

# e-Assessment survey report - joint statement

The further development of e-assessment is important as part of the overall development in the use of technology in the FE and skills sector. Where used appropriately, it can bring a range of benefits including improved learner experience and achievement, increased efficiency and effectiveness and helping to achieve the aims of the FELTAG report (see report). High quality assessment, based on the skills required by employers and real world problem solving, is one of the keys to ensuring learners are employment ready.

The Jisc e-Assessment survey report highlights a number of findings and makes recommendations which have now been reviewed by a range of organisations through the auspices of the e-Assessment Advisory Group and the Jisc FE and skills coalition.

These organisations include:

- » Jisc
- » Learning providers
- » Awarding Organisations
- » The Federation of Awarding Bodies
- » The e-Assessment Association (including CCEA, Qualifications Wales and SQA)
- » Others involved in both the delivery and design of assessment

These organisations agree that a number of actions need to take place to fully maximise the benefits of e-assessment for formative and summative assessment.

The key actions for all the above organisations are to:

- » Provide consistent and positive messages to learning providers about the use of technology and to ensure any potential barriers, perceived or real, to uptake are removed
- » Promote the end-to-end benefits of e-assessment, including the benefits to learners (for example enabling independent learning through more instant feedback), improvements to achievement, the key role of e-assessment to support blended learning approaches, and potential efficiency gains
- » Demonstrate the value and role of e-assessment, particularly formative assessment, by providing learners with an employment related experience eg. through enabling feedback from multiple audiences, including mentors and employers

The survey highlighted many of the key barriers and challenges to development which, in addition to a challenging funding environment, included the need to address the key issues that staff find challenging and their consequent lack of confidence. Through an FE and skills online CPD service, Jisc will provide resource to help teachers and others involved in the design and delivery of assessment to develop their skills and confidence

with e-assessment. In addition, a series of case studies will support a more strategic view of e-assessment, inspiring staff to see what is possible and highlighting where evidence is already available from providers, the awarding organisations and other stakeholders.

The survey also highlighted issues of often differing approaches to the way e-assessment was managed by Awarding Organisations. It was agreed that there was a need to explore, collaboratively, where administration processes could be harmonised to ensure a more consistent experience for providing organisations.

Overall, learning providers are keen to enhance their e-assessment provision and see challenges such as the maths and English to 18 initiative as one for which they need the use of technology to be able to undertake it successfully. This and other challenges can provide the impetus to increase the use of e-assessment across the sector.

In commenting on the outcomes of the e-assessment survey and report, Ofqual said, "e-Assessment and other forms of innovation present opportunities for the sector and potential benefits for students. We want to enable the awarding organisations to innovate in assessment, as long as their assessments are valid. We will keep under review our requirements and approach, and consider changes where there is evidence they are damaging innovation." Ofqual will be publishing an innovation plan in mid-2016 setting out its approach.