Programme
ALTE Introductory Course in Language Testing

Course presenters:
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Ms Jane Lloyd, ALTE Validation Unit

This course introduces core principles guiding the assessment of language abilities. It relates theoretical issues both to the language classroom and to large scale institutional, national and international assessments. The course provides the essential foundations for language assessment practice and for further study in this field.

Participants will learn:
- Principles that inform the decisions that individuals and organisations responsible for language assessment systems have to make about their design, content, implementation and use
- The qualities of language assessments that contribute to their usefulness
- Approaches to the assessment of the skills that language learners need for communicative success
- How to connect tasks found on assessments to the tasks involved in real-world language use
- Practical applications of theoretical and conceptual frameworks in the development and validation of assessments.

The course will provide extensive opportunities for hands-on practice, including in test design, item writing, scoring and quality assurance processes.

Core text – This unit is supported by the following core text which will be sent to each participant, included within the course fee:

Green, A.B. (2020) Exploring language assessment and testing (2nd edition). Abingdon: Routledge. ISBN-13: 978-1138388789

Pre-reading for Session 1: Exploring language assessment and testing, pp.3-17		
1	*Purposes for assessment*	Types of assessment and their uses.
Pre-reading for Session 2: Exploring language assessment and testing (ELAT), pp.18-57		
2	*The assessment cycle*	Steps in designing and developing assessment systems
Pre-reading for Session 3 and 4: ELAT, pp.58-98		
3	*Qualities of effective assessment*	The qualities of assessment systems. Quality assurance frameworks and processes: ALTE as an example

4	*Linking aims to theories and specifications*	Balancing policy aims, theories of language and practical constraints. Standardising assessment material and practices, specifications.
Pre-reading for Sessions 5 to 7: ELAT, pp.99-132		
5	*Assessing Reading*	Sourcing material, targeting reading skills, preparing suitable questions
6	*Assessing Listening*	Finding and adapting recordings, targeting listening skills, preparing suitable questions
7	*Assessing language knowledge*	Why test formal knowledge implicitly or explicitly? Issues of task design
Pre-reading for Sessions 8 and 9: ELAT, pp.133-174, Task types for language assessment: www.routledge.com/cw/rial		
8	*Eliciting performance*	Designing tasks to elicit spoken or written performance
9	*Judging performance*	Options for judging and scoring productive skills Automated scoring and feedback
Pre-reading for Sessions 10 to 12: ELAT, pp.175-233		
10	*Frameworks and objectives*	Working with frameworks: the CEFR as an example
11	*Statistics in the assessment cycle*	The place of numbers in quality control Essential test and item statistics. Rater reliability.
Follow-up reading for Session 11: Statistical tools: www.routledge.com/cw/rial		
12	*Scoring, reporting and setting standards*	What do the results mean? Communicating outcomes to users