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PAPER

Readiness for Conducting E-assessments for end-of-semester examination in Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education

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The use of ICT in assessment, marking and reporting is known as e-assessment. E-assessment provides a good solution when the number of students increase compared with the staff ratio. E-assessment fits with conventional objectives of assessment. Assessments measure the performance of the students compared with the learning objectives of the course. Assessment results are very important for students to identify their performance and show their grades to society and also, for lecturers to take the instructional decisions. Researchers believe that Information Technology offers a powerful tool to improve the assessment criteria. E-assessment is the one of effective tools used in many educational programs.

Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education (SLIATE) offers Higher National Diploma courses in many disciplines. At the end of each fifteen week semester SLIATE conducts examinations. Student enrollment is increasing each year. But the number of lecturers is not increasing. Therefore student staff ratio is high. This becomes a burning issue when evaluating answer scripts, because it needs a lot of human effort and time. Delays in issuing results is also another problem. Compared with conventional assessment methods, e-assessment provides many advantages such as less human effort for organizing and evaluating answer scripts, and issuing results quickly and at low cost.

This study employed the qualitative research method. Conceptual framework for the study was developed based on the literature review and considered key factors are technology, attitudes and assessment methods. Data were gathered through the expert survey, interviews with key stakeholders and questionnaires.

The findings are discussed in relation to literature. From analysis of the findings, the key issues affecting e-assessment systems are attitude of the stakeholders and technology infrastructure. Basic technology infrastructures are available but they are inadequate. Various assessment methods are used at the moment from the structured questions and multiple choice questions are easily converted to e-assessment methods. Delay in issuing results is mainly based on the high number of answer script in some subjects.