

Educake Case Study
Eaton International School
Kajang, Malaysia





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We talked to an English language international school in Malaysia about their experience of using Educake.

Background

The Eaton International School has around 700 students from kindergarten to year 11. It follows the Cambridge Curriculum for Science, using the Cambridge International GCSEs.

We talked to Francis Popham, Head of Science, and began by asking why they started using Educake:

Why did you start using Educake?

Francis: The school had been using MyMaths for Maths which the teachers found incredibly useful so I had a look around to see what similar things there were for science.

Educake just makes things like setting homework, plenaries or revision activities very easy for teachers. The students then get instant feedback, which they find so rewarding, being able to see exactly where they are, straight after doing their test.

I think those things are the most important things we've found using Educake. It's being able to

set tests very quickly, being able to use it in numerous ways, and having the students get that feedback very quickly.

The information they can get from their reports is very detailed as well, so they can see what topics they've done well in and what topics they need a bit more work on.

How did you get started?

I applied for the free trial and set up our students on it – we only had two classes at the time. I was very impressed with the free trial and so I applied for the full subscription.

It was very easy to get the students started. I got a lot of help and guidance from Educake as to how to set up the classes.

As the school has grown it has been easy to add new students, to reset and change passwords, and manage the login details when students forget theirs.

What do you like most about Educake?

It's just how easy it is to use. It saves a lot of time compared to handing out worksheets, marking them, putting the results up on a spreadsheet, hand them back to the kids, making sure they know what they did well... that takes up so much time. Being able to get that feedback straight away is just fantastic. And it's not just the marking, the review time is very quick.

The option to comment on students' answers is also really really good, especially when they are adamant that they got something right. It's possible to discuss their answers and any misconceptions they have. The students like that interaction.

I've noticed that when you provide written feedback in exercise books students often don't seem to engage with it, but when it's typed up in Educake they get a bit more involved. I think it's because it's more specific – you're dealing with specific questions. They don't see it as an overall mark and a judgement on their piece of work, so they do take the feedback on board more.

A lot of our students have come from schools where it's bad to make a mistake, so in their books you'll see a lot of correction fluid. That fear of making a mistake just seems to disappear with Educake.

What are you using Educake for?

Primarily we use it for homework. It's very easy to set differentiated quizzes for the different class sets. It contains questions specifically for the IGCSE as well.

We also use it for plenary exercises; just five questions means we can get a quick judgement on what students have picked up in the lesson.

Once the quizzes are done we can get the students to review the comments on their homework as a starter, so they can see why they got the questions wrong.

Do teachers like Educake?

Yes, they've found it very very useful. One of them isn't very tech-savvy but still is setting questions easily.

It has been useful for us in department meetings to discuss the reports and use the progress tracker to see where kids are as they approach their IGCSEs. That has allowed us to make the weaker topics the priority for revision, making sure those topics were covered first.

What about the students?

The feedback has been really good. The older years have been finding it especially useful for their revision.

We've had quite a lot of students making their own tests. Our top student is almost at four and a half thousand questions.

Going through the progress tracker, I looked at how many of the year 9s had done IGCSE questions, thinking that there must be a few students who had been using it to test the waters of the IGCSE content. I actually found that pretty much all of them had done questions on most of the topics, and that's even before we'd started teaching them the IGCSE content, so they're obviously finding it very useful.

Has there been feedback from parents?

We had quite a big push at the start of the year, emailing parents telling them how we will be using Educake.

Educake is useful when we are doing parents evenings. The auto-generated reports can be used to discuss where the students need to improve. I can show them the reports easily which the parents like.

I can also show them how the students can set themselves their own quizzes for independent learning.

What's your IT like?

All the students in the school have their own devices. Key Stage 3 primarily have iPads and then as they get older they get Macbooks. All the devices are owned by the students, but managed by the school's IT department.

How would you describe Educake to another teacher?

It's just an incredibly useful resource to have. It allows students and teachers to monitor and track student progress easily and efficiently.

There is a sense of security using Educake. It has a trustworthy database of questions, so it does feel like they are geared at the level you choose. Using other resources where people can upload their quizzes, it's very difficult to judge whether a question is actually a level 4 or 5 question, for example.

I've got so much use out of Educake and it's made my life both as a teacher and a subject head a lot easier.

Francis Popham was talking to Charley Darbshire, Managing Director and Founder of Educake, in May 2018.

Educake

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