

# Ensuring standard testing practices in a multilevel multicourse language program

## Multilevel multicourse EL Program

English Language Foundation Program (FPEL)  
English Language Credit Programs ( )

- Students at entry: 17-18 year old Omani nationals
- Mother tongue: Arabic (Swahili, other local languages)
- English is the medium of instruction at SQU (Arabic in schools)
- Around 3000 students are enrolled into SQU annually
- All students sit the Placement Test (except IELTS 5), followed by the Exit Test (from FP) to high-achievers
- Students are streamed into 6 levels of language proficiency (FP) OR exit to Credit
- e.g., Assessment Matrix in FP:
  - Mid-semester test (writing, reading, listening, LU)
  - Final test (writing, reading, listening, LU)
  - Continuous assessment (speaking, project, etc.)

## Scope of Testing: Large Scale Testing / Small Scale Testing / Classroom Assessment

All tests are designed internally.

Assessment Unit: designated members on release time

Placement Test: NRT, Specs  
Reading/listening/grammar/language use

Exit Test: CRT, Specs  
Reading/listening/language use/writing

Objective Course Tests: CRT, Specs  
Reading/listening/language use/writing

Continuous Assessment:  
Speaking, portfolio, m-reader, presentations, extensive reading, reports (supervisory function)

Test Administration Office VS Assessment Unit (!!!)

## Assessment Documents, Regulations and Policies

- NEW (!) UAAP - Undergraduate Academic Assessment Policy - institutional
- Undergraduate Academic Regulations - institutional
- Examination Policy - internal in Center for Preparatory Studies
- Internal documents:
  - guidelines for item writers
  - test writing/revision procedure
  - test administration procedures
  - test marking procedures

## Teacher assessment literacy

Teachers: 250 (220 English, 30 math/IT) + admin staff  
Teacher profile: 30 different countries  
Age: 25 - 68 (teaching experience 1 year - 40 years)  
Qualifications: BA, MA, PhD (TEFL, CELTA, DELTA)  
Omani nationals/Expats  
Levels of assessment literacy: from testing expert to very little knowledge

Teachers do not write tests (!), they contribute through feedback forms, review process, item writing

Regular training workshops (by AU members + outside experts)

Themes:

Testing Principles  
Testing Cycle  
Test Specifications  
Test validation Procedure  
Text selection  
Item Writing  
Test Analysis  
Test Administration

## What do we do to overcome the challenges?

### STANDARD TESTING PRACTICES

Program meetings: test administration  
Regular workshops: target audience (various)  
Standard procedures:  
Test writing - projects, release time, based on need  
Test preparation - follow protocol (Test Admin Office)  
Test administration/Security - unified  
Test Marking - moderation, in one venue, same criteria  
Test validation:  
test specifications  
piloting!  
test map - learning outcomes VS test questions  
statistical analysis - ITEMAN  
test report! - washback



## CONTACT

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