



The University of Southern Queensland

Course specification

The current and official versions of the course specifications are available on the web at <http://www.usq.edu.au/coursespecification/current>.
Please consult the web for updates that may occur during the year.

Description: Language Testing

| Subject | Cat-nbr | Term | Mode | Units | Campus |
|---------|---------|---------|------|-------|-----------|
| LIN | 8007 | 3, 2010 | EXT | 1 | Toowoomba |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Academic group: | FOEDU |
| Academic org: | FOE002 |
| Student contribution band: | National Priority Teaching |
| ASCED code: | 070115 |

STAFFING

Examiner: Shirley O'Neill
Moderator: Ann Dashwood

RATIONALE

Teachers constantly have to make judgements about the language proficiency levels of their students. With the present emphasis on the goals of second language teaching being more communicative and the need for students to meet literacy benchmarks, teachers have to develop the skills beyond pen and paper tests to include assessment of skills in oral and aural language. The present emphasis on outcomes-based education and national testing also emphasises the need for teachers to be able to discuss issues related to assessment practices, construct and use tests and other forms of assessment to measure their students' language and literacy skills. This course examines the current knowledge about language testing and assessment.

SYNOPSIS

The course will introduce students to the different types of language tests and forms of language assessment techniques and their purposes. It will look at how language proficiency is measured and the ways scores are interpreted. It will also discuss the criteria for good tests: reliability and validity. Students will have practice in devising their own test packages in which they will demonstrate their understanding of the principles of second language testing.

OBJECTIVES

The course objectives define the student learning outcomes for a course. The assessment item(s) that may be used to assess student achievement of an objective are shown in parenthesis. On successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. discuss different types of language tests and their purposes (Assignment 1);
2. describe different types of scales that are used in measurement; (Assignments 1 and 2)
3. demonstrate their knowledge in scoring and interpreting test data (Assignments 1 and 2)
4. discuss the importance of reliability and validity in testing (Assignments 1 and 2)
5. demonstrate their understanding of test construction by developing tests of language proficiency (Assignment 2)

6. Demonstrate competence in written language and scholarly writing including correct spelling, grammar, and bibliographic referencing. (Assignment 1 and 2)

TOPICS

| Description | Weighting (%) |
|---|---------------|
| 1. Purposes and types of language measurement | 10.00 |
| 2. Measurement scales | 10.00 |
| 3. Scoring and interpreting data | 15.00 |
| 4. Test reliability | 10.00 |
| 5. Test validity | 10.00 |
| 6. Preparing tests in four macroskills | 35.00 |
| 7. Preparing tests of grammar and vocabulary | 10.00 |

TEXT and MATERIALS required to be PURCHASED or ACCESSED

ALL textbooks and materials are available for purchase from USQ BOOKSHOP (unless otherwise stated). Orders may be placed via secure internet, free fax 1800642453, phone 07 46312742 (within Australia), or mail. Overseas students should fax +61 7 46311743, or phone +61 7 46312742. For costs, further details, and internet ordering, use the 'Textbook Search' facility at <http://bookshop.usq.edu.au> click 'Semester', then enter your 'Course Code' (no spaces).

Hughes, A.2003, *Testing for language teachers*, 2nd edn, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

Reference materials are materials that, if accessed by students, may improve their knowledge and understanding of the material in the course and enrich their learning experience.

(Whether you are on, or off campus, the USQ Library is an excellent source of information <http://www.usq.edu.au/library>. The gateway to education resources is here ... <http://www.usq.edu.au/library/help/facultyguides/education/default.htm>)

Bachman, LF1990, *Fundamental considerations in language testing*, OUP, Oxford.

Brown, H.D2004, *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*, Longman, New York.

Weir, C2005, *Language testing and validation: An evidence based approach*, Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke, UK.

STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS

| ACTIVITY | HOURS |
|-------------------|--------|
| Directed Study | 65.00 |
| Independent Study | 100.00 |

ASSESSMENT DETAILS

| Description | Marks out of | Wtg (%) | Due date |
|--------------|--------------|---------|-------------|
| ASSIGNMENT 1 | 30 | 30 | 07 Jan 2011 |
| ASSIGNMENT 2 | 70 | 70 | 04 Feb 2011 |

IMPORTANT ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

- 1 Attendance requirements:**

There are no attendance requirements for this course. However, it is the students' responsibility to study all material provided to them or required to be accessed by them to maximise their chance of meeting the objectives of the course and to be informed of course-related activities and administration. It is the students' responsibility to participate appropriately in all activities.
- 2 Requirements for students to complete each assessment item satisfactorily:**

To satisfactorily complete an individual assessment item a student must achieve at least 50% of the marks (Depending upon the requirements in Statement 4 below, students may not have to satisfactorily complete each assessment item to receive a passing grade in this course.)
- 3 Penalties for late submission of required work:**

If students submit assignments after the due date without (prior) approval of the examiner then a penalty of 5% of the total marks gained by the student for the assignment may apply for each working day late up to ten working days at which time a mark of zero may be recorded. No assignments will be accepted after model answers have been posted.
- 4 Requirements for student to be awarded a passing grade in the course:**

To be assured of receiving a passing grade a student must achieve at least 50% of the total weighted marks available for the course.
- 5 Method used to combine assessment results to attain final grade:**

The final grades for students will be assigned on the basis of the aggregate of the weighted marks obtained for each of the summative assessment items in the course.
- 6 Examination information:**

There is no examination in this course.
- 7 Examination period when Deferred/Supplementary examinations will be held:**

As there are no examinations in this course, there will be no deferred or supplementary examinations.
- 8 University Student Policies:**

Students should read the USQ policies Definitions, Assessment and Student Academic Misconduct to avoid actions which might contravene University policies and practices. These policies can be found at the URL http://policy.usq.edu.au/portal/custom/search/category/usq_document_policy_type/Student.1.html.

ASSESSMENT NOTES

- 1 APA style is the referencing system required in this course. Students should use APA style in their assignments to format details of the information sources they have cited in their work. The APA style to be used is defined by the USQ Library's referencing guide. <http://www.usq.edu.au/library/help/referencing/default.htm>**

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- 1 **IMPORTANT NOTE: Working with Children:** State law in Queensland requires that all adults (including university students, pre-service educators, trainers, vocational teachers, industry educators) working with children under the age of 18, in the state of Queensland*, obtain approval before commencing such work. Many education courses include a practical component (professional experience, project work, research, assessment etc.) that may require engagement with children under the age of 18. It is your responsibility to ensure that you possess a current suitability card (Blue Card) before commencing any practical components of this course. **DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN ANY PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18 UNLESS YOU POSSESS A CURRENT 'BLUE CARD'**. For further information: <http://www.usq.edu.au/education/profexp/bluecard>
*If you are undertaking practical experience outside the state of Queensland, Australia you should check local requirements.
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