

**RLO and Question Bank Development Fund Project
Final Report Template (for the period 1st October – 31st January 06)**

Project Team Loughborough University	
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Title of Project: Critical evaluation of information literacy questions used to support the Department of Politics, International Relations & European Studies (PIRES)	

Description of tasks undertaken during the project:

During the period 1st October 2005 to 31st January 2006 the following tasks were undertaken:

1. A fifth of the original questions was enhanced to be less ambiguous to students. For example ambiguous distractors were deleted or were changed and questions were re-written to be more specific.
2. The level of difficulty for each question was ascertained by reviewing the reports provided by QuestionMark Perception. QuestionMark Perception provides data on the frequency of correct versus incorrect responses as well as an individual student's performance across the entire test. Where new questions were added the level of difficulty was ascertained by running an automated simulation of test scores.
3. The test was refined and 20 questions were added to the question bank. The original question bank comprised mostly multiple choice and multiple response style questions. A deliberate decision was made to include more varied question styles such as drag and drop, true-false and hotspot styles. This was to support diverse learning styles and to make the test more interesting for the students.

The mechanics of creating drag and drop and hotspot style questions tested the project team's familiarity within the QuestionMark Perception program. Excellent support was provided by a member of the University's Computer-Aided Assessment team. Inspiration for the new questions came from other UK institutions for which permission was sought. The team is currently seeking permission to incorporate materials created by Project SAILS¹ in the US.

4. Metadata was allocated and the entire question bank was populated to include Bloom's Taxonomy, SCONUL's Seven Pillars of Information Literacy² and the name of the originating institution.
5. The target module (EUB608) is delivered in the second semester therefore the project was unable to re-deliver the test within formal teaching time. To compensate for this the PIRES department agreed that the original sample of students could be approached to re-take the test. Of the 105 students registered on this module 20 students re-took the test. Surprisingly a large number of students from other departments took the test without it being advertised them including Chemistry and several Engineering Departments.
6. Attempts were made to obtain reflective feedback from a sample of students via a focus group. Despite the offer of incentives such as £10 printer credits as well as several reminders from the Library to the main contact person within PIRES the students failed to attend the session. This was a very disappointing aspect of the project. After consultation with the department it was decided not to hold another focus group.

The project team produced a web-based questionnaire as another means to obtain feedback; unfortunately just two forms were submitted despite several reminders from the staff member in PIRES and the Library. Therefore the data obtained from the questionnaires are not statistically reliable and very few inferences can be drawn.

Outcomes (including URL for any materials developed):

Currently the question bank is hosted on a secure server within the University's VLE. The team plans to export the questions for dissemination via the HEA-ICS Centre website.

¹ Project SAILS Standardized Test of Information Literacy Skills <https://www.projectsails.org/>

² SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy
http://www.sconul.ac.uk/activities/inf_lit/papers/seven_pillars.html

Financial statement			
	Expenditure (£)	Claimed in 1st period	Variance from original budget
Salaries/Staff costs	£620	£938	£43 more than original budget.
Travel & Subsistence	£13.60		Refreshments for student focus group that was not originally budgeted for.
Consumables			
Other	£400 for attendance at the 7 th HEA ICS conference in August		£100 less than original budget.
Total	£1033.60	£938	£28.40 less than original budget.