

# Supporting the goal of a bilingual population with improved teacher training and development

Ministry of Education

Panama



**In a long-term, collaborative initiative, Cambridge Assessment English is working closely with the Ministry of Education in Panama (MEDUCA) to improve the professional development of English language teachers across the country, with the introduction of our teaching qualifications CELT-P and CELT-S (Cambridge Certificate in English Language Teaching for Primary or Secondary).**

The Panama Government wants to create a bilingual population as a means of achieving rapid economic growth and a better quality of life for Panamanian citizens. As a first step towards achieving this goal, the Government established the Panama Bilingue Project in order to raise national standards of English language teaching, and to increase the number of English teachers working in schools. The certification project is run jointly by MEDUCA and Cambridge English, and aims to radically improve national teacher training strategies by introducing new techniques and methodologies, and by establishing a programme of long-term continuous professional development.

As a first stage in this process, we undertook an analysis of English proficiency and teaching knowledge among a sample of teachers from across Panama. From the

teachers surveyed, 78 were selected to train as 'expert instructors', and were enrolled onto our Train the Trainer course, an internationally renowned course designed to develop the skills required to plan and deliver teacher training programmes.

On completing the Train the Trainer course, expert instructors went on to run training courses for 500 teachers across Panama. The courses comprised 200 hours of face-to-face and online learning where successful participants gained either the CELT-P or CELT-S qualification from Cambridge English. Both CELT-P and CELT-S are internationally recognised qualifications which focus on developing the practical skills required to teach English effectively.

Cambridge English is continuing to support the work and vision of MEDUCA and is now establishing an annual training programme for English teachers, with further opportunities to achieve established professional development qualifications.

**The Panama Bilingue Project aims to radically improve national teacher training strategies.**

