

Opportunities and Challenges for E-assessment: The contribution of the TeSLA project to improving trust in e-assessment

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Abstract:

The use of information technologies as a mediator in learning and assessment adds new dimensions to these processes for both on-line and on-campus students.

On the one hand, technology has a pronounced positive effect in terms of new possibilities for implementing learning and assessment anytime and anywhere. In assessment, a range of tools help to extend the range of possible approaches and methods, whilst also raising its objectivity and ensuring its effectiveness by automating the processes of assessment. Discussing the advantages of e-assessment, and more specifically web-based testing, Hamilton and Shoen (2005) argue that it “has significant advantages in terms of cost, ease of use, reliability, replicability, scoring, aggregating results, and data management”.

On the other hand, e-assessment and the assessment of online students in general presents a number of challenges, perhaps, the most serious being impersonation and plagiarism. These undermine the quality of online learning and assessment and challenge the management of the universities offering online education.

To meet these challenges the European Commission has approved funding for the TeSLA project. The overall objective of the TeSLA project is to define and develop an e-assessment system which ensures the authentication of learner identity and authorship in online and blended learning environments, so allowing assessment to be carried out at a distance and avoiding the time and physical space limitations imposed by requiring face-to-face examinations. The TeSLA project will cover teaching and learning processes as well as ethical, legal and technological aspects of the e-assessment process.

The presentation will shed a light on how the TeSLA project will address these challenges of e-assessment and assessment of online students in general through the development of an adaptive trust based e-assessment system.