

For Immediate Release

**WALL STREET INSTITUTE TO SPONSOR
PACIFIC RIM OBJECTIVE MEASUREMENT SYMPOSIUM (PROMS)**

(Hong Kong, 20 June, 2006) Hong Kong's leading adult English language education organisation Wall Street Institute (WSI) is to sponsor the forthcoming Pacific Rim Objective Measurement Symposium (PROMS) to be held 27-29 June 2006. PROMS, an annual academic symposium convened for researchers, academics and teachers from around the world, is organised and hosted this year by the Department of Educational Psychology, Counselling and Learning Needs of The Hong Kong Institute of Education, with Professor Trevor Bond as Conference Chair.

The main theme of the symposium is objective measurement and RASCH models, the most rigorous measurement tool for social and educational sciences to date. As part of the main symposium, WSI will also host a Language Symposium on Teachers' Day on 29 June. Teachers' Day is a major feature of the PROMS HK 2006 conference (www.promshk.org) and attracts up to 600 participants, mainly teachers and principals from primary and secondary schools.

During the Language Symposium, WSI's Academic Director, Dr. Tony Lee, will present the initial results of the recent WSI-BULATS alignment study effected using RASCH model. BULATS (Business Language Testing Service) is one of the most recognised business English tests in the world and it is aligned to the global standard of English language as set by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). RASCH, named after Georg Rasch, a Danish mathematician and statistician, is a probability theory based measurement tool for educational and the social sciences and is regarded as the most rigorous method for assessment scale alignment and calibration. Dr. Lee will also present a paper entitled *Making Sense of Survey Data Using Rasch Calibration Methods* which will focus on data analysis issues associated with surveys and address issues associated with extracting meaning from survey data.

The alignment study is a collaborative undertaking between WSI and University of Cambridge ESOL (Cambridge ESOL). The alignment study of WSI's assessment levels and the BULATS scale aimed to map the WSI learning system onto the CEFR levels in both curriculum content and student progression. BULATS was chosen as the vehicle for the alignment study because it is a reliable and valid assessment instrument for business English. It is also convenient and versatile in its administration, suitable for large companies and networks.

Phase 1 of the study was completed in May 2006 and Phase Two is expected to be concluded by April 2007.

The alignment study revealed a good fit between the two scales and provided a sound basis for the alignment of the WSI and the CEFR levels. Cambridge ESOL spokesman Mr Sean Hyde said: "We are pleased that WSI has used BULATS in Phase 1 of their project to align their courses with the CEFR. The CEFR provides a clear and objective basis for describing levels of language proficiency throughout the world and we are looking forward to seeing the Phase 2 findings of the project next year."

About WSI

Wall Street Institute is so named because students can "Invest" in their future – the PREMISE behind the famous Wall Street name. Since its establishment in 1972, Wall Street Institute (WSI) has grown into the largest specialist English education organisation in the world and currently operates more than 350 centres in 25 countries worldwide. WSI offers Hong Kong people the most effective English language instruction available using innovation, interactivity and sophisticated technology. Since WSI launched in Hong Kong six years ago, the company has opened 7 centres in key business and commercial areas and has already established itself as the market leader in adult English language education. WSI's international headquarters is in Baltimore, Maryland, USA and its regional headquarters is in Barcelona, Spain.

WSI HK website: www.wsi.edu.hk
WSI International website: www.wallstreetinstitute.com

About Cambridge ESOL

Cambridge ESOL is part of Cambridge Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge. Examinations and tests within Cambridge Assessment cover a wide spectrum of subjects and levels, and are being taken by over eight million individuals every year in over 150 countries. Cambridge ESOL is a leading examination and testing body in the world with quality test development, administration and research arms within its organisation. Cambridge ESOL exams are linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment, published by the Council of Europe. This is a framework adopted by the European Union countries for language syllabuses design, curriculum specification, examinations, textbooks, etc.

BULATS website: www.bulats.org
Cambridge ESOL website: www.cambridgeesol.org
Cambridge Assessment website: www.cambridgeassessment.org

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