

Recent CLEAR Quick Poll Results

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CLEAR periodically issues “Quick Poll” surveys 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. This article discusses the results of several Quick Polls that were administered from November 2020 through February 2022, plus selected results from a survey of CLEAR members conducted in the summer of 2021.

Quick Poll on Live Remote Proctoring

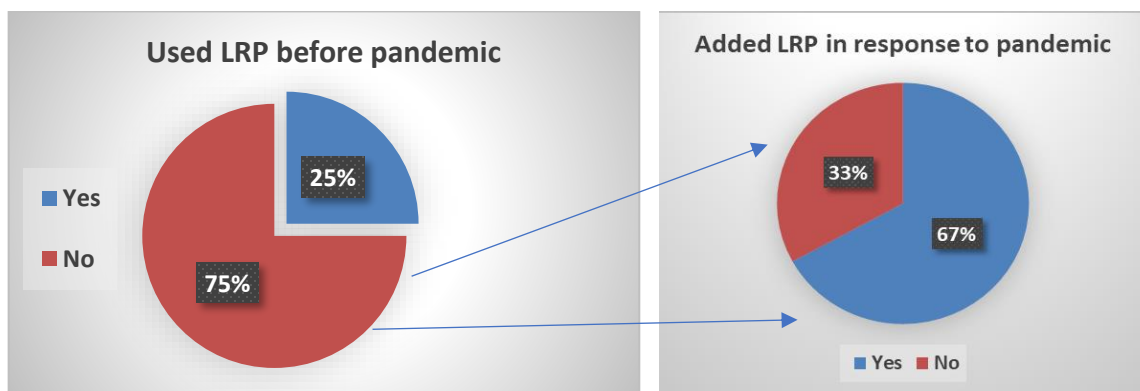
Questions:

- Did your organization use a remote (online) proctoring solution for its examination programs prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic? (Yes/No)
- Did your organization implement a remote (online) proctoring solution in response to COVID-19? (Yes/No/Not sure)
- If Yes, do you plan to continue using remote (online) proctoring after the current situation ends? (Yes/No)
- What regulatory, governance, financial, or practitioner challenges, if any, did you face in the transition to remote (online) proctoring? (Open text response)

Number of responses: 28

Results

Of the 28 respondents who answered the poll, three-fourths (75%, N=21) indicated that their organization had **NOT** used live remote proctoring (LRP) before the Covid-19 pandemic, and one-fourth (25%, N=7) had employed this testing modality. In response to Covid-19, two-thirds of the organizations that had not previously employed LRP (14 of 21 organizations) began implementing this testing methodology, and all those who had previously used LRP continued to do so. Finally, seven organizations did not use LRP before Covid-19 and also did not implement it in response to the pandemic.



Of those organizations that employed LRP before the pandemic, all intended to continue to do so in the future. Of the 14 organizations that implemented LRP for their exams in response to the Covid-19

pandemic, 10 indicated they would continue to offer this option, two said they would not continue to offer LRP, and two were unsure of their future plans with regard to LRP.

Respondents that began offering LRP in response to the pandemic, as well as organizations that had previously used LRP listed a number of challenges in their transition to or continued use of live remote proctoring. Among the primary challenges were:

- security issues, including concerns about the safety of intellectual property and potential increased opportunity for cheating;
- privacy concerns among candidates;
- speed of the transition, although several organizations indicated that Covid-19 simply accelerated an already-planned transition;
- educating regulators so they were confident in examination results; technology issues, including educating candidates about the technology to be used, as well as internet and connectivity issues for individual candidates during exams; and
- developing a communication and education plan for stakeholders.

Question on Remote Proctoring from Membership Survey

As part of a membership survey conducted in the summer of 2021 (eight months after the Quick Poll on this topic was conducted) on organizational responses to Covid-19, two questions related to remote proctoring were posed.

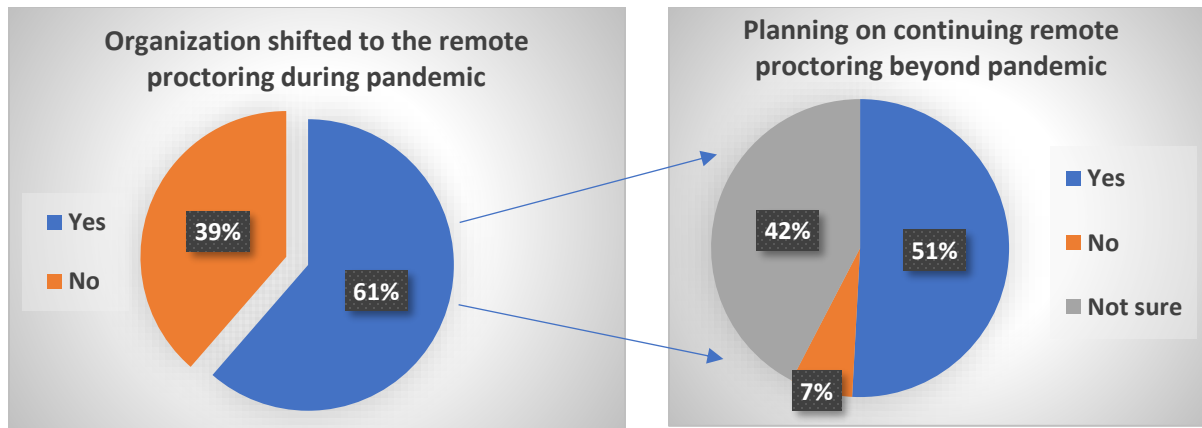
Questions:

- *Did your organization shift to the remote proctoring of examinations during the pandemic? (Yes/No)*
- *Is your organization planning on continuing the use of remote proctoring of examinations beyond the pandemic? (Yes/No/Not sure)*

Number of responses: 101

Results

While the survey did not include a question on whether organizations already offered remote proctoring before the Covid-19 pandemic (as in the Quick Poll), results also indicated a large shift toward remote proctoring as a result of the pandemic, with 61% offering this testing modality (N=62) as a result of Covid, with 39% (N=39) not making remote proctoring available. Of those organizations that made the shift to remote proctoring a larger percentage than in the Quick Poll were not sure they would continue offering this option beyond the end of the pandemic, with 42% saying they were not sure; 51% said that their organization was planning on continuing the use of remote proctoring of examinations beyond the pandemic and 7% said they were not planning on doing so.



With a somewhat larger number of respondents and the benefit of some eight months of additional pandemic experience, it can be seen that those responding to the survey in the summer of 2021 were somewhat *less* likely to plan on continuing remote proctoring beyond the pandemic than were those who responded to the Quick Poll in November 2020 (51% versus 71%, respectively). Whether this is due to additional challenges that became more apparent over time, or differences in the professions or regulatory requirements of respondents to the different data collection efforts, or for some other reason, might be the subject of additional research initiatives.

Quick Poll on Exam Retakes

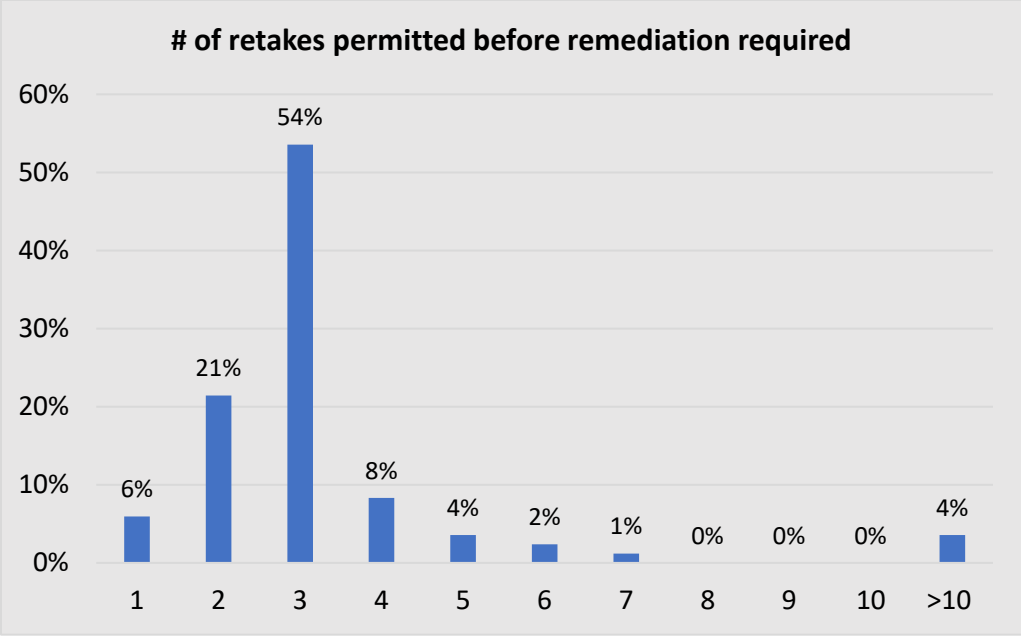
Questions:

- *When a candidate fails an exam, do you limit the number of times the candidate may retake the exam? (Yes/No)*
- *In total, how many attempts does the candidate have before remediation is required prior to another attempt?*
- *When a candidate fails an exam, do you require the candidate to wait a period of time before testing again? (Yes/No)*
- *How long do you make candidates wait?*

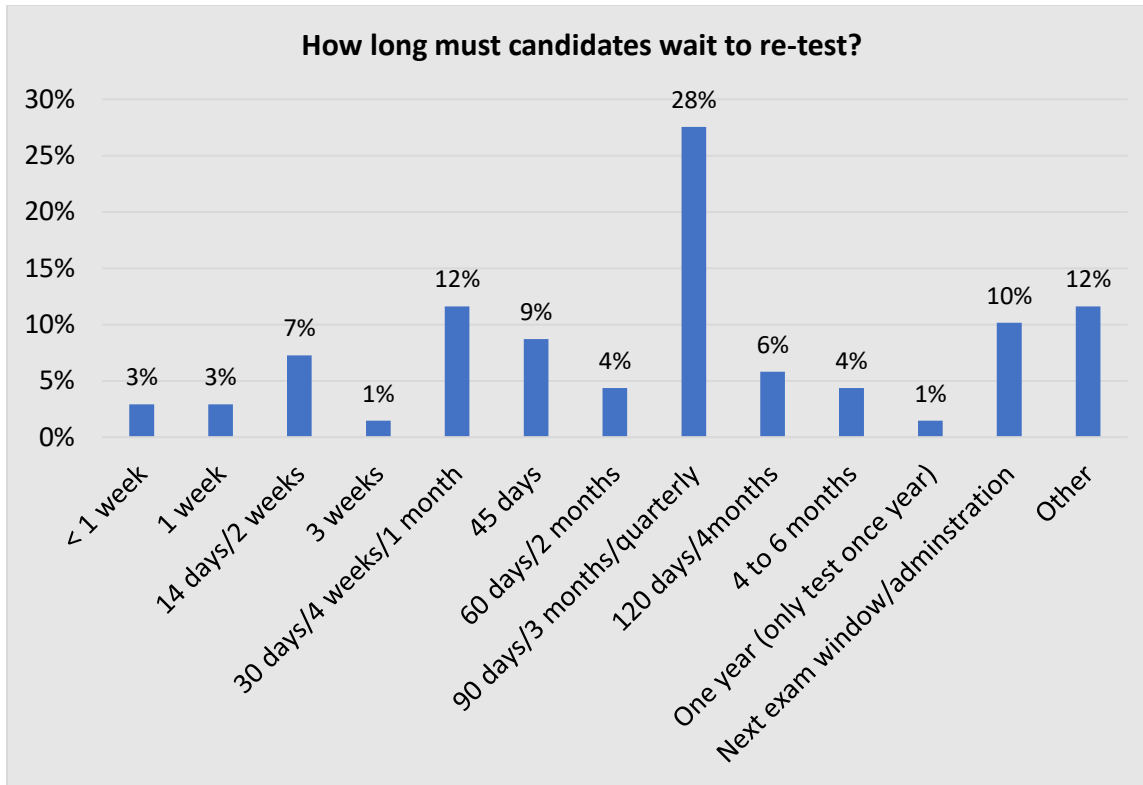
Number of responses: 143 total, then varied by routing to subsequent questions

Results

One hundred forty-three responses were received. Of these, 64% (N=91) limited the number of times candidates could retake the examination and 36% (N=52) did not limit the number of re-takes permitted. Eighty-four respondents completed the followup question on the number of re-takes permitted. The most common response was 3 re-take attempts (54%, N=45), followed by 2 retake attempts (21%, N=18), with various other number of retakes permitted. Qualitative responses also included re-takes limited to a specific eligibility time period (e.g., within 18 months or within two years of graduation) or a lifetime limit regardless of remediation.



Organizations typically required candidates to wait a certain amount of time before retesting after an unsuccessful attempt. Six percent of those making another attempt were allowed to retest within one week or less; 20% could retest in 2 weeks to 4 weeks/30 days/1 month; 13% needed to wait 45 to 60 days/2 months. The most typical wait time for retesting was 90 days/3 months/quarterly (28%). In some instances, this was a requirement of the exam vendor. Smaller percentages required wait times in excess of 3 months. Some respondents indicated the candidates could retest at the next examination window or administration without specifying how long that might be after the failed attempt. Finally, a number of respondents indicated that the wait times between retests got progressively longer after subsequent unsuccessful attempts by a given candidate.



Quick Poll on Cut Scores for Multiple Examinations

Questions:

- When a candidate achieves a certification or license from your program, do they take one examination or more than one examination? (One/More than one)
- When more than one examination is used, is each examination scored separately with its own cut score (passing score), or are scores summed together before the total is compared to one single cut score? (Separate, One, Other)

Number of responses: 107

Results

Slightly more than half the respondents (54%, N=58) required one examination for their certification or licensure, and the remainder (46%, N=49) required candidates to pass more than one examination.

# of exams	N	%
One	58	54.2%
More than 1	49	45.8%
Total	107	100.0%

Of the 49 organizations administering more than one examination, six respondents did not provide details of whether they used separate cut scores or a combined cut score for their examinations. Only one group summed all scores together to create a single passing score. Forty-two respondents indicated they have separate cut scores for each examination and five organizations provided additional details. In one case, the respondent organization was an umbrella regulatory body with different requirements for different professions, another indicated they one exam is written while the other is psychomotor, another used constructed response exams with not set cut score. Other responses indicated non-examination requirements to achieve the certification (e.g., reference checks, education).

Quick Poll on Pandemic Pass Rate Changes

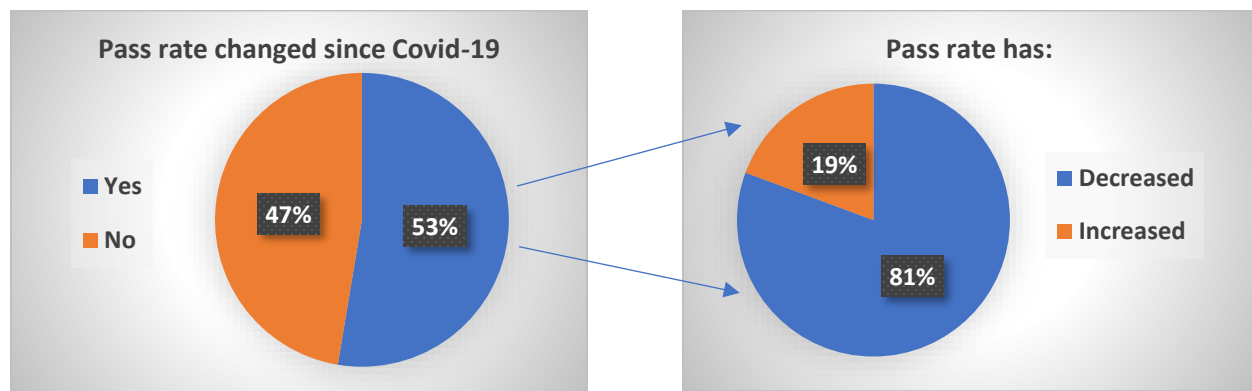
Questions:

- *Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic response, has your program experienced a change in pass rates? (Yes/No)*
- *Have the pass rates increased or decreased?*
- *By what percentage did the pass rates change?*

Number of responses: 57

Results

Just over half of the 57 respondents (54%, N=31) indicated that their program had experienced a change in pass rates since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, with 46% (N=26) reporting no change in pass rates. Of the 31 respondents whose organizations had experienced changes in pass rate, 81% (N=25) had seen pass rates decrease, and 19% (N=6) had seen pass rates increase.



Percentage decreases were provided by 17 respondents, and ranged from 1% to 20%, with an average of just over 9% decrease in pass rates. Percentage increases were only provided by four respondents, and ranged from 4% to 40%, with an average increase of 16%--however, the small number providing this data suggest caution in making generalizations from this data. For the organizations responding to this poll, it is clear that the pandemic has an effect on the ability of candidates to pass their examination(s). Whether this is due to changes in exam delivery formats (e.g., switch to remote proctoring, fewer testing locations leading to impacts on travel), issues related to preparation such as truncated educational programs or lack of access to training or preparation, changes in the candidate population

due to disruptions in employment, or the other pandemic-related stressors or issues remains to be investigated in future research.