Finding & implementing a new placement test

Prepared for Languages Canada

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Context

British Columbia Institute of Technology

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Strategy Summary

Technical Academic English

- Content-based language instruction (technology, business & culture)
- Experiential methodologies
- Working in teams
- Assessment mapped to CEFR

Test Options

- Linguaskill
- Oxford Online Placement Test
- Pearson
- APTIS General

Criteria

- Test purpose
- Test Design
- Test Content
- Task Types
- Ease of navigation

- CEFR coverage
- Length
- Scoring
- Administration
- Practice Material availability

Why trial Linguaskill?

- Computer adaptive
- Modular
- Good construct coverage
- General content & topics
- Cambridge English Scale
    - Comparison to Cambridge exams
    - Placement into 7-week courses
- Online proctoring option

How to:

- Run logistical trial
- Test current students
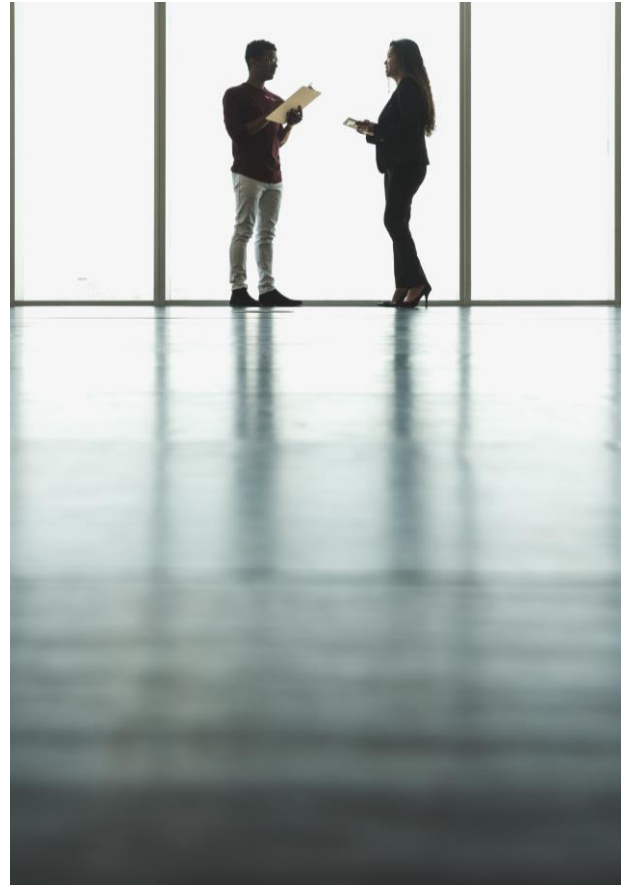 Follow up with instructors
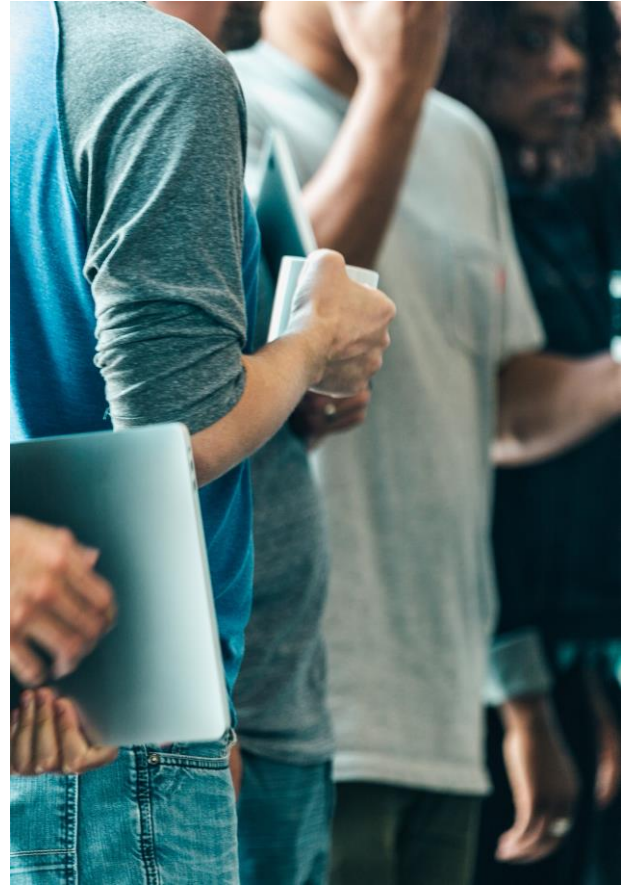- Track data

Limitations
- Timing
- Motivation for students

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Faculty feedback

- *"The ranking in my class is exactly right"*
- *"This explains X's misplacement in my class"*
- *"It's uncanny how accurate it is"*

Student feedback

- *"It's harder"* (than the other test) * Accuplacer
- *"You can't cheat"*
- *"Really interesting"*

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Recommendations

- Do the test yourself
- Run a logistical trial first
- Run at least 100 students through the test
- See how scores correlate to their placement
- Talk with instructors to get their insights into their students

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