

# DE-STREAMING

## **RESOURCE: EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF STREAMING AND ATTAINMENT GROUPING**

I orea te tuatara ka puta ki waho

A problem is solved by continuing to find solutions.

### **Purpose** *(Why you might use this resource)*

To engage teachers and leaders in discussion regarding what is known about the effects of streaming – An introductory article.

### **Audience** *(Could be one intended, or several)*

Classroom teachers

PLD facilitators

SLT

### **Key Points**

- Grouping students in attainment groups has a negative effect on progress, especially for low-achieving students
- Negative social impacts result from being placed in lower groups
- Attainment groups compound issues of racial discrimination
- Teacher expectations differ between high and low attainment groups
- The measures used to place students in groups can be problematic

## Link(s) to key documents

1. [What does the research say about the impact of streaming, setting and attainment grouping on students? - THE EDUCATION HUB](#)

## Suggestions for Use (Ideas for facilitators about how this resource could be used/

Examples of activities/Important questions to consider)

Use the statements below as starting points for conversations in groups.


Prompts:

- Do you agree with the statement?
- How does it relate to your beliefs and experience of streaming or attainment grouping?

a. Overall, the evidence demonstrates that streaming or setting has little if any overall benefit in terms of student academic outcomes. While there may be small achievement gains for higher attaining students, the impact on students in lower attaining groups is negative.

b. Streaming has been shown to have a negative impact on the self-concept, confidence and motivation of students in lower streams, which in turn negatively impacts on their academic achievement and progress.

c. Recent research found that in classes that utilise some form of attainment grouping, 'low attaining learners fall behind by one or two months a year, on average, when compared with the progress of similar students in classes with mixed ability groups', and that this effect is particularly strong in mathematics where setting is most common.



d. Streaming often increases racial segregation within schools and there is evidence to suggest that streaming decreases students' acceptance of racial difference and general positive interaction between racial groups.

e. Streaming has been found to have a negative impact on the social and emotional outcomes of many students.

f. Streaming further disadvantages students from low-income families because the criteria and processes used to allocate students to different groups or streams are often problematic. In many instances, the allocation of students is not based solely on past academic achievement but also teachers' perceptions of student behaviour and previous achievement

g. Teachers' expectations of students in different groups differ significantly, which influences both the curriculum students in different groups access and the pedagogical practices teachers use.

- Groups report back and share the key points of their discussion.