in scoring) were not observed during lesson observations or document reviews, which showed little differentiation of levels. Consistent with this, an education official added that teachers lack competence in scoring.

“The challenge is that scoring is subjective because teachers are only supposed to put everything on the Checklist. Teachers are still locked into the old curriculum and, therefore, need more training in scoring” (NCDC).

Teachers were still reliant on the old curriculum and submitting superficial checklist results without thorough evaluation. Lesson observation findings also confirmed a focus on right or wrong answers rather than on progress, indicating a lack of proficiency in CBC-aligned scoring. An education official from UNEB clarified this.

The theme of inconsistent marking and scoring practices highlights a fundamental misalignment with CBC principles, which require criterion-referenced, rubric-based assessment to provide transparent evidence of mastery of competencies (NCDC, 2020; Wandera et al., 2025). It directly contradicts Biggs’ constructive alignment, in which assessment tasks (ATs) must reflect ILOs (e.g., problem-solving, collaboration) through structured tools that foster deep learning rather than surface-level recall. This inconsistency reduces validity and reliability, illustrating broader challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa, where teachers often default to familiar norm-referenced practices due to a lack of proper training and resources (Ahesibwe & Barigye, 2023; similar patterns in rural Ugandan contexts). According to constructive alignment, assessment tasks should be criterion-referenced, using tools such as rubrics to evaluate learner progress objectively against specified competencies. However, the study found that teachers tend to rely on traditional marking methods (e.g., numerical scores) without using rubrics or performance descriptors (Biggs & Tang, 2014). This disconnect between assessment methods and CBC principles weakens the connection between assessment tasks (ATs) and intended learning outcomes (ILOs). For instance, during a Physics practical, learner participation was noted but not systematically assessed, contrary to the competency-driven goals of CBC. Conventional marking practices reveal a misalignment that hampers CBC’s aim for deeper learning. Moving forward, rectifying this inconsistency is essential for aligning assessment practices with CBC standards.

Theme 2: Limited Use of Rubrics and Alignment with CBC Competencies

Teachers showed limited skill in creating or using rubrics or scoring guides, leading to a gap between assessments and the intended skills. Interviews highlighted issues with rubric development, with officials stating that teachers “grapple with the development of rubrics and prioritise ‘facts rather than evidence of the learner’s knowledge.’” Although national guidelines from NCDC and UNEB are in place, teachers’ awareness does not lead to effective application. One education official noted that:

“There are guidelines available from NCDC, UNEB, called assessment guidelines. Teachers are aware of the challenges, but many do not check at least the websites and school portals” (UNEB).

Similarly, another education official noted that:

“Teachers and school administrators are aware of the guidelines. At the school level, they ignore and follow school guidelines and yet the guidelines are very clear.” (NCDC)

Hence, the findings indicate a gap between awareness and practical use. Document analysis revealed no attached rubrics or descriptive indicators in student portfolios and records, and observations showed no differentiated performance levels or student involvement in self- or peer-assessment. Although some teachers acknowledged awareness of national guidelines (via NCDC/UNEB portals), implementation was weak and often overlooked in favour of school routines. Rubrics are essential for assessing competencies because they provide structured criteria aligned with ILOs. The absence of rubric use shows a failure to connect assessment tasks (ATs) with CBC’s emphasis on critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving (Mandouti & Hattie, 2023). Without rubrics, teachers’ practices remain detached from the curriculum’s learner-centred approach, leading to superficial learning. Teachers’ difficulties in developing rubrics reflect a lack of alignment needed to ensure that formative assessment supports improvement and mastery of competencies (Lestari & Yusuf, 2025). Without rubrics, assessments lack consistency and transparency, making scoring more challenging and hindering meaningful feedback.

Summary comparison of lesson observations.

The table addresses the research question regarding teachers’ proficiency in grading and scoring formative assessments. Ratings use the provided scale: HE (Highly Effective), E (Effective), D (Developing), NE (Not Evident). If no explicit rating is given but the evidence indicates absence, NE (Not Evident) is applied. Evidence is summarised concisely from observations. SSWA was school 1, and SSB was school 2.

Table 1

Observation Findings on Teachers’ Marking and Scoring Practices

Area of Focus/Indicator	School SSWA (History) – Evidence and Rating	School SSB (Physics Practical) Evidence and Rating
Samples of completed FA tools showing clear scoring/grading	Samples of AOI/tasks just scores, but not grading; others marked without scores. P (Partial towards NE for proper grading)	Not directly addressed in samples; teacher marks, but no scores/grades are evident on the work. NE
Scoring/grading aligns with formative purpose (e.g., identifying improvement, informing instruction)	Teachers marked without scores/comments on improvement or informing instruction. NE	Teacher marks/scores without comments; no specific information on strengths/improvement. NE
Scoring/grading reflects progression of competencies (not just right/wrong)	No evidence; just right/wrong answers. NE	Not evident; focus on marking without progression in competency. NE
Consistent/accurate application of rubrics/scoring guides	No evidence of teacher-developed rubrics/scoring guides. NE	No evidence of rubric or scoring criteria. NE
Differentiation in scoring/grading levels	Scores/grades not included, but tasks marked. P/ NE	The teacher marks all tasks, but no scoring/grading or differentiation.
Feedback alongside scores/grades (specific, descriptive on development)	No samples with scores/grades plus specific feedback. NE	No comments/feedback; marking without feedback for learning. NE
Consistency in scoring/grading across learners/tasks	No evidence of multiple samples reviewed for consistency. NE	Not demonstrated; no scoring/grading consistency shown. NE

Both observations indicate very limited or no effective scoring and grading aligned with CBC principles (e.g., criterion-referenced, competency-based progression, use of rubrics, formative focus rather than just right/wrong or numerical grades). Practices remain traditional (marking without detailed criteria, feedback, or tracking of progression). SSWA had some evidence of scores in certain cases, but SSB shows even less (mostly oral guidance during activity, with no post-activity scoring or grading).

Theme 3: Generic, Non-Actionable Feedback Hindering Formative Potential

Feedback was infrequent, vague, and rarely forward-looking, which limited its capacity to guide improvement. Observations noted minimal or no personalised comments during activities. At the same time, document reviews revealed oral or generic remarks (e.g., “good” or “try harder”) that lacked specificity about strengths, gaps, or next steps. Teachers and officials recognised the importance of feedback but cited workload and class-size barriers to providing timely, personalised responses. When asked to describe their approaches to giving feedback and the methods they use, a teacher participant noted:

“I talk to them directly in class, tell them how they are progressing and how to improve. Maybe I can design a second activity to encourage learners to practise more and improve their skills. After the assessment, I record scores and provide individual feedback, encouraging them to improve for future tasks” (Teacher)

However, lesson observations revealed limited detail in feedback. The findings showed effective oral feedback during group work, but it lacked written comments or guidance on specific skill development. Teachers recognised correct answers in class but did not provide descriptive feedback on how learners could improve. Feedback was brief, oral, and general (e.g., “Correct,” “Good”), and it lacked clarity, guidance, and a focus on skills. No feedback tools were used, such as reflection sheets, peer assessment prompts, or success criteria charts. This indicates that although teachers interact with learners, the feedback they provide does not meet CBC formative assessment standards. Actionable feedback is essential for guiding learners towards improvement. The current lack of meaningful feedback diminishes the formative potential of CBC assessments and denies learners critical growth opportunities.

Summary comparison of lesson observation.

The table addresses the research question related to teachers’ proficiency in providing CBA feedback to learners. Ratings follow the provided scale: HE (Highly Effective), E (Effective), D (Developing), NE (Not Evident). If no explicit rating is given but the evidence suggests absence, NE (Not Evident) is assigned. Evidence is concisely summarised from observations. SSWA refers to school 1, and SSB to school 2.

Table 2*Findings on Teachers' Ability to Provide CBA Feedback to Learners*

Area of Focus/Indicator	School (SSWA) History, Evidence and Rating	School (SSB) Physics Evidence and Rating
Student work samples with written feedback related to competencies/outcomes	No samples with written feedback; just scores. NE	Not addressed (focusing on oral during lesson); no written feedback evident. NE
Feedback identifies strengths and areas for improvement (re: competence development)	No feedback identifying strengths/improvement (e.g., just "Good") NE	Not directly evident in written form; oral encouragement, but not specific strengths/improvement pinpointed. NE
Differentiated feedback tailored to individual needs/progress	No evidence of differentiated feedback. NE	Not evident; general group/oral guidance. NE
Timelines of feedback	Not addressed NE	Prompts oral feedback during practical/group work to inform immediate learning. E
Specificity of feedback (relates to Los/competencies, pinpoints strengths/improvement)	Not addressed. NE	Oral feedback fairly related to Los/focus but not specific on strengths/improvement (mostly encouragement). E (fairly) / NE (for pinpointing)
Focus on competency development (skills, knowledge, attitudes; progress understanding)	Not addressed. NE	Fairly encourages development; tasks are done as a class, then as a group to build progress. D
Actionability of feedback (clear guidance on next steps)	Not addressed. NE	Guided during the lesson with specific steps/resources (e.g., practical guide). E
Variety of feedback methods	Not addressed. NE	Mostly oral explanations; frequent but limited to oral. D
Student engagement with feedback (understanding checked, used in subsequent learning)	Not addressed. NE	Not evident for checking understanding; fairly used to inform subsequent practical activities. NE / E (fairly)

The table above indicates that SSWA provides virtually no written or other feedback aligned with CBC's specific, competency-focused developmental approach. SSB performs better with real-time oral feedback during the practical activity—timely, somewhat actionable, and integrated—but lacks written feedback that specifically addresses strengths and improvements, offers variety, ensures differentiation, and checks for understanding. Oral guidance during the lesson acts as a substitute for formal post-assessment feedback.

Therefore, effective feedback must be specific, timely, and focused on the task, process, or self-regulation to close learning gaps (Mandouit & Hattie, 2023). Its weakness here further disrupts constructive alignment, as feedback is a key mechanism for linking TLAs to ILOs and enabling iterative improvement. This pattern aligns with Ugandan CBC studies reporting vague oral feedback and systemic constraints that overshadow formative intent (broader SSA evidence of ineffective practices in rural settings). These findings coincide with and expand the broader literature on assessment in competency-based reforms. The reliance on right/wrong or fact-based scoring, rather than progression-oriented evaluation, contradicts Biggs' (constructive alignment) principle, which emphasises that assessments must align with intended learning outcomes to promote deep understanding and competency development rather than surface recall. Similarly, the absence of clear criteria, consistent standards, and descriptive feedback undermines high-quality

formative assessment, as Brookhart (2013) emphasises these elements as essential for transparency, learner growth, and informed instructional decisions. The observed gaps echo studies in similar contexts, such as those by Aheisibwe and Barigye (2023), in which uncertainty persisted regarding the integration of competency-aligned grading into the overall evaluation.

The persistence of an “implementation gap,” where awareness of guidelines does not translate into practice, reflects Guskey’s (2002) model of teacher change. This model suggests that meaningful shifts in beliefs and practices often require evidence of improved student outcomes before attitudes change through training alone. Without structured support, follow-up, and relevance to the context, teachers tend to revert to familiar methods. This aligns with Kennedy (2014), who argues that professional learning must directly connect to classroom practice and school realities to bring about change; abstract knowledge of frameworks rarely suffices without targeted application. The EPRC follow-up survey conducted in 2025 highlighted emerging trends in the implementation of Uganda’s Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). While there were improvements in teacher acceptance and increasing confidence in the CBC framework, significant assessment gaps remained. The findings showed that teachers were increasingly integrating CBC principles into lesson planning but still struggled to adopt effective marking and feedback mechanisms (EPRC, 2025). Additionally, systemic issues such as large class sizes and a lack of resources remained unchanged, as highlighted in the 2025 report. There was progress in professional development initiatives, which helped improve teacher alignment with CBC’s learner-centred goals, yet formative assessment practices still lagged behind the standards (APHRC, 2025). These findings reinforce the themes identified in the Mpigi District case study, particularly the challenges of rubric development and the provision of actionable feedback. By improving assessment literacy and addressing systemic barriers, further progress in CBC adoption can be achieved. However, full alignment will require ongoing policy refinement and investment in resources (EPRC, 2025).

Feedback in formative assessment not only confirms alignment but also helps learners bridge the gap between their current performance and desired competencies. The findings suggest that feedback is often vague, sporadic, and generic (e.g., “good” or “try harder”). In line with Biggs’ theory, effective feedback should focus on competencies and provide actionable steps for improvement (Mandouit & Hattie, 2023). The failure to provide specific, future-oriented feedback restricts learners’ ability to reflect and make meaningful progress, weakening the vital connection between TLAs and ILOs.

Overall, these themes collectively reveal underdeveloped teacher proficiency in marking and providing effective feedback, characterised by inconsistent practices, underutilisation of rubrics, and generic feedback that fails to support competency development. Based on Biggs’ Constructive Alignment Theory, the findings highlight a clear misalignment: while ILOs emphasise practical skills and competencies, teaching-learning activities (TLAs) may include learner-centred elements, yet ATs (marking and feedback) remain rooted in traditional paradigms, which hinder deep learning and learner progress. This directly addresses the study’s main objective of

investigating teachers' ability to mark and give effective feedback within CBC formative assessment practices in Mpigi District's public lower secondary schools. It answers the research question about how teachers describe and implement these processes. The evidence shows not just isolated gaps but a systemic disconnect in implementation: although there is awareness of CBC and national guidelines (NCDC/UNEB), practical enactment struggles due to inadequate training, resources, and support. This weakens CBC's transformative aims in rural Ugandan environments, contributing to ongoing challenges such as low learner outcomes and poor alignment with 21st-century skills. By linking empirical patterns to theory, the findings reinforce the need for targeted interventions (e.g., CPD on rubric design, feedback literacy, and guideline enforcement) to achieve constructive alignment, thus bridging the gap between policy and practice and improving educational quality as intended by the study.

Study Limitations

This qualitative multiple-case study provides rich, contextualised insights into teachers' marking and feedback practices under Uganda's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in two public lower secondary schools in Mpigi District. However, like all interpretive, bounded case studies, it faces several inherent limitations.

First, the study is geographically and contextually limited to two purposively selected SEED schools (one rural in Muduuma sub-county and one semi-urban in Kiringente sub-county) within Mpigi District. While Mpigi exemplifies common rural and peri-urban challenges in Uganda, such as oversized classes, resource shortages, and uneven CBC adoption, the findings may not fully apply to urban settings, private schools, districts with higher resources, or regions with different implementation dynamics (e.g., those with stronger district-level support or better infrastructure). Recent national reports (e.g., EPRC, 2025; APHRC/Namatovu-Sakwa et al., 2025; UNEB, 2026) highlight widening equity gaps between affluent/urban and low-resource/rural schools, suggesting that Mpigi may represent more challenging rather than typical cases.

Second, reliance on self-reported data from semi-structured interviews, combined with researcher-conducted non-participant observations and document reviews, introduces potential biases. These include social desirability (participants may present practices more favourably during interviews), observer effects (despite unobtrusive positioning), and researcher positionality (e.g., prior experience in Ugandan education, documented through reflexivity). Triangulation across sources and prolonged engagement helped mitigate these risks, but they remain inherent to qualitative research in school settings.

Thirdly, the cross-sectional design captures practices at a specific point in time (September 2024-January 2025), shortly after the initial CBC rollout phases and during the post-COVID recovery. It does not track longitudinal changes, such as potential improvements following intensified teacher retooling, moderation efforts, or resource investments reported in later national assessments (e.g., UNEB's 2025-2026 research on CBC impacts, which noted ongoing large-class and material constraints but some progress in project work). The evolving nature of CBC

implementation, as evidenced by persistent challenges in assessment alignment, ICT access, and workload in 2025-2026 reports, means the findings reflect an early-to-mid rollout phase rather than mature enactment.

Fourth, the small sample size (nine participants: five teachers, two headteachers, two national officials) prioritises depth, saturation, and information-rich cases, consistent with qualitative principles. However, the limited national-level representation (only one NCDC and one UNEB official) may under-represent broader policy perspectives or variations across districts. Similarly, the focus on public schools excludes private or better-resourced institutions, where recent studies indicate stronger CBC fidelity due to differential resourcing.

Fifth, the study does not directly evaluate learner outcomes or the long-term effects of observed marking and feedback practices on competency development (e.g., critical thinking, self-regulation). Although aligned with the research questions, this restricts understanding of downstream impacts, especially given equity concerns raised in recent analyses (e.g., APHRC, 2025), which suggest that under-resourced schools risk increasing disparities.

Contribution to Knowledge

Despite these limitations, the study makes several valuable contributions to curriculum implementation and assessment literacy in Sub-Saharan Africa, especially within Uganda's CBC context.

It offers triangulated empirical evidence from public lower secondary schools in a rural district (Mpigi), documenting underdeveloped teacher proficiency in rubric-based marking, criterion-referenced scoring, and actionable feedback, all of which remain misaligned with CBC principles. This fills a gap in localised qualitative data on the implementation of formative assessment, where much previous research concentrates on policy intentions, teacher knowledge more broadly, or on urban/primary levels. Recent studies in Mpigi and similar settings confirm patterns of limited assessment tool design, reliance on traditional methods, and systemic barriers (e.g., inadequate training, large classes). However, few provide in-depth case-based exploration of marking and feedback specifically.

By grounding findings in Biggs' Constructive Alignment Theory, the research extends its application to low-resource secondary contexts in Sub-Saharan Africa, demonstrating how misalignments among intended learning outcomes, teaching-learning activities, and assessment tasks (particularly ATS involving marking and feedback) sustain surface learning and hinder competency development. This theoretical framing emphasises structural rather than individual deficiencies, adding nuance to discussions of CBC fidelity in constrained environments.

The study also provides policy-relevant insights for stakeholders (MOES, NCDC, UNEB, district officials), emphasising root causes (e.g., training gaps, resource constraints) rather than symptoms, and supporting recommendations such as mandatory rubric certification and moderation protocols. In a landscape where CBC implementation faces persistent challenges, including inconsistent formative practices and a reversion to old methods, the findings serve as a benchmark for

targeted interventions and comparative research across districts or regions. Overall, by highlighting the policy-practice gap in a representative rural setting, this work strengthens the evidence base for improving assessment literacy, fostering equitable competency development, and advancing Uganda's Vision 2040 and SDG 4.

Conclusion

There is a significant misalignment between Uganda's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) goals and the implementation of formative assessment in public lower secondary schools in Mpigi District. Teachers' skills in marking and giving feedback remain notably underdeveloped, characterised by inconsistent traditional scoring methods (such as ticks, crosses, or numerical marks without clear criteria), a near-total lack of rubrics or performance descriptors, and mostly generic, non-actionable feedback that does not highlight strengths, weaknesses, or ways to improve. These practices directly undermine Biggs' Constructive Alignment Theory because assessment tasks (ATs) do not produce valid evidence of the intended learning outcomes (ILOs), which focus on skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration. Instead, they encourage surface-level learning through rote memorisation, which conflicts with CBC's focus on learner-centred, formative processes that promote deep skill development and self-regulation. The issues are not mainly due to individual teachers' shortcomings but are rooted in systemic constraints typical of rural, low-resource Ugandan settings: large classes (often exceeding 60-80 learners), severe time shortages caused by heavy workloads, insufficient pre- and in-service training on CBC-specific assessment tools (especially rubric design and feedback literacy), chronic shortages of instructional materials and digital resources, and limited institutional mechanisms for moderation or collaborative marking.

Recommendations

To address the identified gaps and achieve true constructive alignment, the following multi-level, systemic recommendations are proposed, emphasising structural support over isolated teacher training.

Mandate and certify the development and use of rubrics. The Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES), in collaboration with the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) and the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB), should establish mandatory certification for teachers in rubric design and application. This could include integration into pre-service training at teacher colleges and compulsory in-service modules with practical assessments, with recertification required every 2-3 years. Standardised exemplar rubrics for common AOI tasks and competencies should be disseminated nationwide via online portals and printed guides.

Establish national and school-level moderation protocols. Implement structured moderation systems, including national sampling of marked student work for quality assurance, district-level moderation clusters, and school-based collaborative marking sessions (e.g., weekly or termly peer review of AOI tasks). These measures would improve consistency, inter-rater reliability, and shared understanding of competency criteria, thereby reducing subjective scoring.

Encourage collaborative, peer-supported marking practices. Schools should implement timetabled collaborative marking (for example, co-marking sessions or professional learning communities centred on formative tasks) to share the workload, develop collective expertise, and demonstrate effective feedback. Headteachers should be provided with training to support these structures.

Invest in targeted capacity building and ongoing professional development (CPD). Broaden and decentralise CPD programmes, with a strong emphasis on formative assessment literacy, including practical workshops on actionable feedback, rubric co-creation, and digital tools to boost efficiency. Prioritise rural districts, such as Mpigi, through mobile training units, peer mentoring, and benchmarking visits to better-resourced schools. Incorporate follow-up coaching and classroom-based application to ensure practical transfer.

Address systemic resource and workload constraints. The government should invest in reducing class sizes, aiming for phased reductions to 50-60 learners, providing affordable digital assessment supports (e.g., offline rubric apps or shared tablets), and supplying essential materials such as portfolios, checklists, and exemplars. Incentives like workload adjustments or allowances for assessment-heavy subjects could help ease time poverty. Strengthen policy alignment and monitoring. MOES, NCDC, and UNEB should improve assessment guidelines to explicitly emphasise formative contributions, including the quality of marking and feedback, in school performance evaluations. Regular national monitoring surveys (building on recent UNEB studies) should monitor progress in formative practices, with tailored support for low-resource schools to prevent further inequalities.

References

- Ahabwe, M. (2022). Implementing the lower secondary curriculum in Uganda during the COVID-19 crisis. *African Journal of Education, Science and Technology*, 7(2), 145-155. <https://ajest.org/index.php/ajest/article/view/880>
- Aheisibwe, T., & Barigye, E. (2023). Pedagogical experiences of Bishop Stuart University students on school practice about the new lower secondary school curriculum in South Western Uganda. *East African Journal of Education Studies*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajes.6.1.1140>
- Alvesson, M., & Skoldberg, K. (2017). *Reflective methodology: New vistas for qualitative research* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Andiema, N. C. (2020). Teachers' competencies in evaluating competency-based curriculum among special needs learners in Kenya. *Global Journal of Educational Research*, 19, 135-145. <https://doi.org/10.4314/gjedr.v19i2.2>
- Atuhura, D., & Nambi, R. (2024). Competency-based language curricula: Implementation challenges in Africa. *ELT Journal*, 78(3), 245-254. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccae003>
- Biggs, J., & Tang, C. (2014). *Teaching for quality learning at university: What the student does* (4th ed.). McGraw-Hill/Open University Press.
- Boud, D., & Falchikov, N. (2007). *Rethinking assessment in higher education: Learning for the longer term*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203964309>
- Brookhart, S. M. (2011). Educational assessment knowledge and skills for teachers. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 30(1), 3-12. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-3992.2010.00195.x>
- Cañadas, L., Santos-Pastor, M. L., & Ruiz Bravo, P. (2021). Perception of impact of formative assessment on professional competencies during initial teacher training. *Revista Electrónica de Investigación Educativa*, 23, Article e07. <https://doi.org/10.24320/redie.2021.23.e07.2982>

- Chambers, T. P., & Broadbent, J. (2025). Why authenticity matters: A qualitative investigation of students' perceptions of personal values in first-year assessments. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 30(3), 623–639. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2024.2411688>
- Dado, M., Spence, J. R., & Elliot, J. (2023). The case of contradictions: How prolonged engagement, reflexive journaling, and observations can contradict qualitative methods. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069231189372>
- Dayal, H. C. (2021). How teachers use formative assessment strategies during teaching: Evidence from the classroom. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 46(7). <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2021v46n7.1>
- Drisko, J. W. (2025). Algiarism: Computer generated text, plagiarism, and how to address it in teaching. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 45(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08841233.2024.2433795>
- Economic Policy Research Centre. (2025). *From rollout to refinement: Emerging issues in the implementation of Uganda's revised lower secondary curriculum* (YES Perspectives: A Series on Youth Employment and Skills Policies). Pan-African Coalition for Transformation. <https://eprcug.org/publication/from-rollout-to-refinement-emerging-issues-in-the-implementation-of-ugandas-revised-lower-secondary-curriculum>
- Gyagenda, A. (2023). There is a need for a total revamp of the Ugandan educational system towards enabling local graduates to compete on a global scale. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 12(1), 767–777. <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v12-i1/16149>
- Hamdoun, W. M. A. (2023). Constructive alignment approach: Enhancing learning and teaching. *British Journal of Multidisciplinary and Advanced Studies: Education, Learning, Training & Development*, 4(2), 162–170. <https://doi.org/10.37745/bjmas.2022.0173>
- Kazinyirako, J. P., Ntawiha, P., Buhigiro, J. L., & Ndayambaje, I. (2024). Exploring formative assessment practices in public secondary schools in Kicukiro District. *African Journal of Empirical Research*, 5(2), 388–396. <https://doi.org/10.51867/ajernet.5.2.33>
- Kidega, C., Khaing, T., & Zheng, S. (2023). Factors affecting the implementation of competency-based curriculum in secondary schools in Uganda: A systematic review. *North American Academic Research*, 6(9), 84–102. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10058421>
- Ling, J. H. (2024). A review of rubrics in education: Potential and challenges. *Pedagogy: Indonesian Journal of Innovative Teaching and Learning*, 2(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.64420/ijitl.v2i1.197>
- Lestari, S., & Yusuf, F. N. (2025). Aligning assessment practices with learning objectives: A case of EFL classes in Indonesia. *Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*, 10(1), 145–163. <https://doi.org/10.21093/ijeltal.v10i1.1973>
- Mandouit, L., & Hattie, J. (2023). Revisiting "The power of feedback" from the perspective of the learner. *Learning and Instruction*, 84, Article 101718. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2022.101718>
- Ministry of Education and Sports. (2023). *Lower secondary curriculum implementation progress report*. Government of Uganda. <https://www.education.go.ug>
- Namaalwa, B. J., Bweyale, J., & Mugula, O. (2024). The stakeholders' views on assessment of competency-based curriculum (CBC) in selected secondary schools in Kampala District. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 9(3), 116–130. <https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/IJISRT24MAR107>
- Namatende-Sakwa, L., Musyoki, D. M., & Kakooza, A. A. (2025). *Strengthening implementation of Uganda's competence-based curriculum (CBC) through teacher insights* (Policy brief). African Population and Health Research Centre. <https://aphrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/UGANDA-CBC.pdf>
- National Curriculum Development Centre. (2019). *Lower secondary competency-based curriculum framework*. Author.
- National Curriculum Development Centre. (2020). *Assessment guidelines for the lower secondary competency-based curriculum*. Author.
- Olmos-Vega, F. M., Stalmeijer, R. E., Varpio, L., & Kahlke, R. (2023). A practical guide to reflexivity in qualitative research: AMEE Guide No. 149. *Medical Teacher*, 45(3), 241–251. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0142159X.2022.2057287>
- Prosser, M., & Trigwell, K. (2014). Qualitative variation in approaches to university teaching and learning. *Higher Education*, 67(3), 287–298. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-013-9690-0>
- Rahman, S. M. T., Khan, M. M., & Islam, S. T. A. (2021). Online education system in Bangladesh during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Creative Education*, 12(2), 441–452. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2021.122031>

- Schneider, C., & Bodensohn, R. (2017). Student teachers' appraisal of the importance of assessment competency in teacher education and self-reports on their assessment competency. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 24(2), 127-146. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0969594X.2017.1293002>
- Schütze, B., Rakoczy, K., Klieme, E., Besser, M., & Leiß, D. (2017). Training effects on teachers' feedback practice: The mediating function of feedback knowledge and the moderating role of self-efficacy. *ZDM Mathematics Education*, 49(3), 475-489. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11858-017-0855-7>
- Stahl, N. A., & King, J. R. (2020). Expanding approaches for research: Understanding and using trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Journal of Developmental Education*, 44(1), 26-28. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/45381095>
- Stiggins, R. J. (2017). *The perfect assessment system*. ASCD.
- Uganda National Examinations Board. (2022). UCE 2022 results summary and district performance analysis. Author.
- Uganda National Examinations Board. (2023). *CBC assessment guidelines for lower secondary schools*. Author.
- Ukobizaba, F., & Byukusenge, C. (2023). Investigating effective formative assessment applications to enhance students' performance and interest in learning mathematics. *Journal of Classroom Practices*, 2(2), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.58197/prbl/ZAUI4780>
- UNESCO. (2015). *Rethinking education: Towards a global common good?* Author.
- Vegliante, R. (2025). Formative assessment and educational benefits. *Encyclopedia*, 5(2), 68. <https://doi.org/10.3390/encyclopedia5020068>
- Voogt, J., Knezek, G., Christensen, R., & Lai, K.-W. (Eds.). (2018). *Second handbook of information technology in primary and secondary education*. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-71054-9>
- Wambi, M., Ocheng, T. K., Were, D., Buluma, A., Tusiime, W. E., & Balituumye, M. (2024). Teachers' perception on implementing the revised lower secondary curriculum in selected schools in Uganda: A focus on emerging issues and coping strategies. *EIKI Journal of Effective Teaching Methods*, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.59652/jetm.v2i1.173>
- Wandera, R. O., Mugenyi, E., Ampaire, A., Kamugisha, A., & Mbayo, M. (2025). Relevance of criterion-referenced assessment in competency-based curriculum in Uganda. *International Journal of Education and Social Science Research*, 8(2), 374-383. <https://doi.org/10.37500/IJESSR.2025.8225>
- Yan, Z., & Pastore, S. (2022). Assessing teachers' strategies in formative assessment: The Teacher Formative Assessment Practice Scale. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, 40(5), 592-604. <https://doi.org/10.1177/07342829221075121>