

New Directions English: Language Assessment in China

6-7 November 2013

New Directions English is a series of expert led events presented by the British Council that brings international and national perspectives and insight into trends and approaches in English language teaching, learning and assessment in China.

Our first *New Directions English* symposium takes a close look at the changing nature of English language assessment in China.

The British Council has been delivering UK examinations overseas for over 70 years and delivers almost 3 million tests to over 2 million people a year. We have a long history of creating and offering our own English language assessment tools.

The educational context in China is evolving and there is increasing challenge around how English language assessment sits positively alongside English language curricula and pedagogy in Higher and Vocational Education. There are also questions around how assessment tools can be customised and localised to better meet the needs of candidates and the organisations and institutions that depend upon test results.

2013 is our launch year for *New Directions English*. It is a year in which we hope to bring insight, fresh perspective and debate to the changing relationship between English language assessment on one hand and English language teaching and learning on the other. Future *New Directions English* events will develop these themes and explore

related areas in English education such as teacher development and training, curriculum development and standards setting.

Supporting Partners

- National Education Examinations Authority, Ministry of Education**
- China Language Assessment Research Society**
- Supervisory Committee of Foreign Language Teaching in Vocational Education, Ministry of Education**

Keynote Speakers

Professor Jin Yan

Chair of National College English Testing Committee, China and Professor of School of Foreign Languages, Shanghai Jiao Tong University

Professor Barry O'Sullivan

Senior Advisor, English Language Assessment, British Council

Professor Cyril Weir

Powdrill Professor in English Language Acquisition and the Director of the Centre for Research in English Language Learning and Assessment (CRELLA) at the University of Bedfordshire, UK

Other plenary speakers to be confirmed.

Location: Beijing, China

Dates: 6 -7 November 2013

Target Audience

New Directions English: Language Assessment in China will be of interest to the higher education and vocational education sectors, and is designed to appeal to a wide range of stakeholders; academics and researchers, education officials, members of assessment related associations and examination board representatives, as well as special interest groups in test design, customisation and reform.

Sub-themes

In consultation with our partners and advisors we have chosen three themes which we think represent current challenges shared across the English language assessment field in China.

1. Assessment for learning: washback and formative assessment

This theme considers issues related to the positive and negative impact of assessment on teaching and learning and the implications of this on English language curricula and the learning process.

2. Localisation and customisation: adapting tests to Chinese contexts

General English proficiency tests developed for the global market have advantages but often do not meet the requirements of a specific test-taking group and this sub-topic explores fit-for-purpose assessment within

Chinese contexts, including adapting international tests for the Chinese context.

3. Developing English teacher assessment literacy

Assessment for learning can only take place if educators have a solid understanding of the relationship between testing and learning. This sub-theme focuses on developing testing know-how and skills to empower teachers to use assessment as a means to promote effective learning.

It is expected that a selection of papers presented at the conference will be published in an edited collection. Further information will be available in due course.

Fees

The registration fee is as follows:
RMB1000.00 | GBP105.00 | USD160.00

The fee includes registration, symposium pack and refreshments. Accommodation is not included but a list of accommodation recommendations will be available shortly.

For further information, go to
www.britishcouncil.org.cn/newdirections

For any other questions, contact:
joyce.zheng@britishcouncil.org.cn