NILE ONLINE

Testing, Evaluation and Assessment

NILE — PART OF THE **INTO** GROUP

Overview and Outcomes

This course is an introduction to key concepts, principles and practices in language testing and assessment, and in the broader area of course and programme evaluation. The course is designed for education professionals with a general interest in language assessment, and for those with a specific professional role in this area.

The course will look at the key principles in evaluation in ELT: different models for different objectives; review of formative and summative purposes in testing and assessment; key issues in test design, construction and validation. Finally, we will explore how to put principles into practice: producing good tests and making them work.

Trainers

NILE's highly experienced trainers are experts, not only in their fields, but also in working online with teachers for continuing professional development. Read more about NILE's trainers, their experience and interests at The NILE Team on the NILE website.

Teaching approaches

- We make courses practical and 'hands-on', with reference to relevant theory
- Our courses are participant-centred and collaborative, designed to build knowledge and confidence
- We use activities and tasks to help you apply the course content to your setting
- Courses are broken down into individual units and activities, forming a clear structure.
- Tasks are interactive, involving live online sessions, forums and community walls, and utilise a range of multimedia including images, audio files and videos.

Certification

- Your end-of-course NILE certificate details the areas covered on your course. It comes with recommendations for sharing what you have learnt and implementing your action plan at your institution.
- The course can be extended to include The Trinity Certificate for Practising Teachers (CertPT) - awarded upon completing an 8-week assignment after the course, fulfilling the skills and knowledge descriptors as set out by Trinity College London.

Who should apply?

- Teachers who are currently, or intend to be, involved in testing, assessment and evaluation in their professional context.
- Participants with a minimum language level corresponding to B2 on the Common European Framework

Requirements and Resources

- Participants need a computer, a headset (with microphone) and an Internet connection. You can do much of the course on a tablet or mobile device, but will need a computer for certain activities.
- All participants have access to NILE's extensive ELT e-Library and the NILE digital learning platform during the course and for a further six months, to access materials and keep in touch with your new colleagues. We also encourage you to sign up to the NILE Membership platform, which provides a great range of free resources for ELT professionals and is updated monthly.

Content

Testing, Evaluation and Assessment covers the following areas:

- The key principles in the field of testing, assessment and evaluation
- How to develop your skills as test designers and evaluators
- How to allow for further development after the course
- How to evaluate the full range of test types, assessment procedures and examinations
- How to offer well-informed leadership to your colleagues and institutions in the fields of testing, evaluation and assessment
- Making the testing and assessment coherent with the teaching
- Testing and assessing the full range of communicative skills; profiling
- Basic statistical issues in testing: item analysis and test evaluation
- Critical review of exams: what should we look for in an EFL exam
- Testing and assessing young learners
- 'Authentic' modes of assessment: self-, peer- and portfolio assessment
- Testing and the new technology: the role of computers, CATs and Internet

Each course has a maximum of 18 participants and consists of 8 units, each introduced and completed over a week, Thursday to Wednesday, with an optional 4-week NILE Online assignment or 8-week Trinity College London assignment at the end.

Time will be built into the course for reflection, to consider how to adapt the content to your own professional context. We then support you in creating a strategy for putting your ideas into practice in your institution.

The NILE Online platform was developed specifically for teacher development courses, and upholds the NILE tradition of excellence in tutoring, materials, support and engagement.

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Schedule

This course consists of 8 units. Each unit requires approximately 5-7 hours work per week. Live sessions will be held at a time agreed with participants, and recorded for those who cannot attend.

Testing, Evaluation and Assessment: Course Content	
Unit 1: **Introductions and Key Concepts**	**Unit 2:** **Test Specifications and External Frameworks**
This unit will introduce you to the course structure, platform and dates. You will also find out what you can expect from us and what we expect from you. You will learn more about the NILE Online learning platform and how to communicate effectively online. You will also introduce yourselves and your teaching contexts. You will get an introduction to key concepts in language testing and assessment, and a chance to explore test purposes and their role in your own context.	In this unit, you will review the test types and purposes from Unit 1 and consider their presence in your own professional context. You then consider how test specifications support the test development and validation process. The final activities in the unit concern the importance of the Common European Framework of Reference and its relation to assessment.
Unit 3: **Testing Productive Skills**	**Unit 4:** **Testing Receptive Skills**
This unit is all about testing the productive skills - Speaking and Writing. You will look at constructs, direct vs. indirect assessment, the role of technology, and the use of marking criteria - from an application and a construction perspective.	In this unit you are going to focus on the skills of listening and reading. You will define constructs, watch video interviews with testing experts, look at item types and sub-skills, and explore and practise using item writer guidelines.
Unit 5: **Testing and Assessing Grammar and Vocabulary**	**Unit 6:** **Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods**
In Unit 5 we turn our attention to the language systems, specifically Grammar and Vocabulary, firstly looking at Grammar and the kinds of items we traditionally associate with grammar tests, and whether grammar should be assessed as a separate construct. You will look what 'knowing a word' means, and whether measures of vocabulary breadth or vocabulary depth are more appropriate in testing and assessment. A final focus in this unit is on washback. In this Unit you will again review the content of the course so far in our second live session.	In this unit we look at approaches to research in language testing. This is not focused on high-stakes, large-scale research, but rather things that teachers and institutions can find out about their tests and assessment procedures, as part of their evaluation and quality assurance procedures, and building validity arguments. You will explore both qualitative and quantitative approaches to collecting and analysing data and you will have hands-on practice with both.
Unit 7: **Alternative(s) to) Assessment and Technology in Assessment**	**Unit 8:** **Research Trends, Course Review and Action Planning**
In this unit we explore the approaches to assessment which are often collected under the label 'alternative assessment' or 'authentic assessment'. These include Classroom-based Assessment, self-assessment, portfolio assessment, and 'assessing the unassessable'. In the second part of the unit, you will look at the role of digital technology in testing, and whether it has a place in alternative assessment too. Finally, you will work together to build a resource of Web 2.0 tools for language testers.	In this final unit we start by looking at current research trends in testing and assessment, and relating them to the cornerstones we began with at the beginning of the course. You will have the opportunity to try out a task from one of the assignments, so you can get some feedback before you start the real thing. You will also review the course and participate in some activities to round off the course.
Assignment	
Option A	**Option B**
Describe and critically evaluate a test or testing procedure which is currently used in a specific testing context of your choice.	Design a test task, test component or assessment procedure which would be appropriate for a particular point in a context of your choice.

At NILE we are committed to offering the best in language teacher training. As such, NILE Online courses were developed specifically to recreate the classroom experience and thus, we provide two-way tutorial contact in our online courses. Online participants will benefit from tutor interaction, support and feedback in each unit they take.

NILE Online is the first online course provider aligned to the Cambridge English Teaching Framework. NILE Online courses are also formally aligned to the Eaquals Framework for Language Teacher Training and Development, and the effort we take to make the NILE Online experience both positive and productive has been recognised by inspections from AQUEDUTO, The Association for Quality Education and Training Online.