

CertAcles: ACLES Model for the Accreditation of language competence

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FOREWORD

The Association of Language Centres in Higher Education (ACLES), following one of its main objectives, which is to assist in improving the quality and performance of University Language Centres and to promote the cooperation between its members, published its accreditation model guidelines in January 2011. The implementation and follow up of the accreditation model over the years by the different language centres accredited by ACLES to issue certificates of language competence have served to achieve the objectives for which the model was created: to develop a certification model that respects university autonomy and meets the criteria of sustainability, transparency, effectiveness and quality agreed upon by ACLES members.

Fruit of this effort is the recognition of ACLES accreditation model by the Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities (CRUE) and by the European Confederation of Language Centres in Higher Education (CERCLES) as a valid model for conducting exams of language competence which has been called **CertAcles**.

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ACLES President

Index

- What is ACLES?
- Background of the ACLES model for the accreditation of language competence
- Principles governing CertAcles certification
- CertAcles model
- Accreditation of Centres
- Process standards
- Accreditation Commission
- Marking scale & Examination structure
- Table of certificates valid for level accreditation and their correspondence with the CEFR
- Annex 1: EALTA Guidelines for Good Practice in Language Testing and Assessment

What is ACLES?

ACLES (*Asociación de Centros de Lenguas en la Enseñanza Superior* or the Spanish Association of Language Centres in Higher Education) was created in 2001 and currently comprises most Language Centres of state-run and private universities.

The Association is also a member of the European Confederation of Language Centres in Higher Education (CERCLES), which brings together some 290 universities from 22 European countries.

ACLES was founded to provide university language centres with a forum where they can share their best practices to reach a consensus on the best procedures for standardising language proficiency levels and evaluation

systems in accordance with Council of Europe guidelines while respecting each university's autonomy.

To achieve this, ACLES has five main tools at its disposal:

- ✓ An Executive Committee made up of representatives from different universities.
- ✓ Working groups of representatives from different universities responsible for drawing up reports and best practice recommendations. Since 2008, three such groups have been working on Accreditation, Quality and Linguistic Policy.
- ✓ Quarterly meetings of the Directors of ACLES Centres to determine fields of work and discuss topics of common interest to all Centres.
- ✓ Members' meetings.
- ✓ The biannual ACLES Congress, which provides a meeting point for teachers and experts in language training.

Background of CertAcles model for the accreditation of language competence

CertAcles model for the accreditation of language competence was created in response to a need for standardising the criteria for accrediting different levels of foreign language skills in higher education and thus facilitate mobility between Spanish universities and the internationalisation of universities.

The working group on accreditation was made up of representatives from the Central Language Service at the University of Salamanca, the Language Centre at the Universitat Politècnica de Valencia and the Language Service at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. CertAcles model has been endorsed by the Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities (CRUE) and recognised by CERCLES.

CertAcles is a language accreditation framework developed in the context of higher education and for universities' use, which takes into consideration the following aspects:

- ✓ Accredited languages and levels not only vary according to the needs of each university but also with the ultimate purpose of accreditation. Therefore CertAcles is a model that can be applied to any language and level as required by the certifying institution.
- ✓ The system adopted for the accreditation of language competence must follow ACLES accrediting standards and must be recognised by all universities adopting this accreditation model. Therefore, CertAcles is an accreditation model that consists of language competence exams based on some standard criteria agreed upon by all ACLES members and independent of any language training and language courses imparted at the universities and language centres.
- ✓ Universities will employ already existing resources and know-how elements for the design of the exams, i.e., their language centres. In other words, the examinations will be developed by the language centres based on a common framework of reference, the CEFR.

Principles governing CertAcles certification

- ✓ **USEFULNESS and RESPECT TO UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY:** Universities decide when and how examinations are conducted, what languages and levels are examined and what fees are charged.
- ✓ **RESPECT TO DIVERSITY:** The model is valid for both members and non-members of the Association alike but provide the necessary infrastructure for testing in accordance with Association guidelines.
- ✓ **SUSTAINABILITY:** The implementation of the accreditation system should not involve too great a financial cost for the universities concerned. By making use of existing resources, university language centres with the right experience and suitable human skills can reduce the cost of accreditation or even make it pay for itself.
- ✓ **TRANSPARENCY:** The accreditation model is governed by parameters common to those of other European universities, that is, in accordance with European Community guidelines laid down in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. This gives a comprehensive description of the knowledge and skills needed for a language to be used efficiently and, at the same time, defines the levels of command of a language, allowing progress to be assessed throughout the learning period.
- ✓ **EFFICIENCY:** Because the model has been recognised by the CRUE and by CERCLES and other European centres it can significantly contribute to international mobility and the internationalisation of universities.

CertAcles Model

Only the examinations that meet CertAcles model requirements and only the centres that have been accredited by the Association for that purpose can issue CertAcles Certifications. The Association will publish annually the list of accredited language centres and universities that can issue CertAcles certificates at its website (<http://www.acles.es>) .Certificates shall include the CertAcles logo (provided exclusively by the Association)

CertAcles model, approved by consensus by the different university language centres comprising ACLES, establishes the following:

- ✓ Requirements that must be met by university Centres wishing to make use of the ACLES examination-based accreditation model, CertAcles, (whether they are members of the Association or non-members who wish to avail themselves of this model for accrediting their own examinations).
- ✓ Commitments taken on by Centres on being accredited by ACLES as Certifying Centres.
- ✓ Process standards, with relation to the administration, content and structure of examinations, evaluation criteria and the certification issued. Appendix 1 shows the marking scale and examination structure.
- ✓ CertAcles accreditation does not imply an identical or centralised evaluation system; it constitutes a guarantee of quality by the Association of the evaluation and certification methods used in each university Centre

NOTE: Being a full member of ACLES does not involve being accredited for the implementation of CertAcles exams.

Characteristics

- ✓ Certificate levels: Levels A1 – C2 as established in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.
- ✓ Language competence certificate addressed to candidates over 16 years old.
- ✓ Languages and certificate levels are to be determined by each Centre. CertAcles accredited languages are: German, Spanish, French, English, Italian and Portuguese.
- ✓ In order to certify the overall level, the following four macro skills will be evaluated by examination: oral comprehension, written comprehension, oral production and written production.
- ✓ The certificates issued by ACLES accredited centres will include the CertAcles logo and will indicate the level attained and, where applicable, include a breakdown of skills [standard model: equivalence according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, marking scale, CEFR level global descriptors and exam date].
- ✓ Certification will be independent of the type of language training received.
- ✓ Candidates must enrol for examinations at their own Centre in accordance with the conditions established by the Centre as an examining institution.
- ✓ Each centre will determine the number of examination sessions held annually as far as the exams meet the quality standards specified by the Association
- ✓ CertAcles certifying centres are required to pay a fee to ACLES as accredited centres. The fees will be set by the Executive Committee based on a proposal from the Accreditation Commission, and will be posted on the website of ACLES and reviewed annually.
- ✓ Accredited Centres must be “reaccredited” as certifying institutions by ACLES every two years.
- ✓ The Association will publish annually the list of accredited language centres and universities as well as the CertAcles examinations at ACLES website (<http://www.acles.es>)
- ✓ The centres administering CertAcles exams will be audited by the Association to guarantee that the standards and quality of the model are met. No compliance with the model requirements will imply the loss of the CertAcles seal.

Accreditation of Centres

Accreditation as a CertAcles certifying institution will be carried out by an Accreditation Commission (AC) specifically created for the purpose by ACLES. The Commission will carry out audits to verify compliance by accredited Centres with the established guidelines and procedures.

The accreditation of centres for the administration of CertAcles certificates will be valid for a period of two years.

Requirements of certifying institutions

- ✓ Certifying institutions must have at their disposal a higher education language centre belonging to ACLES or, failing that, a university body responsible for the administration of CertAcles certifications.
- ✓ Accredited Centres must be “reaccredited” as certifying institutions by ACLES every two years.
- ✓ Centres wishing to apply for accreditation as an ACLES certifying institution should submit the following documents in digital format by email acreditacion@acles.es to the Accreditation Commission within the period indicated in ACLES website

• Members of the ACLES Association:

1. The application form to be a CertAcles accrediting institution. The form is available on the ACLES website <http://www.acles.es/acreditacion/>.
2. For institutions applying for the first time, the Collaboration agreement between ACLES and the university, all pages (including annexes) signed by the rector .
3. A specimen copy of the certificate to be issued by the Centre with a blank space for CertAcles logo.
4. A copy of the examination
5. For multilevel exams, also submit the additional documents specified in the application form.
6. Any other documents required by the AC during the accreditation process

NOTE: Any changes that have taken place to the documents or the procedures during the accredited period must be communicated to the Accreditation Commission (acreditacion@acles.es)

• Non-Member Institutions

In addition to the above-mentioned documents, the applying institution should submit a brief report, signed by the rector or delegate, outlining the status and characteristics of the institution. The person in charge of the CertAcles exams should be identified and a statement of commitment should be included, undertaking to have qualified personnel available for the supervision of examinations.

For new members:

- ✓ The first examination session conducted as a CertAcles accredited institution will be supervised by a person external to the institution who will be designated by ACLES.
- ✓ All applications for accreditation will be resolved by the ACLES Accreditation Commission no later than three months after the date of

receipt of application. For application dates, please check at ACLES website.

NOTE: Failure to adhere to any of the guidelines established by ACLES with respect to examination procedures and other requirements may lead to the suspension of the status as a certifying institution.

In the event of this happening, the ACLES Accreditation Commission will notify the Centre within a maximum period of one month from the date on which the breach occurred, giving reasons for the suspension and establishing a time period and a series of conditions for recertification of the institution.

Commitments

Once a Centre has been accredited as a CertAcles certifying institution it must undertake to fulfil the following requirements:

- ✓ The representative of the Accreditation Commission must be kept fully informed about evaluation systems and certifications organised by the Centre.
- ✓ A copy of the examinations held in the year, by level and language, together with marking criteria, should be made available to ACLES.
- ✓ To keep a copy of the conducted exams for at least four years for auditing purposes
- ✓ To pay the fees as CertAcles accrediting centre to ACLES (<http://www.acles.es/acreditacion/>)
- ✓ A person shall be appointed or authorised each year to liaise with the representative of the Accreditation Commission on matters concerning certification.
- ✓ Records must be kept of all examinations held. These should indicate languages, levels examined and results, and may be subject to verification by the ACLES Accreditation Commission.
- ✓ Centres must pay a minimum of 2 days' travel and living expenses for at least 2 ACLES auditors (in accordance with regulations in force at the university of the Centre concerned), should a visit to the accredited Centre be required following an audit by the ACLES Accreditation Commission.
- ✓ Centres must designate at least one representative to attend meetings on certification convened by ACLES.
- ✓ Centres should have at their disposal a team of examiners to be responsible for the planning, organisation and monitoring of examinations, resolve any incidents that may arise and present evidence of their team training programme.
- ✓ Examination results should be available within a maximum period of 30 days and certificates within a maximum of 90 days (30 + 60 days).

Process standards

Administration of examinations

- ✓ The contents, structure and marking criteria of the examinations should be made known to the examinees sufficiently in advance and the information will be published on ACLES website <http://www.acles.es/acreditacion/>
- ✓ Examination review procedures must be made public and comply with the regulations of each institution.
- ✓ Each institution may choose the format in which the examination is conducted.
- ✓ Examinations will remain exclusively at the disposal of the institutions and ACLES, not the examinees.
- ✓ Centres will provide support for examinees with special needs.

Examination contents, structure and marking criteria

- ✓ Examination contents and marking criteria should correspond to Common European Framework of Reference descriptors.
- ✓ Tasks and materials taken from previously published examinations will not be used. See ACLES website for more details
- ✓ The four macro skills (oral and written production, oral and written comprehension) will be assessed either together or separately. Tasks related to use of the language may also be included.
- ✓ All examination tasks, with the possible exception of use of the language, will be based on real life tasks, and, as far as possible, textual material will be taken from real sources, depending on the level to be evaluated. Compulsory from level B1
- ✓ Whatever the level being certified, the duration of examinations will be no less than 70 minutes and no more than 250 minutes.
- ✓ Where possible, the oral examination will consist of an interview with two examiners and will be recorded
- ✓ Tests of written and oral production will be evaluated, where possible, by two examiners, in accordance with the procedures established by the Centre.
- ✓ A table showing examination structure according to level and skill is available on ACLES website for guidance and standardisation.
- ✓ Marking criteria established by the universities concerned will be respected; use of the scale in Appendix 1 is recommended.
- ✓ After two years of the administration of an exam, individual tasks can be reutilised for future sessions but never the full exam will be used in future editions. See ACLES website for more details

CertAcles Certificate

- ✓ A certificate will only be awarded if the required level is satisfied.
- ✓ The certificate will show the language examined, the recognised level attained (based on CEFR), date of the test and, where appropriate, a breakdown of skills.
- ✓ It is recommended that a final mark equal to or exceeding 60% of the total possible points be required to certify that the overall level has been achieved, (with 50% being the minimum) provided that a minimum of 50% of the possible mark has been attained in each skill.
- ✓ Certification procedures will be in compliance with the Organic Law on Personal Data Protection.

Accreditation Commission

Quality guarantee

In parallel with the CertAcles accreditation model, the quality and veracity of certificates issued by the Centres are regulated and guaranteed by the ACLES Accreditation Commission, which accredits Centres wishing to be ACLES certifying centres and verifies that the requirements of the Association with regard to examinations are being met.

Four geographical accreditation zones have been established for organisational purposes. Nevertheless, as far as the Association is concerned, the ultimate aim is that these zones should foster collaboration between Centres on different aspects of language skill accreditation (whether examination-based or based on other methods established by individual universities, such as the use of similar protocols for recognising the B1 level of the master's degree in secondary school teaching), and the standardisation of equivalence tables for certification, evaluation training and examination validation.

As can be observed from the regulations, each university taking part in the project will have its own representative on the Accreditation Commission, who will be advised by a professional evaluation specialist.

Rules and Regulations

1. Constitution of the Accreditation Commission (AC)

1.1. Only full members of the ACLES Association can form part of the Accreditation Commission.

1.2. Four geographical zones have been established for accreditation purposes:

- Zone 01: Catalonia, Community of Valencia and the Balearic Islands
- Zone 02: Andalusia, Murcia, the Canary Islands, Ceuta and Melilla
- Zone 03: Madrid, Extremadura, Castilla-la Mancha, Navarra and Aragon
- Zone 04: Galicia, Asturias, Cantabria, the Basque Country and Castilla y León

1.3. The AC will consist of 9 members: a representative of the ACLES Executive Committee, one representative and one member from each of the four geographical zones. More members may be added as the number of applications for accreditation increases.

1.4. The Presidency of the AC will always be held by the person that represents the ACLES Executive Committee.

1.5. Representatives from each geographical zone will be appointed by the ACLES Executive Committee at the proposal of the Centres and at appropriate intervals. They will be responsible for liaising with the Centres in their zone. A representative of a zone cannot evaluate his or her own Centre for accreditation purposes.

1.6. A renowned European association recognised in the field of evaluation may act as advisor to the AC in the test validation.

2. Functions

2.1. Functions of the Accreditation Commission:

2.1.1. To establish periods of application for accreditation and reaccreditation as CertAcles Certifying Centres.

2.1.2. To confirm or reasonably reject applications for accreditations. The AC will meet at least once every year for this purpose.

2.1.3. To determine the profiles of the representatives and ordinary members in each geographical zone

2.1.4. To appoint representatives and ordinary members in each geographical zone and designate the Centres they will represent.

2.1.5. To keep records of all examinations held. These will indicate Centre, registration number, identification number (ID) language and level. The results and marking criteria may be subject to verification by the AC.

2.1.6. To arrange for audits of the accredited Centres.

2.1.7. To decide on whether a Centre should lose its certifying status, once the arguments of the corresponding representative and zone member have been heard, in cases where the guidelines or conditions of accreditation have not been fulfilled.

2.1.8. Propose to the Executive Committee the fees for the accreditation of the administrative procedure and the fees for non-member institutions.

2.1.9. To convene meetings and recommend training workshops to the Certifying Centres.

2.1.10. To undertake the process of test validation.

2.2. Function of the zone representatives:

2.2.1. To liaise with the AC and the ACLES managing board

2.2.2. To act as interlocutor with the person in charge of the Centres in the zone

2.2.3. To submit the information on accreditation to the AC to be published on ACLES website, for the registration of the CertAcles seals and for the payment of the accreditation fees

2.2.4. To organise action plans with the zone member relative to the implementation of the accreditation procedures in the Centres

2.2.5. To attend the meetings convened by the AC

2.2.6. To inform and advise Centres on the requirements necessary for becoming a Certifying Centre.

2.2.7. To receive applications for accreditation from Centres assigned by the AC.

2.2.8. To evaluate the documentation received and check that all the requirements for a Certifying Centre are met.

2.2.9. In the event of accreditation being denied, the Centre must be informed of the reasons for refusal and be given a period to rectify the situation.

2.2.10. To propose accreditation to the AC of Centres in his or her zone.

2.2.11. To monitor compliance with the guidelines and conditions of accreditation.

2.2.12. To inform the AC if any Centre does not comply with ACLES guidelines for holding examinations or other requirements for a certifying institution.

2.2.13. To take the minutes of any meetings held in the assigned Centres.

2.2.14. To receive a digitally formatted model of examinations held, by level and by language, with the purpose of carrying out the test validation process.

2.2.15. To visit the assigned Centres for verification purposes during the examination period when recommended by the AC.

2.3. Functions of the zone member

2.3.1. To inform and advise Centres on the requirements necessary for becoming a Certifying Centre.

2.3.2. To help the zone representative in his actions and tasks

2.3.3. To substitute the zone representative, when required

2.3.4. To attend the meetings convened by the AC

2.3.5. To visit the assigned Centres for verification purposes during the examination period when recommended by the AC

2.4. Functions of the AC President

2.4.1. To liaise with the ACLES Executive Committee

2.4.2. To convene AC meetings.

2.4.3. To take the minutes at AC meetings.

2.4.4. To notify Centres of the results of the accreditation process. In the event of accreditation being denied, the Centre must be informed of the reasons for refusal.

Marking scale & Examination structure

Marking scale

Marks are awarded on a scale of 0 to 10 points (100%) expressed to one decimal point:

- ✓ Between 6.0 and 6.9 points (60%-69% of total marks possible) = PASS.
- ✓ Between 7.0 and 8.9 points (70%-89% of total marks possible) = MERIT.
- ✓ Between 9.0 and 10 points (90%-100% of total marks possible) = DISTINCTION.

Structure of CertAcles examinations

A table with the structure of CertAcles exam by level and skill is available on ACLES website <http://www.acles.es/acreditacion/>

Tables of certificates valid for level accreditation and their correspondence with the CEFR

A table of valid certificates for level accreditation and their correspondence with the CEFR is available on ACLES website <http://www.acles.es/acreditacion/>

- ✓ The tables of valid certificates will be reviewed by ACLES annually, during the month of July, and will be published before the start of the academic year.
- ✓ ACLES may grant provisional recognition of other certificates admitted during the academic year by member institutions of the Association.
- ✓ Certificates that do not cover all four skills will not be recognised under any circumstances.

Annex 1. EALTA

EALTA Guidelines for Good Practice in Language Testing and Assessment

The EALTA Executive Committee appointed a Working Group to review and revise the draft Code of Practice received from the ENLTA Project. The task of the Working Group was to develop a code of practice or set of guidelines for good practice in testing and assessment which is appropriate to EALTA and its mission.

The EALTA Mission Statement is as follows:

The purpose of EALTA is to promote the understanding of theoretical principles of language testing and assessment, and the improvement and sharing of testing and assessment practices throughout Europe.

The rationale for the Guidelines adopted by the Working Group was the following:

Europe is a multilingual continent, where the diversity of languages, cultures and traditions is highly valued. Part of such diversity is diversity in education systems and assessment traditions and values.

Consequently, EALTA members will strive to adhere to the principles of transparency, accountability and quality appropriate to their particular contexts and spheres of professional involvement in language testing and assessment.

Reflecting its policy of inclusiveness, EALTA wishes to serve the needs of a very broad membership. EALTA's guidelines for good practice in testing and assessment are accordingly addressed primarily to three different audiences: those involved in

- (a) the training of teachers in testing and assessment,
- (b) classroom testing and assessment, and
- (c) the development of tests in national or institutional testing units or centres.

For all these groups, a number of general principles apply: respect for the students/examinees, responsibility, fairness, reliability, validity and collaboration among the parties involved. These general principles are laid out in relevant existing codes of practice, which EALTA members are encouraged to consult in order to further inform the professionalism and quality of their work. Please refer to the following links:

<http://www.iltaonline.com/code.pdf>

http://www.alte.org/quality_assurance/index.cfm

<http://www.qca.org.uk/15990.html>

<http://www.apa.org/science/standards.html>

<http://www.apa.org/science/FinalCode.pdf>

EALTA's own guidelines to good practice in language testing and assessment are as follows:

A. Considerations for teacher pre-service and in-service training in testing and assessment

EALTA members involved in teacher training related to testing and assessment will clarify to themselves and appropriate stakeholders (trainees, practising teachers, curriculum developers):

1. How relevant is the training to the assessment context of the trainees?
2. How aware are trainees made of the range of assessment procedures appropriate to their present or future needs?
3. How clearly are the principles of testing and assessment (e.g. validity, reliability, fairness, washback) related to the trainees' context?
4. What is the balance between theory and practice in the training?
5. How far are the trainees involved in developing, trialling and evaluating assessment procedures?
6. How far are trainees involved in marking or assessing student performances?
7. What attention is given to the appropriate analysis of assessment results?
8. What account is taken of trainees' views on the appropriacy and accuracy of assessment procedures?
9. How far do assessment procedures used to evaluate the trainees follow the principles they have been taught?

B. Considerations for classroom testing and assessment

EALTA members involved in classroom testing and assessment will clarify to themselves and appropriate stakeholders (especially pupils/students and as far as possible parents):

1. ASSESSMENT PURPOSE(S) AND SPECIFICATION

1. What is the purpose of the assessment?
2. How does the assessment purpose relate to the curriculum?
3. Are there any test specifications?
4. How well is the curriculum covered?
5. How are the assessment purposes and specifications made known and discussed?

2. ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

1. Who designs the assessment procedures?
2. How appropriate are the assessment procedures to the learners?
3. How is information on students' learning collected?
4. How is information on students' learning assessed and stored?
5. What efforts are made to ensure that the assessment results are accurate and fair?
6. What efforts are made to promote agreement in marking practices across teachers and schools?
7. What account is taken of students' views on the assessment procedures?

3. CONSEQUENCES

1. What use is made of the results?
2. What action(s) will be taken to improve learning?
3. What kind of feedback do students get?
4. What processes are in place for students or their guardians to make complaints or seek re-assessments?
5. What are the consequences of the assessment procedures for classroom practices?
6. What are the consequences of the results of the assessment for learners?

C. Considerations for test development in national or institutional testing units or centres

EALTA members involved in test development will clarify to themselves and appropriate stakeholders (teachers, students, the general public), and provide answers to the questions listed under the headings below. Furthermore, test developers are encouraged to engage in dialogue with decision makers in their institutions and ministries to ensure that decision makers are aware of both good and bad practice, in order to enhance the quality of assessment systems and practices.

1. TEST PURPOSE AND SPECIFICATION

1. How clearly is/are test purpose(s) specified?
2. How is potential test misuse addressed?
3. Are all stakeholders specifically identified?
4. Are there test specifications?
5. Are the specifications for the various audiences differentiated?
6. Is there a description of the test taker?
7. Are the constructs intended to underlie the test/subtest(s) specified?
8. Are test methods/tasks described and exemplified?
9. Is the range of student performances described and exemplified?
10. Are marking schemes/rating criteria described?
11. Is test level specified in CEFR terms? What evidence is provided to support this claim?

2. TEST DESIGN and ITEM WRITING

1. Do test developers and item writers have relevant experience of teaching at the level the assessment is aimed at?
2. What training do test developers and item writers have?
3. Are there guidelines for test design and item writing?
4. Are there systematic procedures for review, revision and editing of items and tasks to ensure that they match the test specifications and comply with item writer guidelines?
5. What feedback do item writers receive on their work?

3. QUALITY CONTROL and TEST ANALYSES

1. What quality control procedures are applied?
2. Are the tests piloted?
3. What is the normal size of the pilot sample, and how does it compare with the test population?
4. What information is collected during piloting? (teachers' opinions, students' opinions, results,...)
5. How is pilot data analysed?
6. How are changes to the test agreed upon after the analyses of the evidence collected in the pilot?
7. If there are different versions of the test (e.g., year by year) how is the equivalence verified?
8. Are markers trained for each test administration?
9. Are benchmarked performances used in the training?
10. Is there routine double marking for subjectively marked tests? Is inter and intrarater reliability calculated?
11. Is the marking routinely monitored?
12. What statistical analyses are used?
13. What results are reported? How? To whom?
14. What processes are in place for test takers to make complaints or seek reassessments?

4. TEST ADMINISTRATION

1. What are the security arrangements?
2. Are test administrators trained?
3. Is the test administration monitored?
4. Is there an examiner's report each year or each administration?

5. REVIEW

1. How often are the tests reviewed and revised?
2. Are validation studies conducted?
3. What procedures are in place to ensure that the test keeps pace with changes in the curriculum?

6. WASHBACK

1. Is the test intended to initiate change(s) in the current practice?
2. What is the washback effect? What studies have been conducted?
3. Are there preparatory materials?
4. Are teachers trained to prepare their students for the test/exam?

7. LINKAGE TO THE COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK

1. What evidence is there of the quality of the process followed to link tests and examinations to the Common European Framework?
 2. Have the procedures recommended in the Manual and the Reference Supplement been applied appropriately?
 3. Is there a publicly available report on the linking process?
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