Lecturer
Mr. Phil Smyth

Introduction
The aims of this elective course are to:

a) introduce participants to the fundamental principles of language testing and language test evaluation
b) develop skills in the design, trialling, moderation and validation of testing instruments for a range of purposes including: formative and summative assessment, self-assessment, language profiling

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)
At the end of the course you should be able to:

i. describe and discuss a range of contexts, purposes and methods for language testing
ii. discuss and critique the appropriacy and usefulness of various methods for testing writing, speaking, listening, reading and integrated skills
iii. analyze, describe and report data derived from test scores using a range of techniques including item analysis, estimation of reliability, investigation of validity and potential test bias
iv. describe and discuss appropriate techniques for the evaluation of language tests

Core text
Sources of additional readings and bibliographic references


Web-based resources:
http://languagetesting.info/ is a one-stop site for references on testing specific language skills and using statistics. There are also short video clips of topics in language testing. It is maintained by Dr. Glenn Fulcher.

Course Outline:
Session 1: Theoretical influences in language testing
Session 2: Test specifications and test tasks
Session 3: Item writing, moderation, scoring and reporting
Session 4: Performance assessment
Session 5: Reliability, validity and item analysis
Session 6: Classroom-based assessment
Assessment (2500 words)
All participants will be expected to complete the following assignment.

Discuss and critique the appropriacy and usefulness of various test methods for testing writing, speaking, listening, reading, grammar or integrated skills. Use a test with which you are familiar. Illustrate your response with reference to current theory relating to test development and validation procedures. Focus predominately on the principles of testing/assessment that are most relevant to your choice of test.

Other assessments can be negotiated with the course lecturer for appropriacy.

Assessment criteria

Distinction
The assignment demonstrates an ability to critically evaluate tests and assessments in light of current assessment theory. The points made are cogent, and are illustrated with relevant and practical examples. There is evidence of wide reading of the current literature on language assessment. Information is effectively organized and presented and the language used is excellent.

Pass
The assignment demonstrates a connection between the evaluation of tests and current assessment theory, although at times the critique is rather descriptive. Several points are made and there is evidence of practical examples given. There is evidence of enough reading to be able to adequately and persuasively evaluate a test or assessment. Information is organized and presented well enough to be followed with ease. Language use is generally accurate and appropriate.

Fail
The assignment demonstrates little if any connection between the evaluation of tests and current assessment theory. The points made are generally weak and/or unsupported with relevant practical examples. There is insufficient evidence of enough reading to be able to persuasively evaluate a test or assessment. Organization and presentation of information is poor meaning points can only be understood with difficulty. Language use is poor enough that comprehension is seriously affected.