

Benchmarking and diagnostics

How we can help

Cambridge Assessment English can help you evaluate your English language education system by testing the language skills of your learners and teachers, and collecting information on the factors within and outside of school that affect learner and teacher performance. The resulting data can be used to support the development of an evidence-based strategy for improving the current standard of language learning.

What we offer

Benchmarking students

We provide a modern, cost-effective and efficient online service. A typical benchmarking service would include the following elements:

Sampling

We undertake sampling in consultation with you, following the sampling approach used in large-scale education surveys, such as PISA and TIMSS. Alternatively, all students within a learning system can be tested.

Testing for students

Comprising online language assessment testing skills in reading, writing, listening and use of English. We can also assess speaking skills as required.

Questionnaires

Online questionnaires for students, teachers, parents and educational institutions in order to collect information on the factors within and outside of the school that affect learner performance.

Results report

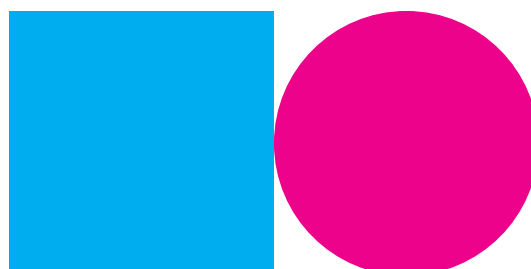
The deliverable from our benchmarking service will be a detailed profile of language competence with language proficiency mapped to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The output will be in the form of a report that includes recommendations with regard to how to improve the learning and teaching of English.

Benchmarking teachers

The typical benchmarking service for teachers would include sampling, testing for students, questionnaires and a results report with the addition of an online teaching knowledge benchmarking test.

Key benefits for you

- As part of the University of Cambridge we provide the advantage of a reputable, objective evaluation, considering internal and external factors that may affect performance
- A research-based approach to the alignment of language competence to international standards
- Established baseline that can be used to measure progress or assess future outcomes
- Recommendations to support the development of an evidence-based strategy for future interventions to improve English language education



Case studies



Benchmarking English speaking skills to improve national curricula

Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development

Netherlands

The Institute (Nationaal Expertisecentrum Leerplanontwikkeling – SLO) was tasked with delivering new and improved English language curricula for the national secondary education system in the Netherlands, for students in vocational or general streams, and at pre-university level. The aim was to improve the quality of learning outcomes, and therefore raise proficiency levels, by aligning national curricula with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

To achieve this goal, SLO first had to establish the performance levels attained by current students, determine whether these levels met existing targets, and then map current performance against the CEFR. We were asked to deliver this part of the project as we can offer a high-quality, face-to-face Speaking test for all the ability levels defined by SLO.

Our Speaking test was used to map student ability against every CEFR level, from A1 to C2. A sample of 1,732 students, in 40 schools, took the Speaking test. We also sourced, trained and managed the team of experienced examiners required to deliver this complex testing programme.

When testing was completed, we produced a detailed report in which results were analysed in terms of CEFR level, and in the contexts of gender, province, first language and educational stream. The report also included a series of recommendations for SLO, which were used to inform the next stage of the curriculum planning process.

For more information on our English language consultancy, visit:

 cambridgeenglish.org/consultancy



Benchmarking English language proficiency against international standards

Ministry of Education

Malaysia

We worked with the Ministry to evaluate the learning, teaching and assessment of English in schools in Malaysia. At the same time, we tested language proficiency from pre-school to pre-university. Reading, listening, writing and use of English were tested online while speaking was tested face to face.

This study is now complete and is enabling the Malaysian Government to set realistic and achievable targets for the future. The project also delivered baseline data which the Ministry is using to determine whether these targets are being met, and therefore whether its reform strategies are proving successful.

The key aim of the evaluation was to benchmark student and teacher English language proficiency against international standards. Teachers were also benchmarked on their teaching knowledge and teaching practice. The role of a range of other factors such as the contexts of and attitudes towards learning, school location, school type, class specialisation and gender on language proficiency was explored and current national curricula, assessments and learning materials were reviewed.

The evidence-based 2013 baseline findings provide the Ministry with a clear picture of how the Malaysian English language education system is currently performing against internationally recognised standards along with the recommended next steps required to implement an integrated solution.

Contact the team at:

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