



香港城市大學
City University of Hong Kong

Diagnostic English Language Tracking Assessment (DELTA) Writing Project

Project Number: 6000203

Principal Investigator: Dr Jane Elizabeth Mary LOCKWOOD

Grant Type: ERG

Abstract:

This project aims to research and develop diagnostic writing tasks, band descriptors and language learning guidelines, based on current theories of English language acquisition of writing and it also aims to explore the adoption/adaptation of an automated writing scoring system that best activates the selected and developed researched writing test construct, tools and processes. The context for this research relates to the language needs of university students in Hong Kong. As such this project will contribute to, and build on the existing Hong Kong-wide collaborative assessment work of the Diagnostic English Language Tracking Assessment (DELTA), previously and currently funded through ad hoc UGC funds attached to the participating universities. The collaborative DELTA project to date has developed an on-line computer scored assessment of the skills of listening, reading, grammar and vocabulary.

This ERG project will be City University's contribution to the DELTA project and will just as importantly provide the English Language Centre (ELC) at City U with writing assessment tools and processes that will enable ELC to place students into the right levels of proficiency, to diagnose their writing needs and track their writing proficiency development across the 4-year curriculum. We anticipate that the DELTA writing assessment will have a positive washback into the design of the new pathway of academic proficiency programs being offered by ELC that start at the Foundation level (HKDSE 3-) and finish at General Education English 1 (HKDSE 4 +). The project is in line with the UGC consultant's (Professor Bachman) recommendations to significantly improve the efficacy of the language assessment tools and processes currently being used by English language centres across Hong Kong (see Appendix 1). This project also satisfies CityU's Task Force on the English Attainment Requirement which recommends CityU participates in the development of 'a locally designed instrument, benchmarked against international standards', with also the facility to report regularly on the language improvements of CityU students, with other Hong Kong tertiary institutions.