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## Kathleen Tattersall

Chair of the Institute of Educational Assessors

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We hope that more individuals will join us as we face another challenging year of teaching and assessing

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## Equipped for change

Welcome back to *Make the Grade* after the summer break. I hope that by now you will have recovered from the usual frantic round of tests and examinations that make up such a major part of the assessment calendar.

The TV and newspaper headlines after the publication of GCSE and A-level results were predictable – many of us could have written the press coverage ourselves over the quieter summer months! – and this issue has given us the opportunity to reflect on how the national media treats our assessments.

The boundaries between assessment and learning are not always well defined. Assessment means different things to different people. On page 18, Robert Coe of Durham University looks at the uses of the term “assessment” and tries to find some common understanding.

### Looking ahead

Over the next few years, a number of changes affecting the way we assess will be coming to fruition. Foremost among them are the new specialised diplomas, which will be introduced in schools and colleges throughout the country in 2008. They will allow learners to engage in both academic and vocational learning. But how does vocational differ from academic assessment? On page 16 you will find a case study of one vocational trainer, Becky Tootell, and her role in assessing students.

The first issue of our magazine coincided with the launch of the Institute of Educational Assessors in May. I am glad to report that both the national and the regional events went extremely well, with high levels of interest in the IEA and support for its objectives shown by teachers, lecturers, examiners and assessors, awarding bodies and teaching unions. Our launches have resulted in applications for membership from a wide range of individuals. We hope that more people will join us as we face another challenging year of teaching and assessing. The institute is here to support those engaged in those activities.

As our membership continues to grow, so does our ability to engage key stakeholders on the issues affecting you – our members. So please take time to read your magazine, look at your website at [www.ioea.org.uk](http://www.ioea.org.uk), or get in touch (our contact details are next to this column) to see how you can shape your institute to meet the needs of one of the most important constituents in any education community – our assessors.

*Kathleen*