Cambridge Assessment
English

RMIT Vietnam assesses English proficiency of staff with Linguaskill

RMIT UNIVERSITY

'As an Australian university in Vietnam, where all our courses are taught in English, English proficiency will always remain high on the agenda. Moving forward with Linguaskill will support us in achieving our goals.'

Esther Walker, Manager, Talent Acquisition, RMIT Vietnam

With all operations in English, RMIT Vietnam requires all of its 650 professional and academic staff to have the right level of English language proficiency to carry out their roles successfully. As part of this, all non-native-speaking applicants are now tested using Linguaskill during the recruitment process. Using Linguaskill enables RMIT Vietnam to evaluate all four language skills quickly and easily, providing a fairer assessment of proficiency and supporting wider business objectives.

Testing English language proficiency within staff recruitment

RMIT Vietnam operates as a completely English-speaking environment, meaning that as well as teachers, all of its 650 professional employees, from maintenance staff to senior administrators, need to meet set English standards in order to be appointed. Ensuring that candidates have the required level of proficiency before being offered a job is the responsibility of the university's Talent Acquisition team, part of the 18-strong HR department.

'English is the language of teaching and communication at RMIT Vietnam,' says Esther Walker, Manager, Talent Acquisition. 'This means it is the responsibility of applicants to be able to demonstrate evidence that they meet the required level of English proficiency before joining the organisation. We test all successful candidates to ensure that they have the language skills required, before offering jobs.'

Aligning testing with business requirements

While RMIT Vietnam previously carried out English proficiency tests, the platform it used was unable to easily test all four skills, as speaking would have required a visit to a specialist test centre. This meant that RMIT Vietnam focused solely on reading and writing in order to deliver sufficiently fast results to the business.

The team therefore wanted to find a platform that better aligned with its business needs. Working with RMIT Vietnam's English department, HR carried out extensive research and benchmarking into alternatives, before selecting Linguaskill. This recommendation was then presented to the RMIT Vietnam Leadership team for sign-off.

Linguaskill►►

Linguaskill delivers fast, accurate assessments of English proficiency based on the internationally recognised Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) framework. A secure, online test, it can be carried out from any location, without needing to visit specialist exam centres. Powered by machine learning, and supported by extensive preparation materials for candidates, it enables all four key English skills to be tested quickly and easily through a secure, multi-level approach.

'We felt that Linguaskill stood out in multiple areas. We liked the fact that it evaluated all four skills, is online and offered both general workplace and advanced business proficiency testing – this meets our needs to be able to test applicants for the wide range of roles within the university, using a single platform,' adds Esther Walker. 'Having taken the tests ourselves we've also been impressed by the relevance of Linguaskill's content – it is really focused on everyday business situations, making it ideal for delivering accurate assessments that fit with our organisation.'

A seamless, easy-to-manage experience

Candidates are now tested after interview and before being offered a job, in a dedicated room in the HR department. A team of four administer the tests, with results provided for all four skills in less than 48 hours. Having begun using Linguaskill in October 2019, RMIT Vietnam expects to carry out around 200 tests each year, for new employees and for those who are moving internally to roles that require a higher level of English.

'We believe the move to test all four skills is a fairer approach, rather than limiting ourselves to just reading and writing as we did under our previous platform. While we have just started using Linguaskill, we think we may potentially achieve better results by assessing all competencies to get a more rounded, accurate picture,' Esther Walker notes.

Candidate feedback has been positive on Linguaskill, particularly as they have access to relevant material, such as practice tests to help with preparation. The HR team has been impressed by how quickly Linguaskill was up and running and the ease of administering each test. Additionally, internal stakeholders, such as those recruiting, have also seen the benefits of more comprehensive English language assessments. Moving forward, the Talent Acquisition team is looking to benchmark the impact of Linguaskill on the speed and success of recruitment, particularly at the workplace level.