

Special Interest Group for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

SIG coordinators:

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Background and Rationale

Recent years have seen greater awareness of issues related to fairness and accessibility in the field of assessment and wider society. Accordingly, organisations around the world promote equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) as important themes for products, whether in inclusive education, teaching languages or foreign language exams. In language assessment, common practice is to provide accommodations to test-takers and to 'mainstream' EDI thinking into processes, that is, make EDI integral by design to each stage of product development and policy.

Common areas of diversity include but are not limited to:

- age
- disability
- ethnicity
- race
- gender
- religion or belief
- sexual identity

Accommodations and mainstreaming aim to provide greater opportunity, increase fairness in assessment and enrich test-taker experiences, ultimately contributing to more inclusive societies. Although a great deal of work to this end is carried out in the field of assessment, both theory and practical approaches can be opaque to other organisations and often to test-takers themselves.

Organisation and Focus

We expect the SIG to be a space for all interested in EDI issues, but particularly for:

- test providers
- EDI administrators
- educators
- researchers

The aim of the SIG is to provide a forum for discussion with the intention of sharing knowledge in the field, making practices more transparent and discussing present and future developments in EDI, with particular reference to:

- special accommodations (such as changes to the test format or delivery to make the test accessible to test-takers with physical or invisible disabilities), and the promotion and sharing of relevant research, policies, processes, and resources; and
- practices in test development, production and quality review, especially the mainstreaming of EDI thinking, (e.g. diversity and inclusion).

Activities are to include an annual event at the EALTA conference, together with regular additional meetings, webinars, and symposiums according to the interests of SIG members.