



Putting the ALTE Code of Practice into practice: auditing the quality profile

Codes of Practice in Language testing

November 10th Sofia

ALTE history: from ethics to auditing

general/
philosophical



specific/
practical

ethical framework

principles

standards

quality
management
system

ALTE Code of
Practice, 1994

ALTE Principles of
Good Practice, 1993;
2001

ALTE COP & QM
checklists, 2001

ALTE auditing
system, 2002 -

ALTE COP & QMS

Checklist domains

- test construction
- administration & logistics
- marking & grading
- test analysis
- communication with stakeholders

Examples of minimum standards

- test construction

- 1 The examination is based on a theoretical construct, e.g. on a model of communicative competence.

- test analysis

- 14 Item-level data (e.g. for computing the difficulty, discrimination, reliability and standard errors of measurement of the examination) is collected from an adequate sample of candidates and analysed

the balancing act: test-specific quality management in the ALTE context

- standards are applied consistently
- the system establishes whether standards are being met



- the system is effective in all local contexts
- the system leads to change where necessary

a quality management system which is:

professional

comprehensive

consistent

confidential

impartial

supportive

the auditing system

Best Practice

Satisfactory

Can improvements still be made?

Minimum Standard

Recommendations
(Consultancy regarding follow up)

Requirements
(Quality Control during visit)

In need of improvement

How to improve?

How well are standards being met?

Unsatisfactory

Timeline

Pre-Audit
(Documentation & Preparation)

Auditing Event
(Visit)

Post-Audit
(Report)

the ALTE COP Auditing system in action

- effecting change

☺ audited organisation is given the opportunity to consider their system and to improve it continuously

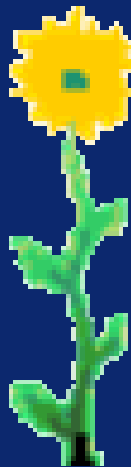
- Maintaining quality



☺ ALTE guarantees stakeholders that its member organisations provide examinations of high quality

the ALTE COP Auditing system in action

- what factors are important for success ?



- ☑ involvement of key members of the organisation is important
- ☑ opinion from outside is valued because an audit is understood as non-threatening
- ☑ mutual support is offered by ALTE:
 - ☺ discover what is involved in an audit
 - ☺ develop an approach to the audit
 - ☺ receive advice on how to deal with issues

ALTE COP & QMS links

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