

November 2025

Dear UKALTA members and colleagues

As we approach Language Testing Forum (LTF) 2025 next weekend (which will include our UKALTA Annual General Meeting), there are several organisational updates on recent activities that I'd like to share with you.

In October, the UKALTA PGR Network organised the second of this year's gatherings - with input from Drs Jing Xu, Hye-won Lee and Yasin Karatay (from Cambridge) presenting on the topic of 'Applying Generative AI in Language Assessment and Learning'. The online event was well attended and grateful thanks go to our PGR Network co-ordinators Petra Smelak and Ozlem Terzioglu who organised it, as well as to the presenters who gave freely of their time and energy to benefit our postgraduate community.

Many thanks to those of you who have completed the UKALTA survey recently sent out as part of our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary activity. Our last survey was in 2021 so it will be good to take the temperature of the organisation once again to help us plan for the future. We will report on the survey results so far at the AGM.

The CEFR Handbook Steering Group (comprising representatives from British Council, ALTE, EALTA, and UKALTA) will be meeting in Southampton later this week. Several of us will be attending LTF so this is a good chance for a face-to-face update meeting since our last online meeting in July. Following the CEFR Case Studies Conference in Barcelona in October 2024, the SG has assembled and edited a special issue of the CEFR Journal scheduled for publication in early 2026. We have also been working on a short Supplement document to accompany the CEFR Handbook 2022, offering additional guidance on various points including translation. We will be reviewing the first draft of the Supplement in Southampton, aiming to have a final version ready by the end of this year.

Earlier this month I was in London to represent UKALTA at meetings of the Academy of Social Sciences (AcSS) and the British Academy (BA). For some years now, UKALTA has been a member of / affiliated with these bodies as a UK professional association and learned society. Over the past 5 years I have attended most of the online meetings for Presidents, Chairs and CEOs of member/affiliated learned societies, but this was a welcome opportunity for a face-to-face meeting with colleagues who lead our peer professional associations in the social sciences.

At the AcSS meeting in the morning, I was able to feedback on our recent collaborative EDI Leadership Project with BAAL, funded by ESRC/AcSS as part of a strategy to progress inclusivity in the social sciences. You can read more about this initiative at: [Progressing inclusivity in the social sciences: showcasing the positive impact of the Academy's joint EDI Project – Academy of Social Sciences](#) . We are continuing that EDI Leadership Project into a Phase 2, with Executive Committee members Sathena Chan and Yasin Karatay working on a draft EDI-related resources page for our UKALTA website.

At the British Academy meeting in the afternoon, I participated in discussions on the UK government's Curriculum and Assessment Review (CAR), on current challenges for the Higher Education landscape (especially concerning language/s), on the new post-16 White Paper, and on plans for the next Research Excellence Framework in 2029.

Throughout this year I have continued to engage with the UK Coalition for Language Education (CLE) to discern how UKALTA might input in positive ways to national debates about language assessment and language assessment literacy within the wider frame of UK language education, especially in light of the ongoing Curriculum and Assessment Review (CAR). You can access a number of important contributions on these issues at the Coalition for Language Education (CLE) website: [Outputs – Coalition for Language Education](#) .

The UK government's CAR - and the responses to it from various constituencies – have led to considerable and sometimes heated debate of the current challenges facing language teaching, learning and assessment at all educational levels (primary, secondary, tertiary) across all sectors (MFL, EAL, ESOL, HHCL) within the UK.

In late October, I attended a seminar on behalf of UKALTA at the Faculty of Education in Cambridge organised by the Multilingualism and Languages Education Group (MuLtiE). The seminar featured input from contributors to a Special Issue of The Language Learning Journal (LLJ) exploring the implications of the Francis Review's Interim Report for the CAR from the perspective of languages education, but relevant to all curriculum areas. A video recording of the Cambridge seminar in late October can be viewed at:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3l\\_RwmXlQI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3l_RwmXlQI) . One thing I was able to do in the seminar discussion was to raise awareness of UKALTA's remit and expertise, as well as to champion some alternative views of approaches to language assessment, e.g. through a multilingual framework approach such as that of the CEFR - an approach, as some of you will no doubt recall, that was once embodied in the UK through a national 'Languages Ladder' System delivered through 'Asset Languages'!

The aim of the LLJ Special Issue is to present a rapid review of available evidence to inform the CAR process, as policy recommendations are elaborated and implemented. The published contributions respond to issues raised in the Francis interim report but also beyond. Sadly, the underlying evidence base, including evidence relating to assessment issues, is not presented in the Francis report.

For those interested, the content of the recently published Special Issue is available at:

[https://www.tandfonline.com/journals/rllj20/collections/Language\\_Educ\\_in\\_the\\_Curric](https://www.tandfonline.com/journals/rllj20/collections/Language_Educ_in_the_Curric)  
Norbert Pachler et al's summary overview of their contributions to the Special Issue can be seen at: <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/2025/10/08/rethinking-language-education-evidence-for-englands-curriculum-and-assessment-review/> .

I think that brings you up-to-date with various important initiatives in which UKALTA has been involved over recent months. I look forward to seeing many of you at LTF in just a few days' time.

Kind regards

Lynda