

Setting and Streaming

Some minority ethnic groups are over-represented in the lower sets. If this were due to labelling or institutional racism, the school could face negative sanctions, such as poor press, parental complaints or reduced admissions.



Students in the top sets will speak quite highly of the school's decision to set and stream and this must be taken into account when the researcher is conducting the research. Their parents will also be very positive as their children are seen as 'gifted' and only collecting these views could lead the research to be less objective and may alter the validity of the research

Setting and streaming can have a negative impact on a student's performance and on their self-esteem. Many lower sets are not allowed to enter higher tier exams as it is assumed the students aren't capable of achieving. Researchers would need to show empathy in approaching these students.

Labelling is a factor in setting and streaming and should students be found to have been placed into lower sets based on some other characteristics rather than their academic ability, it could have a negative impact on the perception of the school and the teacher responsible. For this reason, access may not be granted.

Students are placed into sets and streams based upon their perceived ability, however those in the lowest sets are often there based upon behaviour. This may be challenging for a researcher to investigate as student in the bottom sets, as a result of polarisation and differentiation, may have formed anti-school attitudes. Conversely, top set students may be more pro-school and co-operative with the researcher