

# EduGrowth and Global Victoria EdTech Innovation Alliance

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## Genix Ventures Innovation Sprint

### Evaluation of the EXAMINA+ assessment-led learning framework

Project Report  
2022-07-19



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

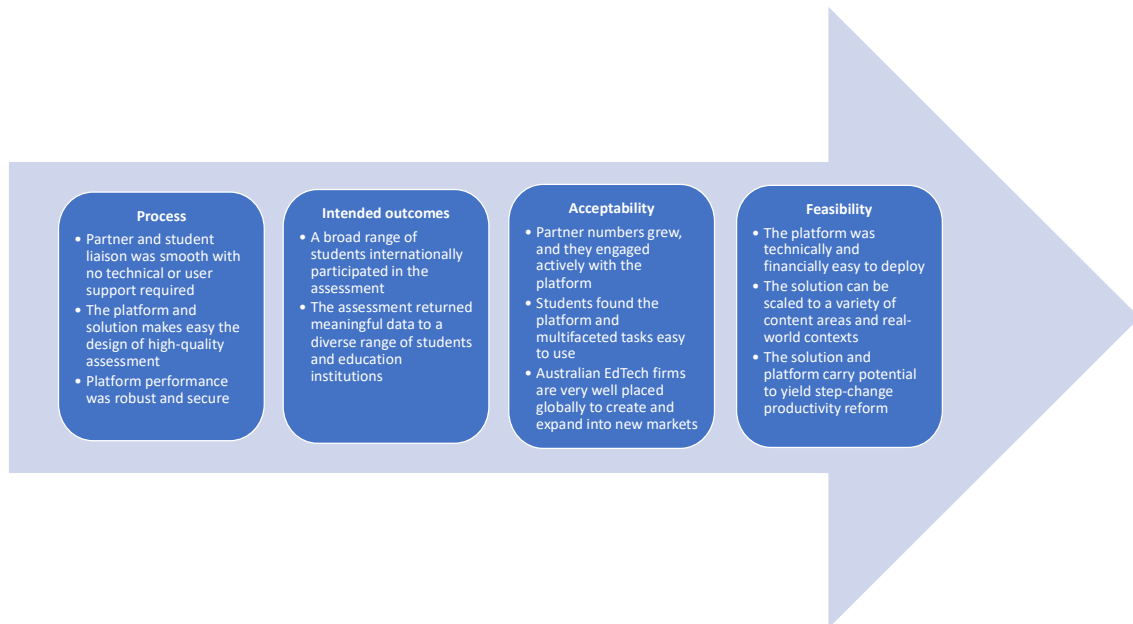
Around the world demand for talent and skills is growing larger than ever before. Workers and employers entering or shifting around the economy need knowledge and skills tailored to where they are and wish to go. This requires new thinking, new education solutions, and new EdTech platforms.

This Genix Ventures innovation sprint evaluated the feasibility of using a rebuilt prototype EXAMINA+ platform to service this new education economy. The EXAMINA+ prototype platform was deployed to pilot test the assessment-led learning solution. This pilot testing was framed by the concept of next generation assessment, built on recent software development, and engaged partners and learners around the world.

The innovation sprint lasted for around seven months and involved project initiation, platform setup, content finalisation, partner engagement and consultation, fieldwork operations, analysis, evaluating and reporting. The innovation sprint proceeded according to schedule despite pandemic- and international-related disruptions.

The EduGrowth and Global Victoria EdTech Innovation Alliance Genix Ventures' Innovation Sprint did play a hugely significant role in helping Genix Ventures confirm the efficacy of the platform and assessment-led solution. The funding and community associated with the innovation sprint helped to propel and in important respects accelerate the development. Drawing on evidence presented in this report the infographic charts efficacy in terms of process, intended outcomes, acceptability and feasibility.

Overall, this Innovation Sprint has returned valuable dividends for platform development, to partners, and to Victoria's globally oriented EdTech industry. This Innovation Sprint has revealed that an education concept, a prototype platform, and a small suite of partners can indeed innovate in ways that keeps people learning across their working lives.



## UNLEASHING THE NEW EDUCATION ECONOMY

Around the world demand for talent and skills is growing larger than ever before. Longer lives and careers, economic disruption and volatility, maturing industries and economies, the rapid transformation of knowledge as well as global growth and competition are, among myriad other forces, all spurring the need for learning. People need to keep learning across their working lives, not just for a handful of post-school years in pursuit of a foundation credential.

The World Economic Forum (2020) predicts that half of all workers will need reskilling in the next five years. SkillsFuture Singapore (2021) predicts that emerging ‘digital’, ‘green’ and ‘care’ economies will require people to be retained with a host of technical priority skills as well as more general core skills. In Australia, the National Skills Commission’s (2021) intergenerational report spotlighted the need for a massive upswing in education and training, and a 2022 Jobs Summit is being planned (Albanese, 2022). The same patterns are echoed by international agencies, employer groups, and governments around the world (Sung, Sheng, Liau, Xinhui, Liu & Coates, 2021).

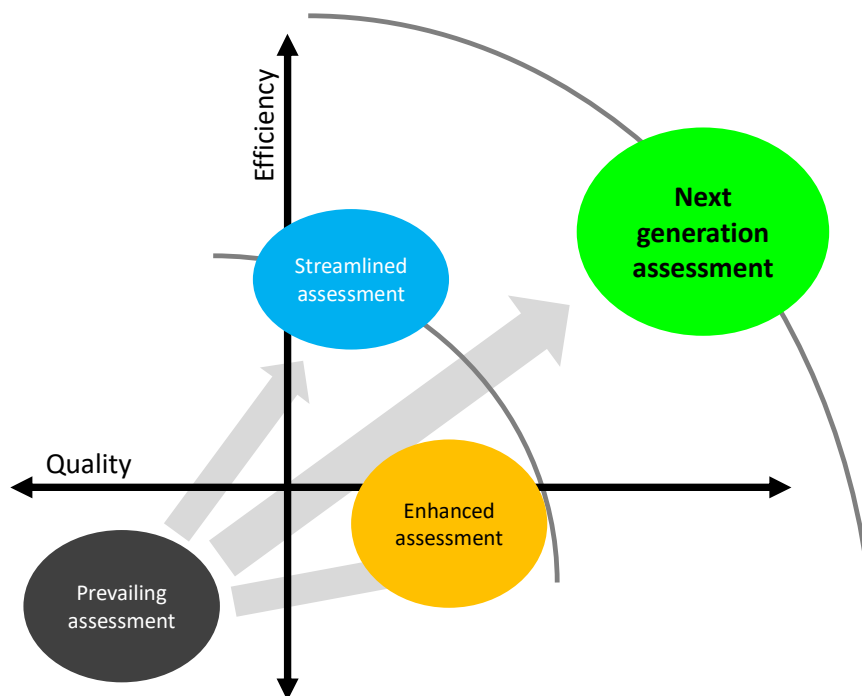
A host of constraints, however, keep hindering learning, driving the need for this Genix Ventures innovation. Higher and vocational education remains fixated on things like ‘sectors’, ‘institutions’, ‘qualifications’, ‘accountabilities’, ‘work roles’ and ‘reputations’, most of which have surprisingly little to do with the any individual learner’s needs. In terms of overall strategic posture, there is a pressing impetus to shift into a new education economy in which the supply of education opportunities is tailored to each person’s needs. Neither workers nor employers entering or shifting around the economy have resources to invest in learning on the terms of the education sector, but instead need knowledge and skills tailored to where they are and wish to go. This requires new thinking, new education solutions, and new EdTech platforms.

## GENIX VENTURES' ASSESSMENT-LED INNOVATION

This Genix Ventures innovation sprint evaluated the feasibility of using a rebuilt prototype EXAMINA+ platform to service this new education economy. The EXAMINA+ prototype platform was deployed to pilot test the assessment-led learning solution. This pilot testing was:

1. Framed by the concept of next generation assessment
2. Built on recent software development, and
3. Engaged partners and learners around the world.

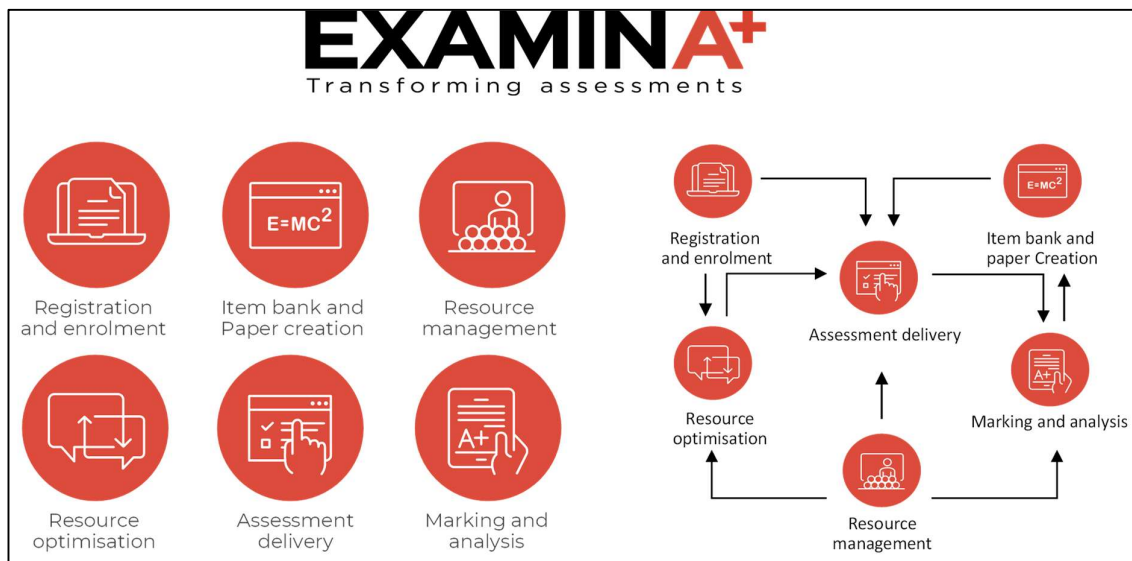
Next generation assessment combines disciplinary, digital, and institutional capability to define learning outcomes, customize and validate authentic assessments, diagnose learning needs and readiness, scale and dynamically target learning resources, mark and moderate results, and establish trusted and authentic information on learning. Fundamentally, it involves repositioning assessment towards the start rather than the end of the learning process. Over 15 years of international assessment research was factored into this innovation sprint (Coates, Liu, Zhang, Jiang, Zhang & Godinho, 2021). Next generation assessment can increase either the efficiency or the quality of assessment (Figure 1). The real value derives from using collaborative assessment to realise step-change productivity advances in learning, education and growth.



**Figure 1: Next generation assessment drives step-change productivity improvement**

Working from a decade of international practice, the EXAMINA+ prototype platform was rebuilt to enable constructively aligned assessment design, collaborative task development and validation, multimodal and multiformat scalable delivery, smart marking and verification,

dynamic and customised reporting, and integration with learning resource libraries. An extensive international audit of existing assessment platforms was conducted, and the rebuild was designed with not just the latest popular features in mind but also a vision for the transforming role of learning assessment in education and beyond. Figure 2 presents the EXAMINA+ platform assessment services.



**Figure 2: EXAMINA+ platform assessment services**

Genix Ventures engaged with partners around the world to prototype and evaluate the platform and education solution. Partners developed assessment and learning materials in the fields of Business and English language, with the former being factored into the pilot. Partners from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas helped to evaluate the platform and sculpt the overall approach to assessment-led learning.

## EDTECH EVALUATION FOR EDUCATION DESIGN

The EduGrowth and Global Victoria EdTech Innovation Alliance Genix Ventures' Innovation Sprint provided a prestigious and fortuitous opportunity to formatively evaluate the capacity of the rebuilt EXAMINA+ to an instantiation of next generation assessment and the broader education solution. It builds on earlier international collaborations underway since 2019.

This overarching aim of the innovation sprint was to demonstrate the effectiveness of using EXAMINA+ to support Next generation Assessment (NGA). NGA seeks to drive assessment-led learning to enhance the reach and breadth of education, helping people achieve their fullest potential through life, regardless of their starting point.

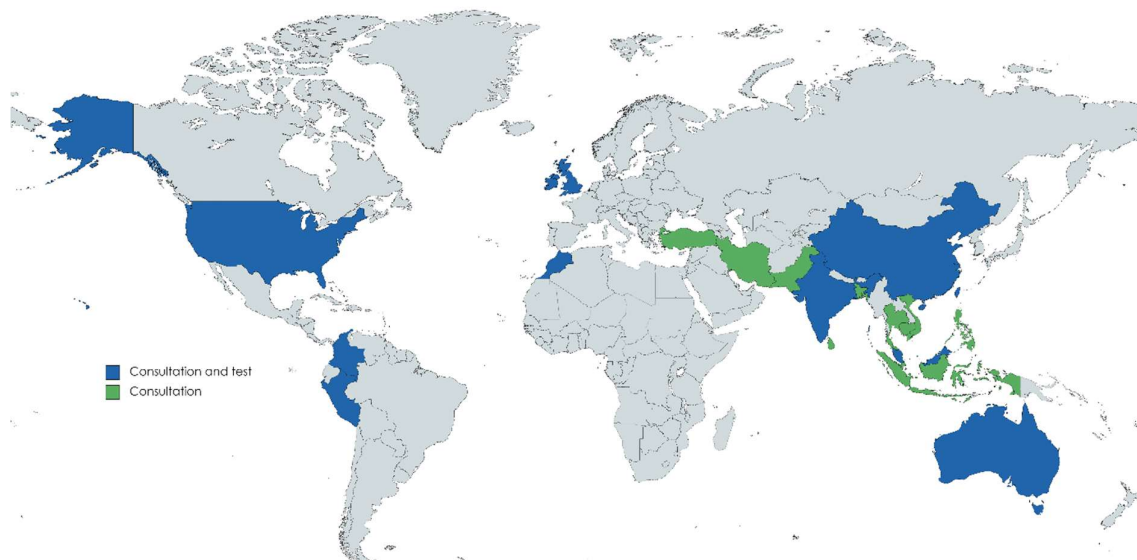
The innovation sprint lasted for around seven months and was divided into four main phases. The first focused on project initiation and platform setup, engaging the local teams, partners and content development partners. The assessment tasks and the evaluation framework

were finalised. A number of new partners were engaged during consultation and also for pilot testing. The second phase focused on fieldwork operations, which involved mainly working with partners and with markers. The final phase involved analysis, evaluating and reporting. The innovation sprint proceeded according to schedule despite pandemic- and international-related disruptions.

Multiple kinds of data were collected in this innovation sprint. The evaluation framework provided the overarching design (Figure 3). Consultations were conducted with national, disciplinary and technical experts in a host of locations around the world. As well, use/interaction, assessment and stakeholder feedback data was collected from the platform itself. Two student focus groups were conducted, one in Asia, the other in Africa. The scope of various data collections is mapped in Figure 4. As these arrangements convey, evaluation data was collected before, during and after the piloting. Data was analysed using a qualitative and quantitative methods with reference to the evaluation framework and prepared for this report.



**Figure 3: Innovation sprint evaluation framework**



**Figure 4: Global consultation and testing locations**

## FORMATIVE INSIGHTS

Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 summarise feasibility insights from the innovation sprint. These summaries are parsimonious given the commercial nature of this innovation sprint and the need to sustain confidentiality of the partners and participants. The summaries are underpinned by a range of consultation, assessment, feedback and platform data. By way of example, selected qualitative results are summarised in the tables, Figure 5 provides a summary of the student feedback, Figure 6 shows a distribution of student assessment scores, Figure 7 summary insights from global partner consultations, and Figure 8 reports a selection of student quotes regarding platform improvement.

**Table 1: Evaluation of ‘scale’ success indicators**

<b>Expanding participation</b>	<b>Enhancing market reach</b>	<b>Working across contexts</b>
<p>The feasibility study did affirm the capacity of the platform to expand participation in learning and education.</p> <p>First, the engagement of partners exceeded that forecast in the project proposal, indicating global interest in the assessment and platform.</p> <p>Second, as the range and quantum of assessment feedback data makes clear, learners around the world were able to log in, complete authentic assessments, have responses marked, and receive reports on specific learning outcomes and areas for improvement.</p> <p>Overall, the EXAMINA+ assessment-led learning solution carries potential to expand participation in learning of people in a variety of education and professional situations.</p>	<p>The piloted solution does indeed help partners increase their reach and tap into new markets.</p> <p>Partners involved in the pilot testing were able to deploy assessments remotely and also across multiple locations and countries. Partners were able to reach out to prospective students and foresee options for deploying the platform either through other institutional partnerships, through language schools, or direct to students/customers.</p> <p>The assessment and feedback results affirm the potential of the platform to cater to students with diverse perspectives and competencies.</p> <p>Judging by first language and country of birth data, a very diverse range of people engaged with the platform. Partners and students represented all the main language groups.</p>	<p>The pilot did confirm that the platform performs in different enterprise/national IT environments.</p> <p>The platform was supplied to partners without any technical instructions and was able to be used in various national IT environments. This usability and adaptability is important for scalability.</p> <p>The feedback from students in many contexts is consistently positive.</p> <p>Evidence came from Genix Ventures technical support, from partner consultation, and from analysis of technical logs.</p>

**Table 2: Evaluation of ‘quality’ success indicators**

Improving assessment resources	Enhancing learner engagement	Supporting quality improvement
<p>Technical/psychometric analysis of the quality of assessment resources in use before and after the project showed that the solution enhanced quality.</p> <p>The project helped collect a suite of responses from students spanning different partners, enabling initial psychometric validation of the assessment materials, and initial calibration against reference assessments.</p> <p>Through platform development, the project provided an impetus to develop the English language assessment and learning resources, and also build materials for use in the field of Business. While full psychometric validation is beyond the scope of this evaluation, the assessment and feedback data affirmed the value of these resources.</p> <p>The platform enabled several features which build quality into assessment resources, including constructive alignment, collaborative task development and validation, multimodal and multiformat scalable delivery, smart marking and verification, dynamic and customised reporting, and integration with learning resource libraries.</p> <p>Overall, the design of the EXAMINA+ platform improved the design, development and validation of assessment resources.</p>	<p>Partners did indeed engage in the project. They saw the solution as a means to engage students in assessments that delivered value to them and their institutions. Partners convened students, assessment spaces, and oversaw the assessments. Given the scope of the project, no steps were taken to engage partners in marking student responses.</p> <p>A diverse and sufficiently large array of students engaged in the project. Relative to other options such as paper-based assessments conducted by partners, the platform helped to engage learners in the assessment process itself. The pilot assessment was low stakes for students, leading to varying engagement with the assessment materials.</p> <p>For instance, the feedback data in Figure 5 indicates that around two-thirds of students who responded to the evaluation questions found the platform easy to use, found it helped them learn English, and would recommend the platform to others. Results were slightly lower as regards usability, which goes to the ongoing need to improve user journeys and experiences.</p> <p>Nonetheless, feedback from students via the platform and in focus groups, analysis of assessment data, and consultation with partners all signalled the need for work on user experience.</p>	<p>The scope of the innovation sprint did not enable considered evaluation of the extent to which the platform or solution supported broader institutional forms of education quality improvement. Evidently, it did enable discussions of education design, student learning, and assessment standards.</p> <p>For instance, results from partner consultations and student feedback did signal that the platform helped people learn English and it worked well.</p>

**Table 3: Evaluation of ‘cost’ success indicators**

Efficiencies and savings	Scaling opportunities	Scaling opportunities
<p>While a full cost/benefit analysis has yet to be conducted for the current prototype, demand for secure online assessment platforms continues to grow in a sustained way, even after the initial surge during the pandemic. Interest in this facet of EdTech is strong and growing.</p> <p>A financial case was developed as part of earlier piloting with the legacy EXAMINA+ platform, which indicated that there are fixed costs associated with adopting such platforms but through quality and efficiency enhancements it is feasible to realise step-change productivity advances.</p>	<p>Research conducted over the last three years on education contexts, developments, practices and innovations has affirmed a growing market for secure online assessment platforms.</p> <p>The student and partner feedback was especially promising, signalling the easy uptake and unique value of the platform.</p> <p>Australian technology and education firms are extremely well placed to serve and develop this market given their innovative nature, global orientation, and established reputations.</p>	<p>To be taken to scale, further platform development is required, particularly regarding user experience and integration with learning resources. Additional assessment and management features are continually being added.</p> <p>As well, a full commercial model is being developed, in liaison with education and commercial partners. The EXAMINA+ platform has been redeveloped to support a variety of solutions, which will naturally require a diverse array of partnerships.</p> <p>Australia is an important foundation context and testbed for the EXAMINA+ platform and assessment-led solution, though the main markets are located abroad.</p>

What, in summary, do these insights reveal for the efficacy of the EXAMINA+ platform and its capacity to support next generation approaches to assessment-led learning? Overall, the EduGrowth and Global Victoria EdTech Innovation Alliance Genix Ventures' Innovation Sprint did play a hugely significant role in helping Genix Ventures confirm the efficacy of the platform and assessment-led solution. The funding and community associated with the innovation sprint helped to propel and in important respects accelerate the development.

The Global Victoria EdTech Innovation Alliance defines 'efficacy' as resulting from process, intended outcomes, acceptability and feasibility. Summary observations can be drawn from Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3:

- While development and evaluation never proceed in a straight line, the overall process was efficacious when considered against each of the success objectives and subsidiary indicators.
- At the same time, the evidence affirmed that outcomes established for learners, partners, the EXAMINA+ platform and the assessment-led solution were achieved.
- The diversity and depth of engagement with the platform and lack of technical support and coordination required indicated that, even before user-experience upgrades are implemented, the prototype platform was acceptable to stakeholders.
- The innovation sprint, platform and solution were feasible, noting that prototype platform and salutation are not yet being offered on commercial terms, though with further development and partnering seems feasible.

## STEPS AHEAD

Much more is required to service the worldwide demand for talent and skills than a single platform testing in a single field with a handful of partners spanning a dozen global locations. But new platforms and education solutions are indeed required, shifting beyond those developed to support more provider-centric approaches to education. This Innovation Sprint has revealed that an education concept, a prototype platform, and a small suite of partners can indeed pave a means for people to keep learning across their working lives, not just for a handful of post-school years in pursuit of a foundation credential.

This Genix Ventures' Innovation Sprint has returned valuable dividends for platform development, to participating partners, and to Victoria's globally oriented EdTech industry. A significant factor in the Innovation Sprint's success was the focus on rigorous innovation rather than technical discussion. This helped to quickly engage a variety of partners around the world.

Platform building continues apace, with focus on enhancing security and scalability, user journeys and experiences, the production of user learning libraries, commercial platforms and gateways, and efficiency improvements. A major focus is the consolidation of partnerships with education institutions and resource development partners.

As the prototype matures, Genix Ventures is developing marketing strategies to broader engagement with the EXAMINA+ platform. Higher, vocational and lifelong education is replete with platforms which expand, engulf and adapt to meet all kinds of educational and practical needs. The world has relatively few secure online assessment platforms, however, which are user-friendly, can be deployed across an array of fields, and link seamlessly with learning resources.

Work continues as well on articulating next generation assessment approaches to assessment-led learning. The ultimate test of any platform is whether it enhances the efficiency and value of people's learning hence wellbeing and work in cost effective ways.

## REFERENCES

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## APPENDIX: SELECTED EVIDENCE

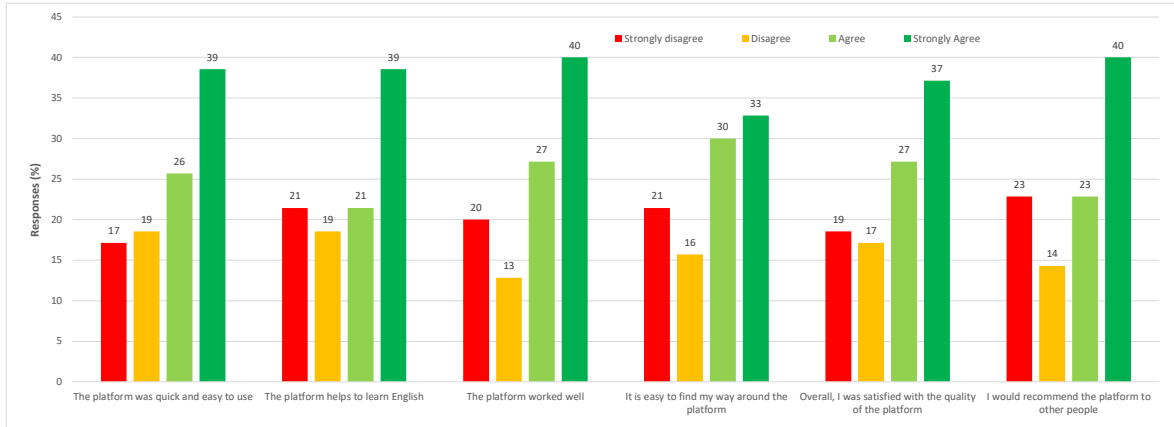


Figure 5: Student evaluation questions average scores

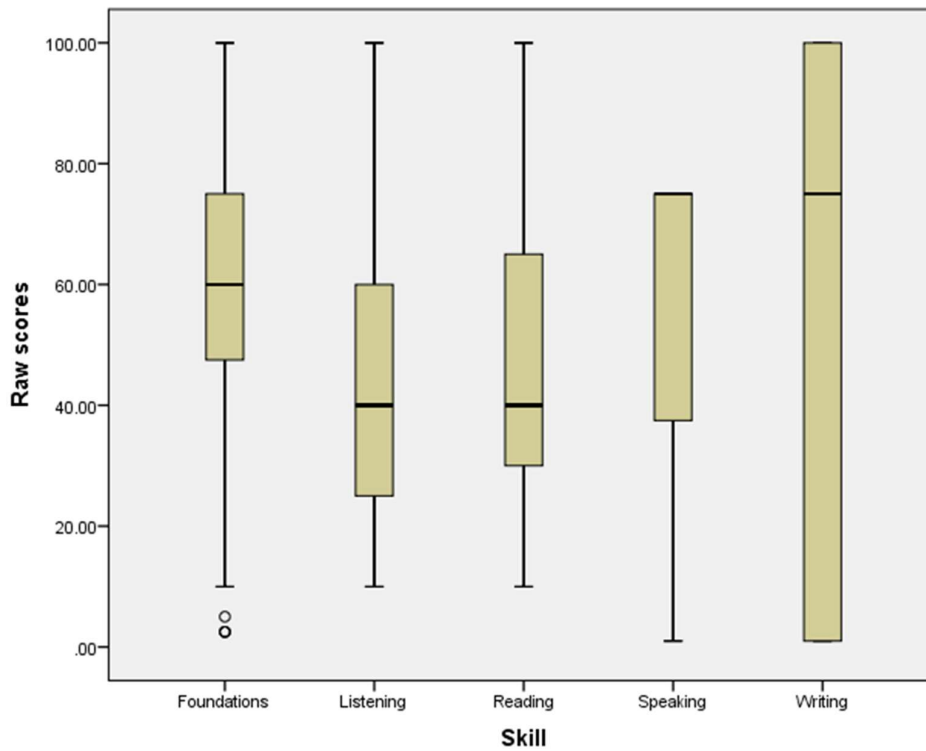


Figure 6: Student English skill assessment summary scores



- I don't think that i have something to improve the platform because i am very satisfying!
- adding the ability to type dates and locations, instead of having to browse for a long while.
- I like this test.
- I liked!
- I loved everything about the platform except i would love to add more attempt while recording on ,and the ability to delete it in case you need to
- I think that this plateform is interesting for the people whether they are children,teens,adults... who want to learn English. It is too fast and the questions are clear . So I don't think it needs improvement.
- Thank you for all members who create this useful platform.
- I will do nothing because it is verry clear, easy to use and amazing.
- i would add some videos with clear english so that everyone can understand it and learn from it
- Instead of using long audios ( 3 minutes audios from exmple), I prefer if it was short audios in severel questions.
- It is already very good to be honest. Does take time to fill in, so may the option of saving a partially completed form so that it does does need to be filled in at one go.
- It was a suitable experience to learn English but it would be amazing to see mistakes and correct them after passing the exam
- It's good experience
- Making the speaking shorter
- Maybe take part in further tests on this platform.
- more time for exam
- Nice
- no count down clock
- No more adittional comments
- nothing, it's working fine
- thank you so much
- solve the lag problems
- Speaking and writing sections are unsuitable on mobile phones
- thank you for this platform , we have fun and learn too
- the listening part might need pauses so that the test takers can answer the questions.
- The platform is already perfect
- The platform is good
- the platform needs more guidance for use. the UI can be more beautiful
- There are bugs in the speaking test (I cannot record or stop)
- This platform is very helpfull . THANK YOU
- Well , everything seems well to me , i even enjoyed taking that exam on this platform .
- only the vocal questions what quiet hard to understand every word.
- i GIVE 10/10.!!

**Figure 8: Student platform improvement suggestions**