

iTEP Case Study: Pre-Arrival Testing

Solving Sheridan College's need for pre-arrival and placement testing.

About iTEP

The International Test of English Proficiency (iTEP) was introduced in 2008 to modernize English language assessment with on-demand scheduling, 24-hour grading, and accurate test data. iTEP provides a convenient and cost-effective testing option delivered in a highly secure test center environment or remotely at-home.

iTEP offers academic testing for secondary schools and universities for both admissions and on-campus ESL programs. iTEP also offers a range of career testing used by companies around the world to determine English proficiency needed for hiring and promotion decisions. For more information see www.itepexam.com.

Case Summary

Like many universities, institutions, and individuals around the globe, the Coronavirus changed the way Sheridan College — housed across three campuses in Ontario, Canada — was able to conduct teaching and learning.

Prior to the pandemic, the Sheridan College ESL program created, distributed and proctored its own English language proficiency exam used to place incoming international students into the appropriate ESL course level for non-native English speakers. However, as the pandemic spread, and face-to-face interaction quickly dissipated, ESL program administrators at Sheridan realized it wasn't feasible to transfer their own test online and would need to find another solution.

The search required a product that could be distributed online, safely monitored for academic integrity, brief enough for students to easily complete in one sitting, but thorough enough to provide a reliable and accurate overview of a student's English language skills. Enter iTEP

Snapshot, designed as a 60-minute pre-arrival English assessment tool that can give academic institutions an accurate reading of a student's English language proficiency without requiring them to enter a testing center. The entire process, from signup and examination to monitoring and scoring, is securely housed online allowing safety and peace of mind for students and administrators.

Sheridan ESL volunteered as one of the first organizations to replace their previous onsite testing method with Snapshot as a full-service solution to their problem. Any concerns about cost, reliability, security or technology were quickly alleviated through a responsive and knowledgeable iTEP support team delivering a well-vetted product that exceeded administrators' expectations. This was so true that Sheridan College is considering the adoption of the iTEP snapshot test even when the campus re-opens.

Sheridan

The Problem

Prior to the Coronavirus pandemic, Sheridan ESL provided a paper and pencil in-person test distributed on campus to English as a second language students in order to determine their English language skills and place them appropriately in the ESL program. The college administered and proctored the exam allowing administrators to feel confident in the results and their ability to seat students at the appropriate level of English instruction to ensure their success. When it became evident that the virus was becoming a serious threat to the health and safety of individuals around the world, campuses, like businesses and

institutions across the globe, began shuttering their doors and moving business, meetings and anything else they could online. It also became evident to the ESL team at Sheridan that transitioning their in-person paper and pencil test to an online format was not a feasible option. That's when they began searching for a solution to replace their on-campus testing strategy with an online service that could deliver the results, reliability and peace of mind Sheridan ESL administrators and students had come to expect.

The Approach

While the iTEP Academic Plus exam does have an online option available, it was not the best fit for the ESL program's needs. So, when Sheridan College administrators learned about a new iTEP pre-arrival testing product called Snapshot, they were eager to find out more.

"When we heard about Snapshot, which was fairly new, we were happy to try it out" said Suzanne Soares, ESL program manager at Sheridan College. "We wanted a test that students could sit in a short amount of time, and Snapshot was a 60-minute test, but what we really liked was it would provide at-home testing along with the IVP proctoring services."

Snapshot had everything administrators were seeking: a brief, hour-long test format; strong test security; comprehensive testing; speedy results; and an attractive price point for students. Test takers can purchase the test directly from the iTEP webpage and take it immediately, with no scheduling required.

Additionally, iTEP was able to provide peace of mind with a supportive, responsive team who also shared Snapshot's reliability testing and score equivalency comparisons to help ease concerns about being one of the first users of a new product. Seeing how thoroughly vetted and monitored the exam was proved very helpful in Sheridan ESL's decision to use Snapshot as a reliable placement tool.

Finally, Sheridan College was able to match the Snapshot test results with their own tiered ESL program to ensure a student's score on the Snapshot test would accurately reflect where they should be placed within the College's ESL program. Smooth and reliable placement of students into their program was critical.

The iTEP Solution

Snapshot had everything Sheridan ESL desired in an online English language assessment tool for the ESL program. From the price point to the administration and validity of the testing, iTEP's new Snapshot pre-arrival testing allowed Sheridan ESL to quickly move their paper and pencil testing online without sacrificing quality or security.

For students, Snapshot offered ease and convenience with the entire registration through test completion process immediately accessible from the comfort of their home. As a product of iTEP, a reputable name in English language testing, Snapshot scores were available within 24 hours or less meeting the iTEP guarantee.

Snapshot's one-source solution for Sheridan ESL has also proven to be as robust as the previous pencil and paper exam with a very high student placement success rate.

This testament to the accuracy of Snapshot in assessing a student's level for Sheridan College's ESL program is prompting administrators to consider iTEP as their official ESL pre-arrival and placement testing source of the future.

“ We wanted a test that students could sit in a short amount of time, and Snapshot was a 60-minute test, but what we really liked was it would provide at-home testing along with the IVP proctoring services. **”**

Suzanne Soares, ESL program manager at Sheridan College