2018 CLEAR Quick Poll Results

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CLEAR periodically issues a "Quick Poll" survey, asking members about their credentialing practices, policies, and issues. These Quick Polls are not designed as scientific studies but allow us to gather snapshot data regarding current practices in credentialing. Here are the results of several Quick Polls from 2018.

Language Accommodations

Question: Does your program provide special testing arrangements for candidates whose first language is not the same as the language on the examination?

If yes, which arrangements does your program provide? Choose all that apply.
- ☐ *Extra time*
- ☐ *Bilingual dictionary*
- ☐ *Monolingual dictionary*
- ☐ *In-person translator*
- ☐ *Other*

Number of responses: 91
Results:

Seventy-six respondents (83%) indicated they do *NOT* provide special testing arrangements for candidates whose first language is not the same as the language of the exam, while 15 respondents (17%) do provide such arrangements.
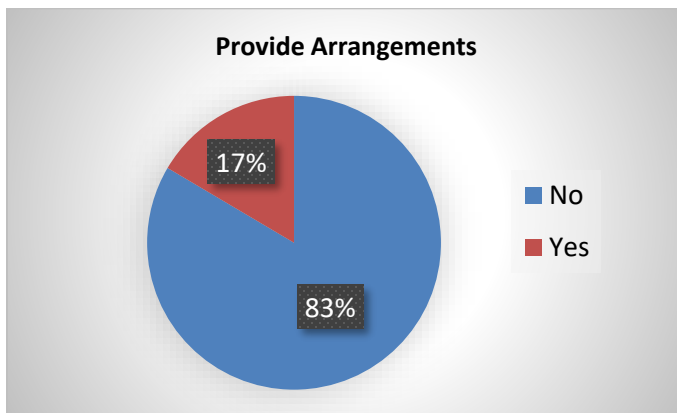
Among respondents providing special arrangements, 60% provide bilingual dictionaries, 40% permit extra time, 20% provide an in-person translator, and 60% provide some other type of arrangement.

Types of Arrangements Provided

Arrangement	Percentage
Other	60%
Bilingual dictionary	60%
Extra time	40%
In-person translator	20%
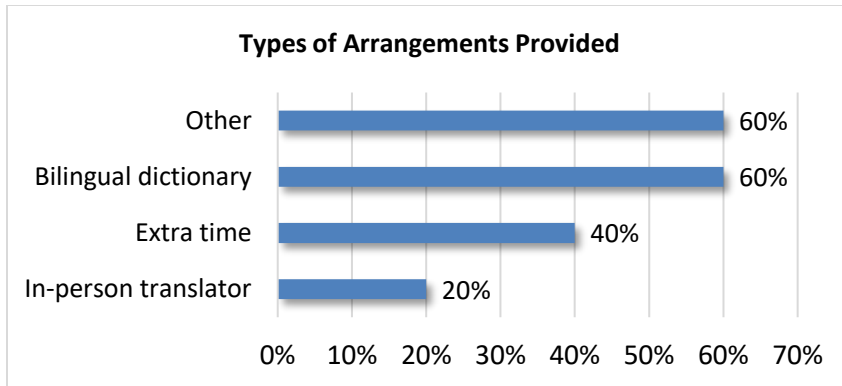
Of the organizations providing other types of arrangements for candidates whose first language is not that of the exam, the following are provided.

- Candidates bring their own pre-approved translators on special Translator Testing Days;
- Organization provides English to French Canadian terms;
- Organization provides Kurzweil software to provide language translation for testing;
- Examinations provided in two official Canadian languages—English and French—and candidates can write the French exam or the bilingual exam, where questions are presented in French and English.

Additional comments were received from Canadian organizations related to requirements regarding demonstrating language proficiency. The following feedback was provided.

- Candidates must pass an approved language test;
- Candidates may provide proof of a degree or diploma from a post-secondary institution where the instruction is in English;
- Candidates may provide proof that they have met another jurisdiction's English Proficiency standards.

Question Types

Question: *Does your examination include question types other than single correct answer, four-option multiple choice?*

*If yes, which of the following do you use? Choose all that apply.*

- ☐ *3-option multiple-choice*
- ☐ *5-option multiple-choice*
- ☐ *Drag & drop*
- ☐ *Hotspot*
- ☐ *Multiple response*
- ☐ *Question with audio*
- ☐ *Question with still image*
- ☐ *Question with video recording*
- ☐ *Question with virtual simulation (interaction with virtual equipment, virtual patient, etc.)*
- ☐ *Scenario or case study with several related questions*

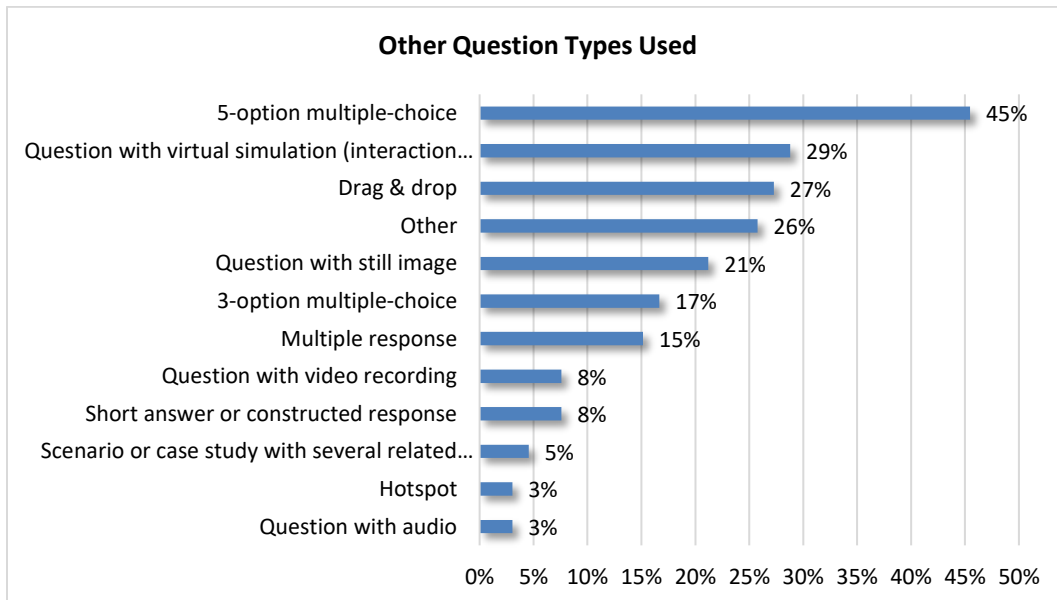☐   *Short answer or constructed response*

☐   *Other*

Number of responses: 126
Results:

Slightly more than half of respondents (N=66, 52%) use one or more question types other than (or in addition to) four-option multiple choice questions with one correct response on their examination, while 60 respondents (48%) do not use other question types.

**Exam Includes Questions Other Than
4-option Multiple Choice**

- **No**
- **Yes**

52%   48%
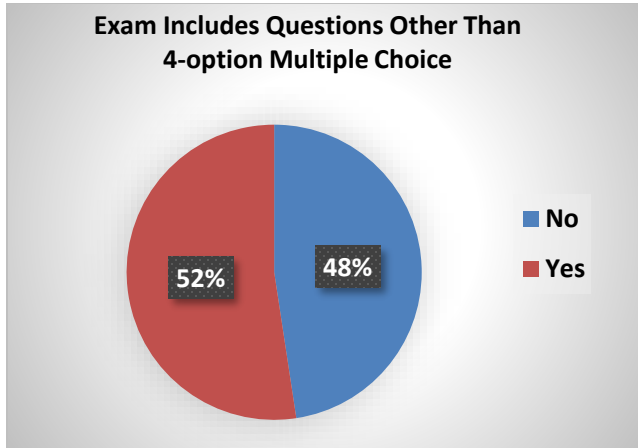
Respondents using other question types on their exams and chose all that applied from a list of options. Because multiple responses were permitted, the total percentage of alternate question types exceeds 100%. Nearly half (45%) use 5-option multiple choice, 29% use questions with virtual simulations (interaction with virtual equipment, virtual patient, etc.), and 27% use drag and drop items. The percentage of respondents using the various item types options are displayed in the chart below.

Other Question Types Used

Question Type	Percentage
5-option multiple-choice	45%
Question with virtual simulation (interaction…	29%
Drag & drop	27%
Other	26%
Question with still image	21%
3-option multiple-choice	17%
Multiple response	15%
Question with video recording	8%
Short answer or constructed response	8%
Scenario or case study with several related…	5%
Hotspot	3%
Question with audio	3%

Write-in responses to the "other" types of questions used indicated a range of types, including OSCEs or practical exams (N=7), True/False questions (N=4), simulation assignments (N=3), matching (N=2), fill in the blanks (N=1), and multiple correct response options (N=1).
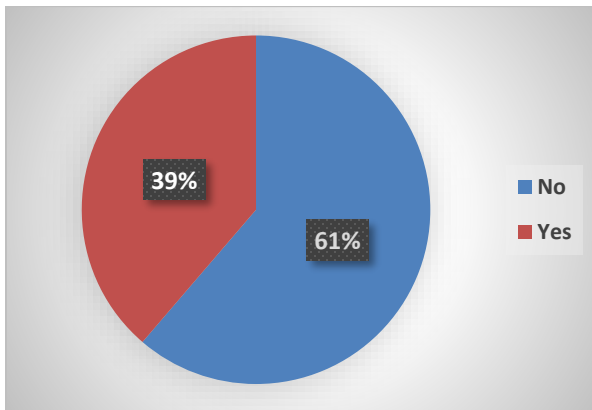

US Copyright

Question: *Do you register your test content with the U.S. Copyright Office?*

Are you US-based?

Number of responses: 62
Results:

Overall, 39% of respondents register their test content with the US copyright office, and 61% do not.

Fifty of the 62 respondents are US based, and 12 are not based in the US. As shown in the chart below, whether or not an organization registers its exam with the US copyright office is directly tied to its location. Just over half (53%) of the US-based organizations register their exams, while none of the non-US-based organizations do so.

Register Test Content with US Copyright Office

YES ■ NO ■

	YES	NO
US based	24	26
Not US based	0	12
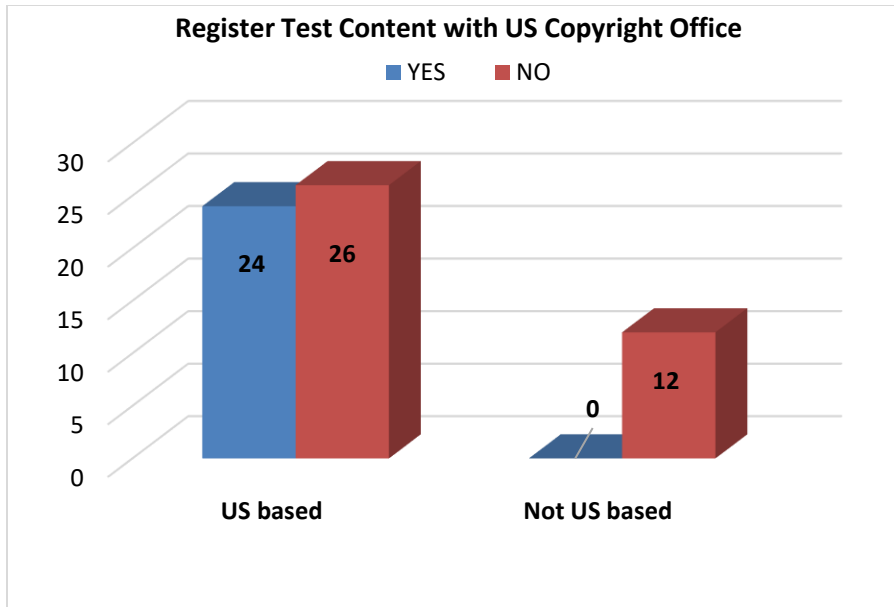
Training Regarding the Meaning of Regulation

Question: *Does your organization offer training to new licensees or registrants on what it means to be regulated?*

If yes, is the training required as a condition of licensure/registration?

What media do you use to provide onboarding training? Choose all that apply.

- ☐ *In person, instructor led*
- ☐ *Pamphlets or other printed materials*
- ☐ *Self-paced eLearning*
- ☐ *Webinars*
- ☐ *Other*

*Would your organization benefit from such a training?*

In a training for newly regulated individuals, what topics are essential? Choose all that apply.

- ☐ *Best practices regarding hot button issues*
- ☐ *Continuing competency issues*
- ☐ *Disciplinary proceedings*
- ☐ *Ethical practices for licensees and regulators*
- ☐ *Expectations of licensees/registrants for the regulatory body*
- ☐ *Expectations of the regulatory body for the licensees/registrants*
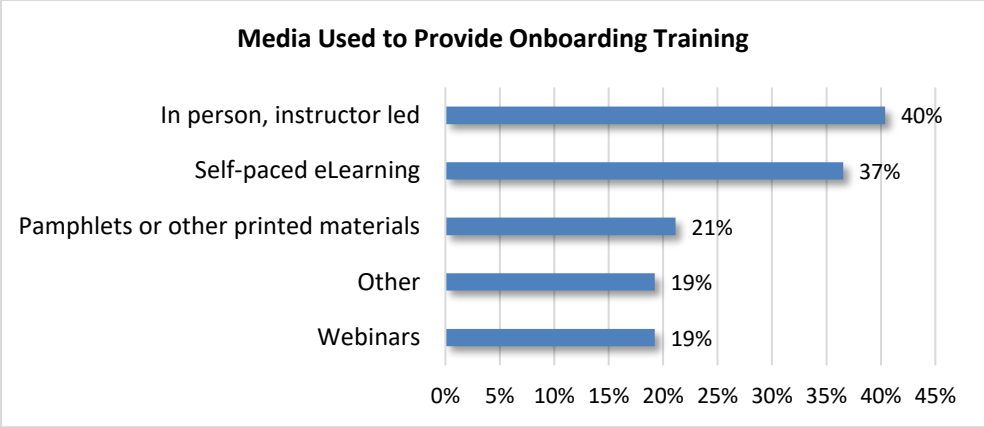- ☐ *The role of the regulatory body*
- ☐ *Other*

Number of responses: 170
Results:

Of the 170 respondents, 52 (31%) offer training to new licensees or registrants on what it means to be regulated and 118 (69%) do not.

Training Offered

31%
69%

■ No
■ Yes
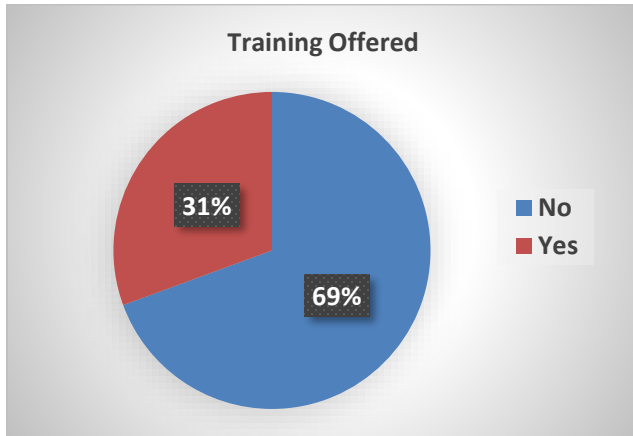
In 57% of those organizations providing training on the meaning of regulation, the training is required as a condition of licensure/registration, while it is not required by 47% of those providing training.

Training Required

43%
57%

■ No
■ Yes
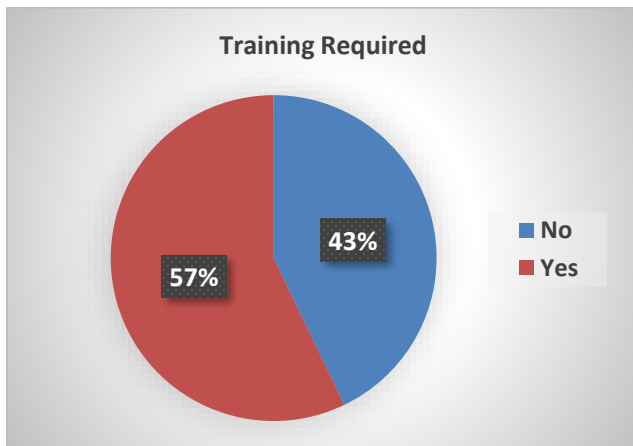
Respondents used a variety of media to provide onboarding training, as shown in the table below. Because respondents were permitted to select all options that applied, percentages do not sum to 100%. The largest percentage of respondents provide instructor-led in person training (40%), and 37% offer self-paced eLearning. Printed materials and pamphlets are offered by 21% of respondents, and webinars or some other form of media are each used by 19% of respondents.
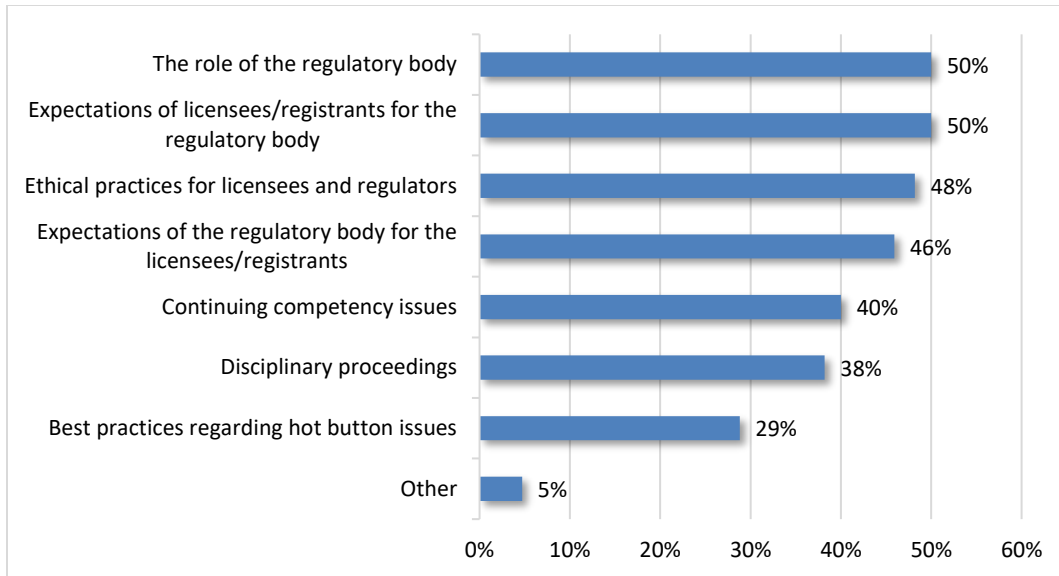
Media Used to Provide Onboarding Training

Media	Percentage
In person, instructor led	40%
Self-paced eLearning	37%
Pamphlets or other printed materials	21%
Other	19%
Webinars	19%

Among the write-in responses to the "Other" option are jurisprudence exams, online material provided as part of an education or training program, requiring sign-off of online attestations, material on the certifying organization's website, and resources available from the regulatory body.

Asked if their organization would benefit from new licensees or registrants receiving training related to the meaning of regulation, opinions were almost evenly split. Fifty-one percent responded that such training would benefit their organization, and 49% did not believe their organization would benefit.

Organization Would Benefit from Training

Response	Percentage
No	9%
Yes	51%
Missing	40%
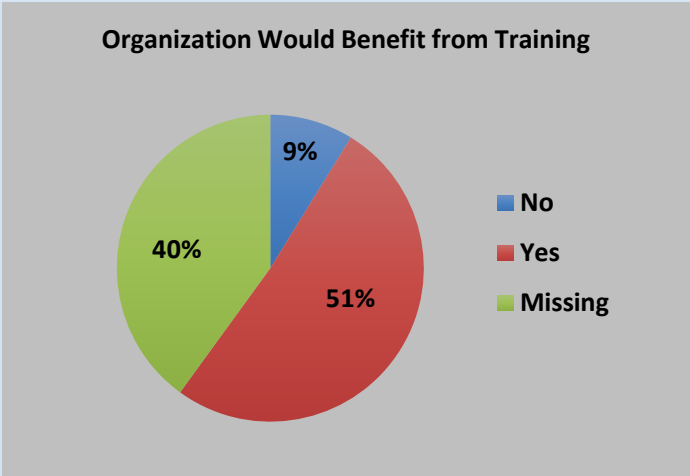
Respondents were then asked "In a training for newly regulated individuals, what topics are essential?" They were able to select all options that applied, so percentages in the table below do not sum to 100%.

Category	Percentage
The role of the regulatory body	50%
Expectations of licensees/registrants for the regulatory body	50%
Ethical practices for licensees and regulators	48%
Expectations of the regulatory body for the licensees/registrants	46%
Continuing competency issues	40%
Disciplinary proceedings	38%
Best practices regarding hot button issues	29%
Other	5%

Some respondents wrote in "Other" topics that for which training is essential, including the meaning of self-regulation; self assessment of health; and return to practice after an absence.

Additional respondents used the comment box to make general observations, including that their organizations were either national or global in scope and therefore regulators and regulations varied by state, country or region; that regulators rather than credentialing bodies have the responsibility for information transfer; and that training is provided as new programs are implemented but not as ongoing training.

Exam Breaches

Question: Has your organization experienced an exam breach by a test taker in which live exam content was obtained and released to other test takers? Please also answer "yes" if your organization was able to intercept the test taker before the test taker was able to provide the information to others (an "attempted breach").

What were the consequences for the guilty party/parties? (Check all that apply.)

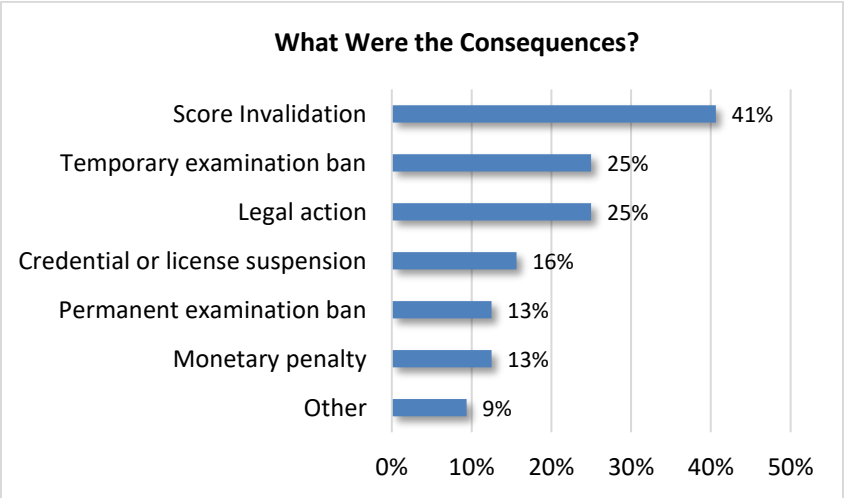*Are you aware of any negative publicity from the breach or attempted breach?*

Number of respondents: 83
Results:

Almost two-thirds of respondents (64%) had *NOT* experienced an exam breach or attempted breach. Twenty-nine percent had experienced a breach or attempted breach, and 7% suspected a breach but were unable to confirm it.

Organization Experienced Exam Breach
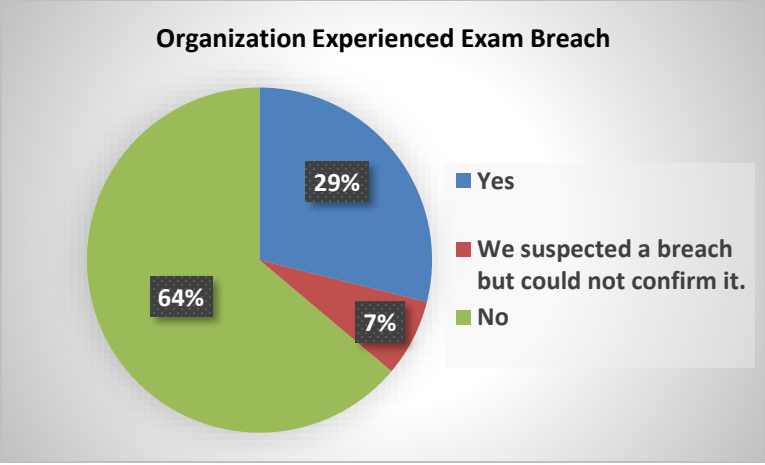
Respondents were asked the consequences for those found guilty of breaching or attempting to breach the exam; their responses are shown in the table below. Because respondents could select all consequences that applied, the percentages do not sum to 100%. The most common consequence for the guilty party was having their score invalidated (41%), followed by a temporary examination ban or legal action (both implemented by 25% of breached organizations), followed by credential or licensure suspension (16%), and ermanent examination ban or monetary penalty (both at 13%). Write-in responses to the "Other consequences" option included a ban of six years to retake exam (since the exam was requirement for licensure, this in effect was a 6-year licensure ban); the candidate was expelled from school; and one instance where adjudication of the breach was still in process.

Respondents were asked if they were aware of any negative publicity from the breach or attempted breach. In the vast majority of cases (92%) there was no negative publicity; only 8% experienced negative publicity as a result of the breach or attempted breach.

Any Negative Publicity

- 8% Yes
- 92% No
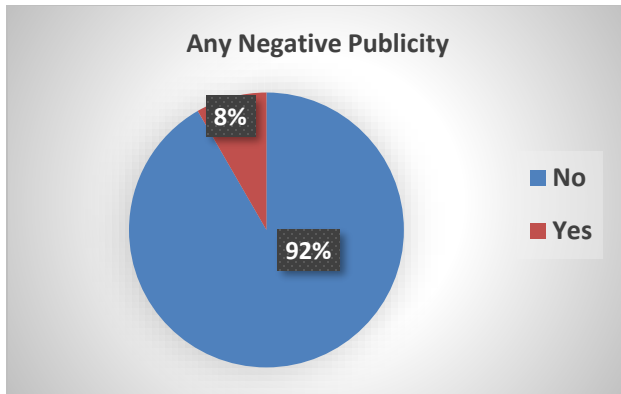
Respondents provided the following additional information related to exam breaches:
- Test provider did not have robust action plan in place
- We have had a long history of examination breaches. These are accomplished by memorization of examination content, then sharing the content with others in an examination preparation "school".

Appeals Process

This poll was administered as part of a presentation for the 2018 CLEAR Annual Conference.

Question: Does your organization have an appeals procedure related to your examinations?

Of your most recent appeals, about how many were related to each of the following topics? (Note: any single appeal may include multiple topics.)

☐ *Concerns about bias in the scoring*
☐ *Concerns about instructions from the proctor/invigilator*
☐ *Concerns about the clarity of questions and response options*
☐ *Concerns about the correctness of the answer key*
☐ *Concerns about the exam content*
☐ *Concerns about the fairness of the examination*
☐ *Conditions occurring during the examination administration*
☐ *Errors in score reports*
☐ *Missing of deadlines*
☐ *Other concerns*
☐ *Score results (for example, requests to rescore)*

Think about the three most recent appeals requests you have received. For each, briefly state the basis of the appeal, and describe how your organization responded.

Is there anything you would like to share about your organization's policies and procedures related to examination appeals?
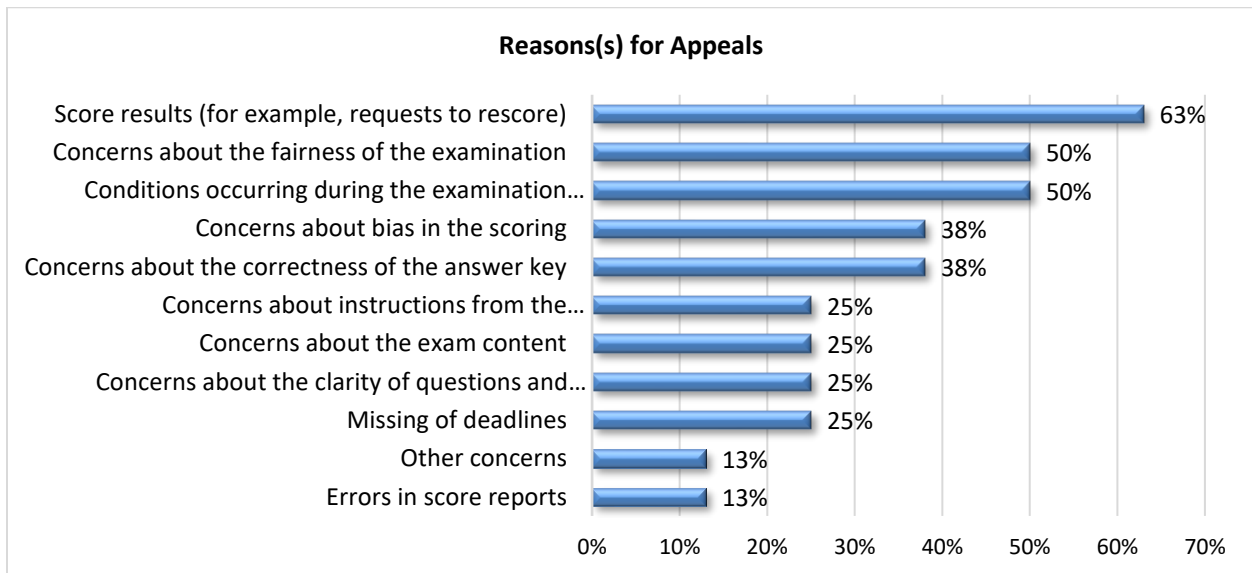
Number of Respondents: 14
Results:

Seventy-nine percent of the organizations had an appeals procedure related to their examination and 21% did not.

Organization Has Appeals Process

- Yes
- No

21%

79%
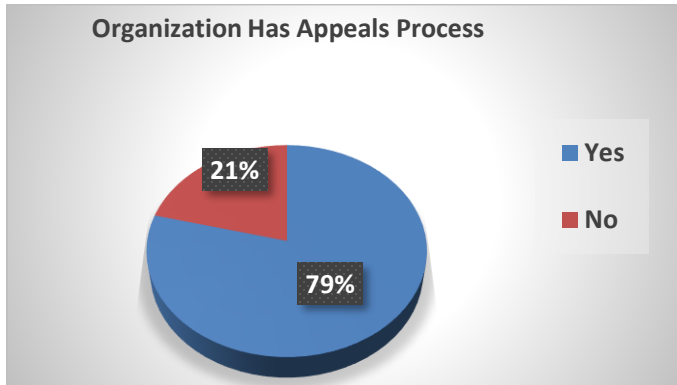
As shown in the chart below, the most common reason for appeals is related to score results, with 63% of respondents mentioning this. Half of respondents noted that candidates appealed the examination because of concerns about either the fairness of the examination or conditions occurring during the examination administration. The full set of responses are shown in the table below.

Reasons(s) for Appeals

Reason	Percent
Score results (for example, requests to rescore)	63%
Concerns about the fairness of the examination	50%
Conditions occurring during the examination…	50%
Concerns about bias in the scoring	38%
Concerns about the correctness of the answer key	38%
Concerns about instructions from the…	25%
Concerns about the exam content	25%
Concerns about the clarity of questions and…	25%
Missing of deadlines	25%
Other concerns	13%
Errors in score reports	13%

In addition to discussing their formal appeals process, several organization offered information on how they handle candidate disagreements with exam results outside a formal appeal. For example, one organization noted that it permits a review and challenge process, but not formal appeals, and another organization rescores all candidates close to the passing point and evaluates any scoring discrepancies.

Think about the three most recent appeals requests you have received. For each, briefly state the basis of the appeal, and describe how your organization responded.

Appeals generally fell into a number of categories. Scoring issues were the most common, and were most typically addressed by re-scoring, either another assessor or by the exam vendor. In almost all cases, the initial score was found to be correct. One organization found that an invigilator had issued incorrect instructions and affected candidates were allowed to re-sit the exam for no cost at the next available session; however, in another case, a candidate's concern with an invigilator was not raised in a timely manner and the appeal was rejected. Questions about answer keys or the content of the exam were forwarded to the exam agency for review.

> "90%-100% of our appeals relate to not receiving sufficient marks"

Is there anything you would like to share about your organization's policies and procedures related to examination appeals?

Verbatim responses to this question are provided below.

- Appeals are limited to substantive issues with marking (i.e., is there an error or injustice in the making of the exam) or where there may be an issue with a question.
- We allow a two week period immediately following the exam for candidates to appeal on the basis of exam process, but not exam content.
- Concerns about conditions during exam administration or other administrative issues are handled outside of the exam appeal process.
- We recently eliminated a paid rescoring option for candidates and instead require that all exam challenges meet the criteria for our certification appeals process. The rescoring process had never uncovered an issue and it seemed disingenuous to charge for such a service. We receive very few true appeals related to the exam.
- All candidates are allowed to write comments on items during the exam. All such comments are reviewed, and such review has, on occasion, identified a scoring issue for an item. Those are corrected before providing official scores to candidates, so those issues are handled in this QA process between conclusion of the exam and providing official scores.