



Tracking the “New Normal” Factors Related to Variations in Pass Rates & Implications for the Future

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Who are you?

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Why are you here? Select all that apply.

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Study Design and Development

- Why we conducted the study
- Pandemic trajectory, dates and definitions
- Interviews to be conducted.....
- Look for forthcoming article in CER



Survey Dissemination & Organizational Support

- Individualized invitations sent to CLEAR mailing list
- Anonymous link distributed by I.C.E.
- LinkedIn post
- Survey open for ~3 months, several reminders
- 160 useable responses



Survey Results



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What geographic region are you from?

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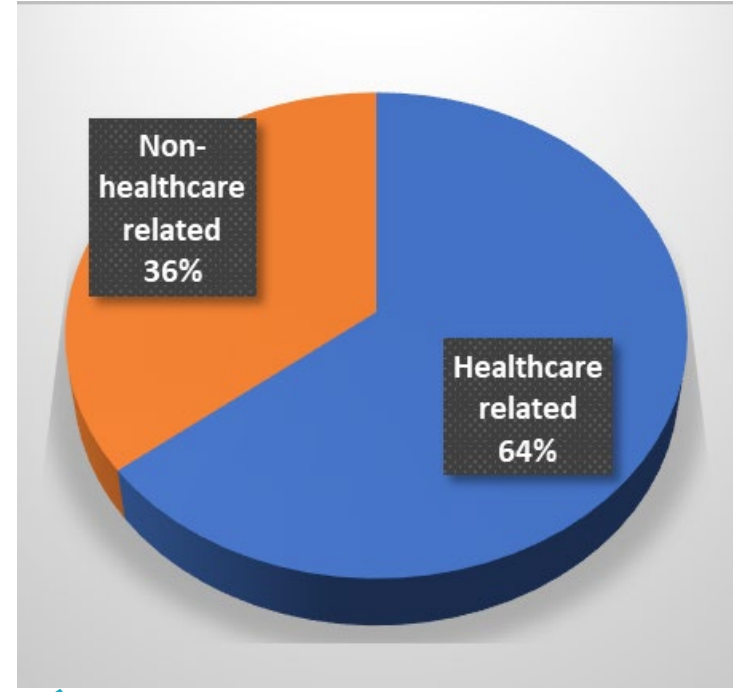
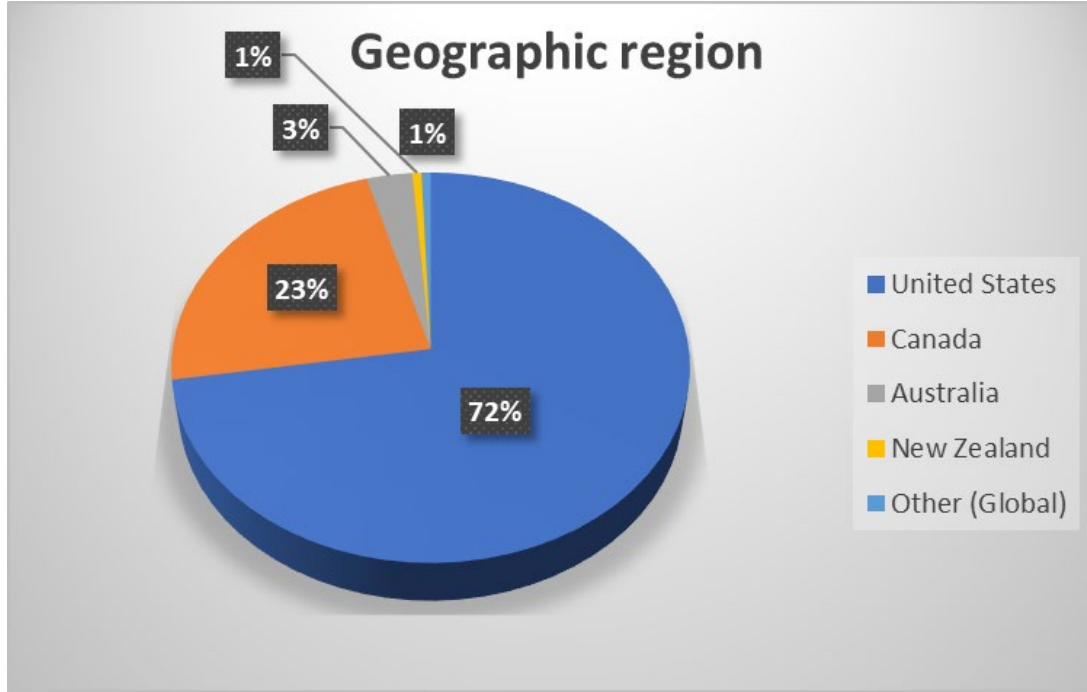
POLL 4

What type of profession(s) does your organization regulate, or do you work with?

- Healthcare
- Non-healthcare
- Both healthcare and non-healthcare

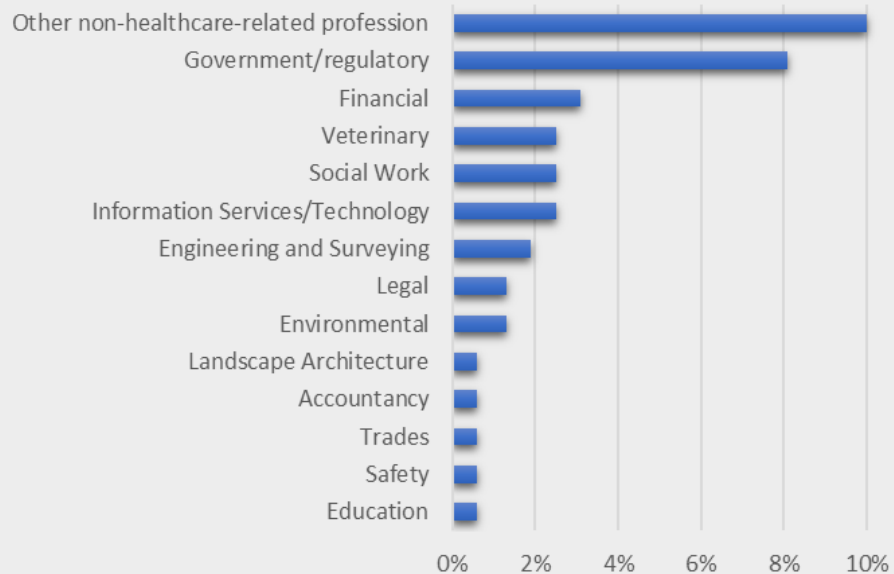


Respondent Characteristics

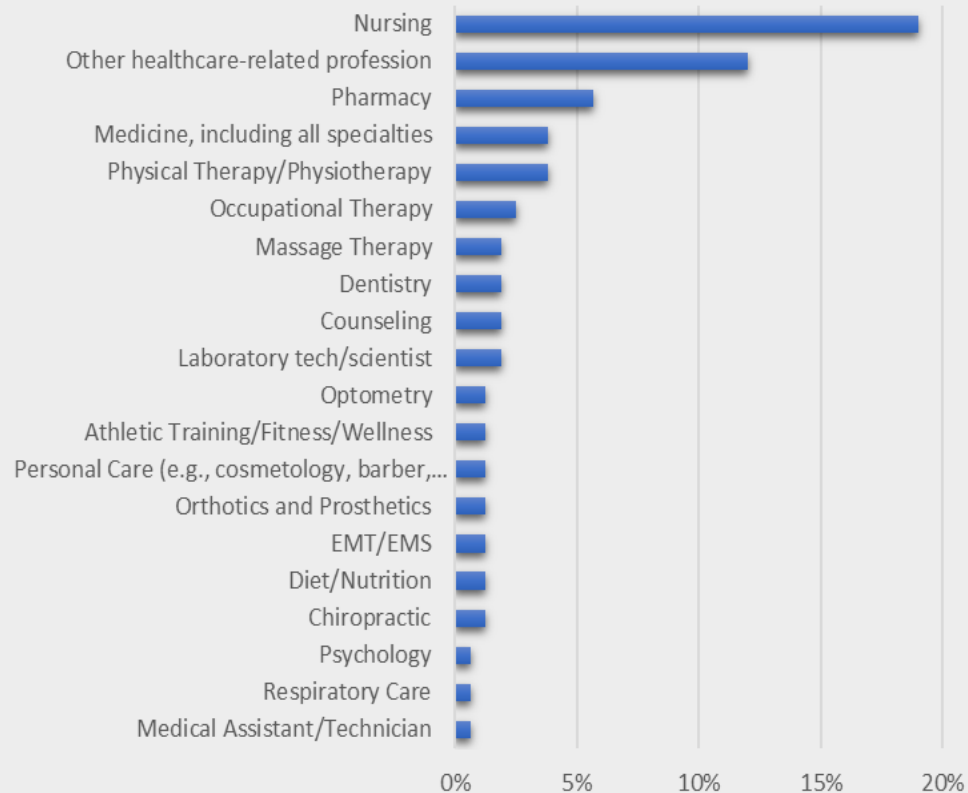


Professions

Non-healthcare related



Healthcare-related



Credentialing Programs & Candidates

Number of credentialing programs represented by organization

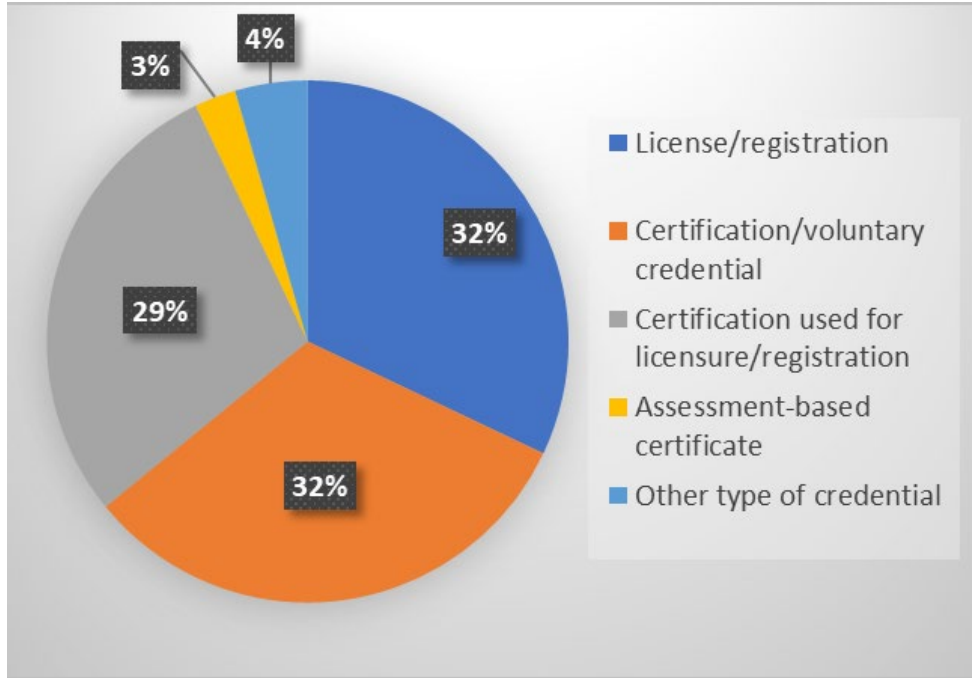
	n	%
1	73	49%
2 to 3	34	23%
4 to 10	23	16%
11 to 20	10	7%
More than 20	8	5%
Total	148	100%

Number of candidates tested

	n	%
Up to 200	29	20%
201 to 500	24	17%
501 to 1000	14	10%
1001 to 5000	42	30%
5001 to 10,000	14	10%
More than 10,000	19	13%
Total	142	100%



Type of credential awarded

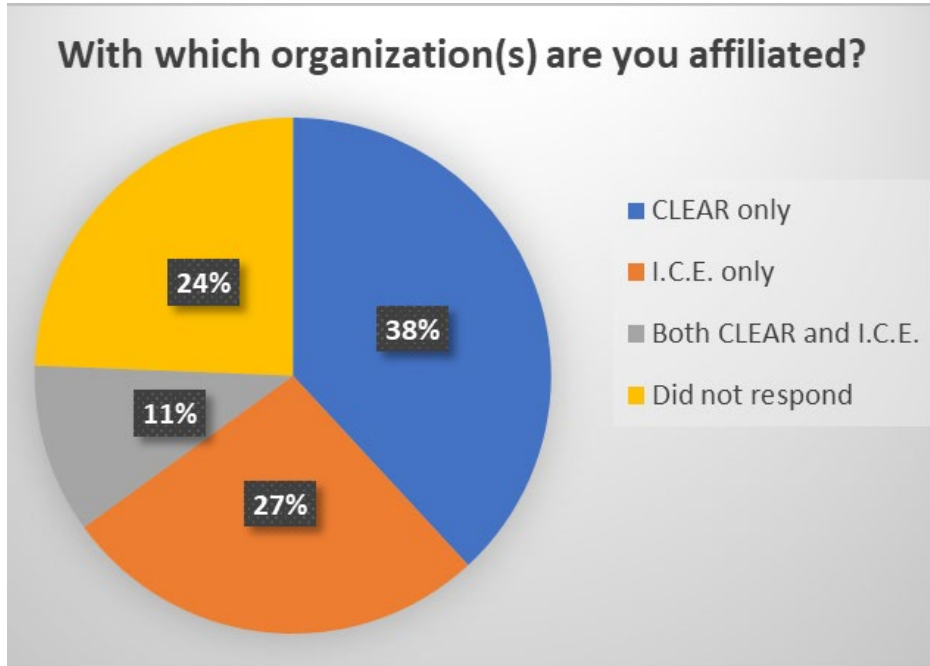


Type(s) of assessments used

Type(s) of assessments used	%
Multiple choice (MCQ)/objective testing	91%
Constructed response	9%
Essay	5%
Performance-based (e.g., OSCE, practical, observational)	16%
Oral	2%
Other	5%



Organizational Affiliations



Accredited by one or more of these bodies

- NCCA = 29
- ISO/ANSI/ANAB = 10
- ABSNC = 9
- Buros = 3
- Other = 17



Exam Modalities & Delivery Methods



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**What delivery methods do you currently use for your written exams?
Select all that apply**

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What delivery methods do you currently use for your performance-based exams? Select all that apply

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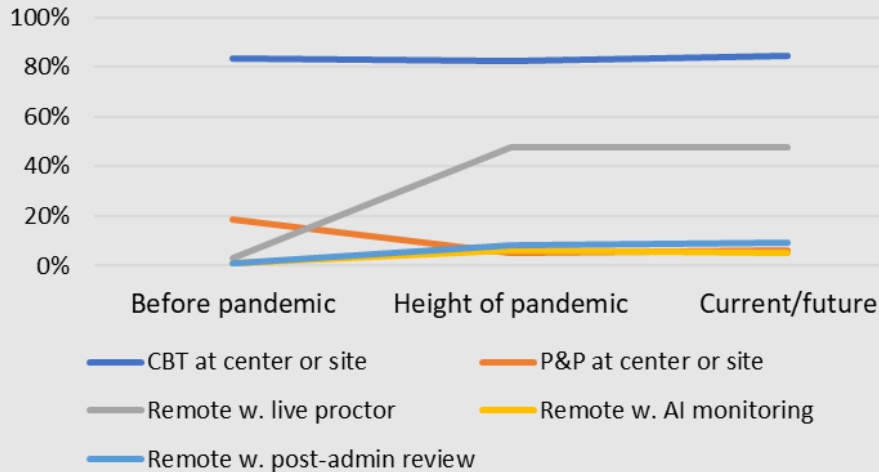


Have you changed the type(s) of assessments you offer since that start of the Covid-19 pandemic (~March 2020)?

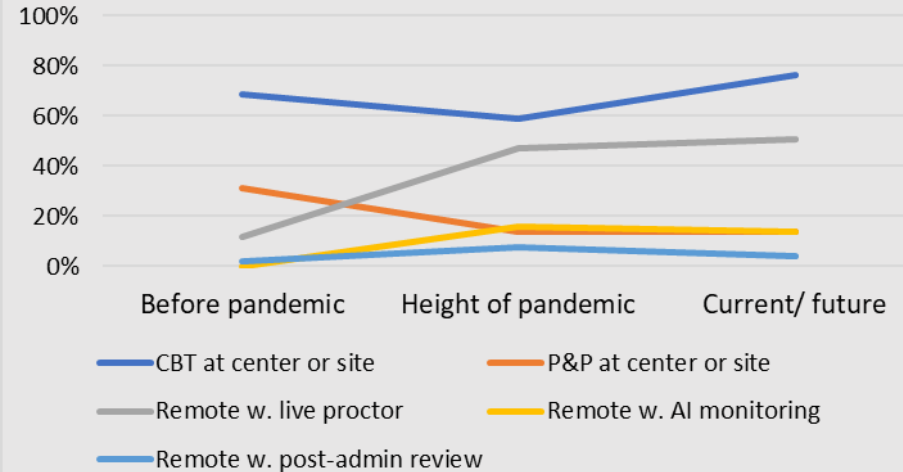
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Delivery Methods for Written Assessments

Healthcare (N=96)

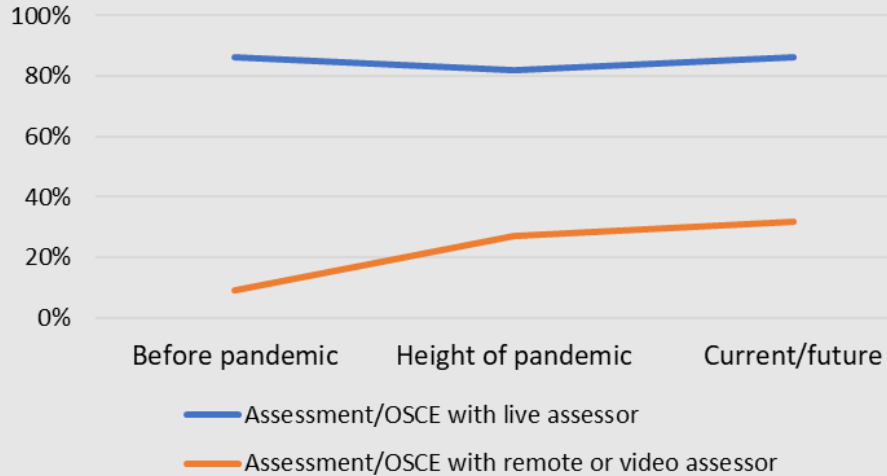


Non-healthcare (N=51)

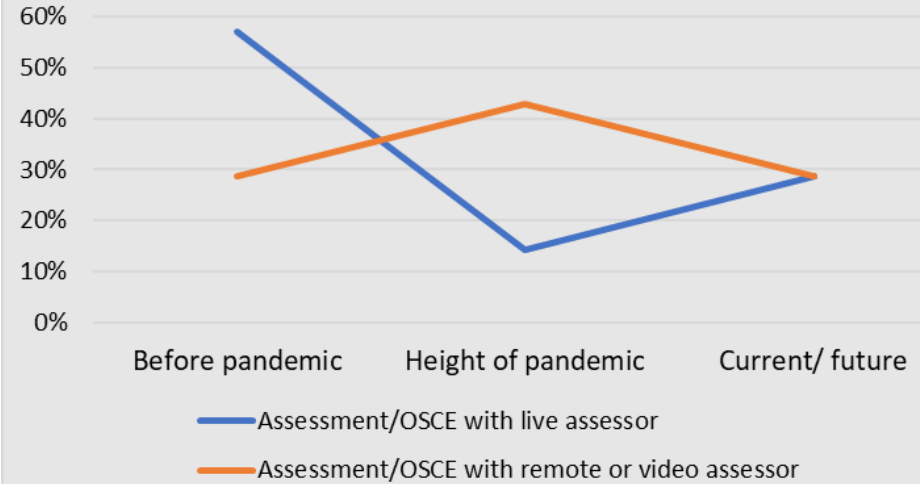


Delivery Methods for Performance-based Assessments

Healthcare (N=22)



Non-healthcare (N=7)



Discussion of Changes in Delivery Methods

- Subgroup differences
- Written v. performance-based
- Healthcare v. non-healthcare



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Did your program experience a change in pass rates during the height of the pandemic (March 2020 – October 2022)?

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Changes in Pass Rates, Written Exams (from before to height of pandemic)

	N	%	Average change
Increased	12	12%	5.0%
Decreased	52	51%	8.2%
Pass rate remained consistent	38	37%	
Total	102	100%	



Reasons for **INCREASES** in Pass Rates for **Written** Exams – Open Responses

11 Responses	N
Candidate pools smaller, better trained	5
More preparation/study time	3
Remote proctoring	1
Change in exam eligibility	1
Curriculum changed to improve PRs	1



Reasons for **DECREASES** in Pass Rates for **Written** Exams – Open Responses

	33 Responses	N
Candidate Population	Candidates are less qualified	5
	More candidates testing	2
	Fewer candidates testing	2
Testing Conditions	Remote proctoring / home testing	9
	Reduced capacity at sites/test centers	2
	Introduced CBT	1

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Reasons for **DECREASES** in Pass Rates for **Written** Exams – Open Responses

Other		N
	Virtual/online learning	4
	Changes to exam (format, difficulty)	2
	Changes to curriculum	1
	Less rigor in training	1
	Disruptions in training	1
	Candidates opt to defer testing	1
	Work demands (health care)	1



Changes in Pass Rates, Performance Exams (from before to height of pandemic)

	N	%	Average change
Increased	9	21%	5.7%
Decreased	14	33%	10.9%
Pass rate remained consistent	20	46%	
Total	43	100%	



Reasons for **INCREASES** in Pass Rates for **Performance** Exams – Open Responses

7 Responses	N
Fewer test takers, esp. repeaters	4
More exam preparation materials available	1
Virtual testing instead of in-person	1
Less committed people choosing different (non-health care) fields	1



Reasons for **DECREASES** in Pass Rates for **Performance** Exams – Open Responses

5 Responses	N
Stress	2
COVID protocols @ test centers	1
Random causes	1
Unsure	1



Trajectory of Pass Rate Changes

Held steady, then DOWN	3
Initial Decrease in PR	
■ DOWN, remain LOW	32
■ DOWN, trending DOWN	5
■ DOWN, then UP	3
■ DOWN, UP but not to normal	6
■ DOWN, then UP to (near) normal	17



Reasons Attributed for Increases in Pass Rates

	Health-care	Non-HC	Total
Other	7	0	7
Change in candidate population	3	1	4
Changes in testing conditions	4	0	4
Pandemic-related factors	2	2	4
Repeated use of exam forms	2	0	2
Cheating	0	0	0



Reasons Attributed for Decreases in Pass Rates

	Health-care	Non-HC	Total
Limited practical experience opportunities	32	4	36
Pandemic-related factors	32	3	35
Limited didactic training opportunities	25	4	29
Changes in testing conditions	14	2	16
Other	10	4	14
Change in candidate	9	4	13
Reduced requirements to write/take exam	2	1	3



Reasons for Pass Rate Changes

Candidates less prepared/qualified

- Online learning / Disruptions to education
- Lack of clinical/practical training
- Testing too soon OR deferring
- Candidate population changes
- Candidate volume changes
- Less study time
- Less employer support
- Work stress

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Reasons for Pass Rate Changes

Changes to Exam

- Online testing / remote proctoring
- New passing score
- Format, blueprint, length, new items
- Number/timing of retakes allowed

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Reasons for Pass Rate Changes

Changes to Education/Training

- Online learning
- Altered timelines
- Faculty adjusting to different methods
- Limited clinical opportunities
- Curriculum changes
- Class size

more →



Reasons for Pass Rate Changes

Miscellaneous Factors

- Labor shortages, work stress, unemployment
- Less human interaction
- Mental health, anxiety
- Quality/availability of study materials
- Distractions (home)
- Emphasis on test security

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Group Variations in Pass Rates

Healthcare	N	Non-healthcare	N
Similar trends for all groups	14	Similar trends for all groups	5
First-time vs. repeaters	10	Repeaters consistently lower than 1 st time	2
International test takers vs. domestic	3	1 st time pass rates went down; repeaters consistent	1
Certain degree programs	2	Candidates who delay exam have lower pass rates	1
		Increased pass rate for	

Changes in Candidate Population Since Start of Pandemic: **Yes=38%** / **No=62%**

Increase (15) **OR** decrease (16) in number

Fewer international candidates

Fewer qualified candidates

Less educated, less experienced

Younger

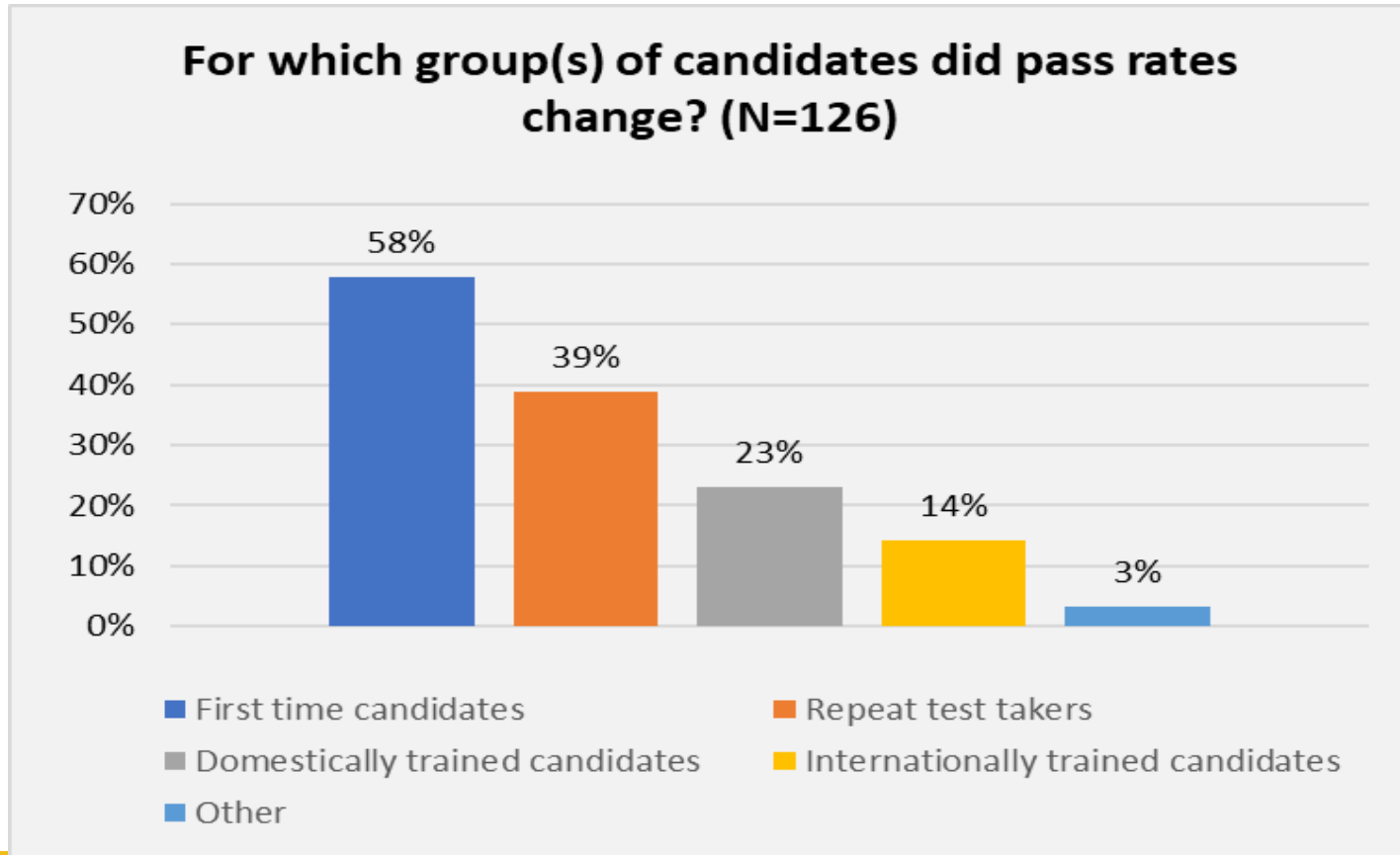
Fewer PhDs

More diversity

More immigrants/refugees



Changes in Pass Rates by Candidate Groups



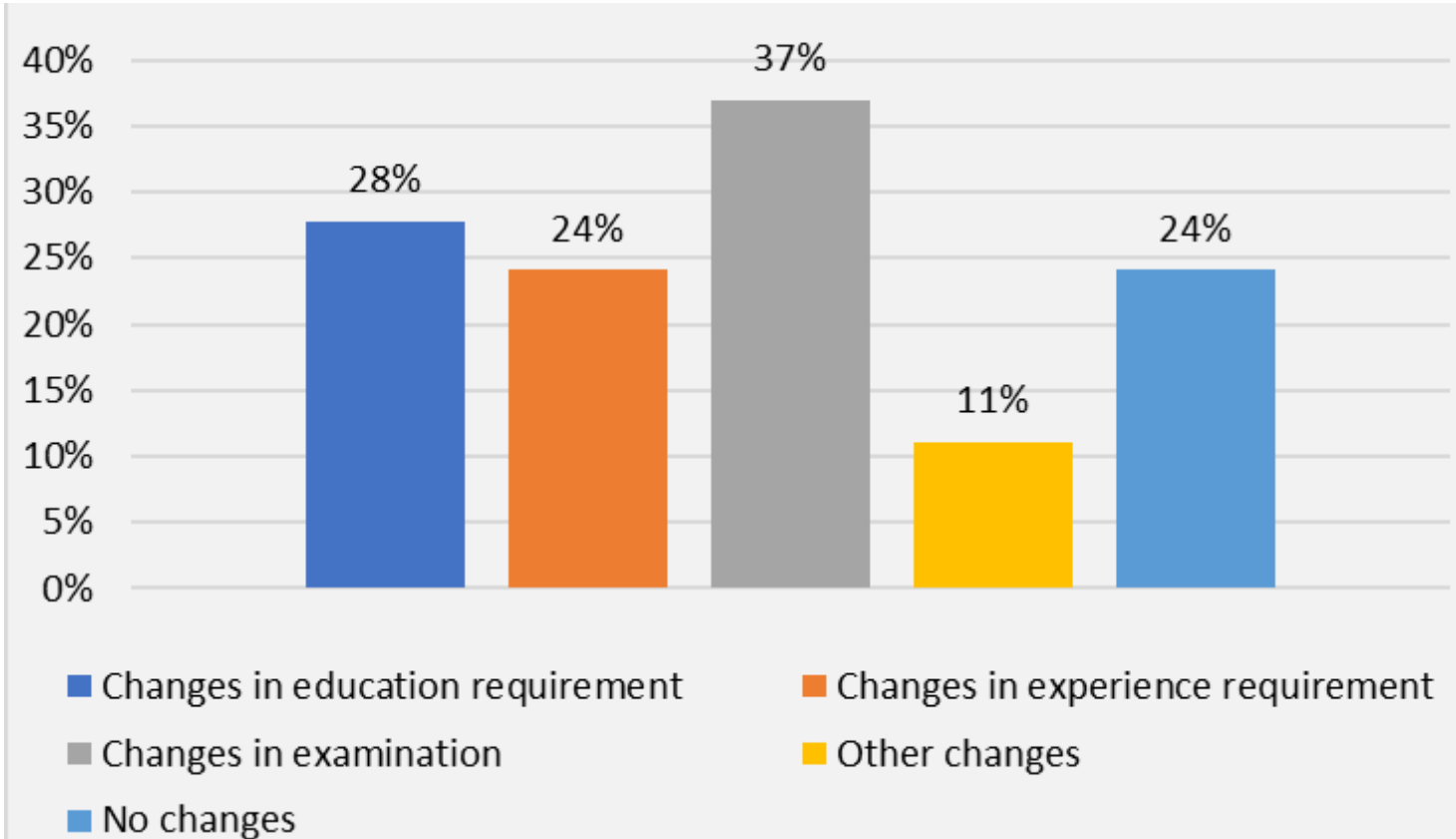
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Have you changed any aspects of your program since the start or height of the pandemic? Select all that apply

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Changes in Testing Program Since Start of Pandemic



Discussion of Program Changes

Education	N	Experience	N
Allowed online training/education	4	Decreased requirements/ more time	6
Increased eligibility requirements	4	Allowed online, virtual experiences	2
Change in curriculum	3	Increased practicum hours	2
Increased assessment & monitoring	1	Added eligibility requirements	1
3rd party course providers	1		
Added synchronous and asynchronous delivery methods	1		

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Discussion of Program Changes

Exam	N	Other	N
New exam/new items	6	No changes	13
Added remote testing/proctoring	5	New online exams	2
Changed test delivery method	4	JTA, standard setting	1
Harder exam	2	Change in policy for repeaters	1
Shorter exam	1		
New standard set	1		

Comments on Pass Rates

Interest in ongoing research on pass rates

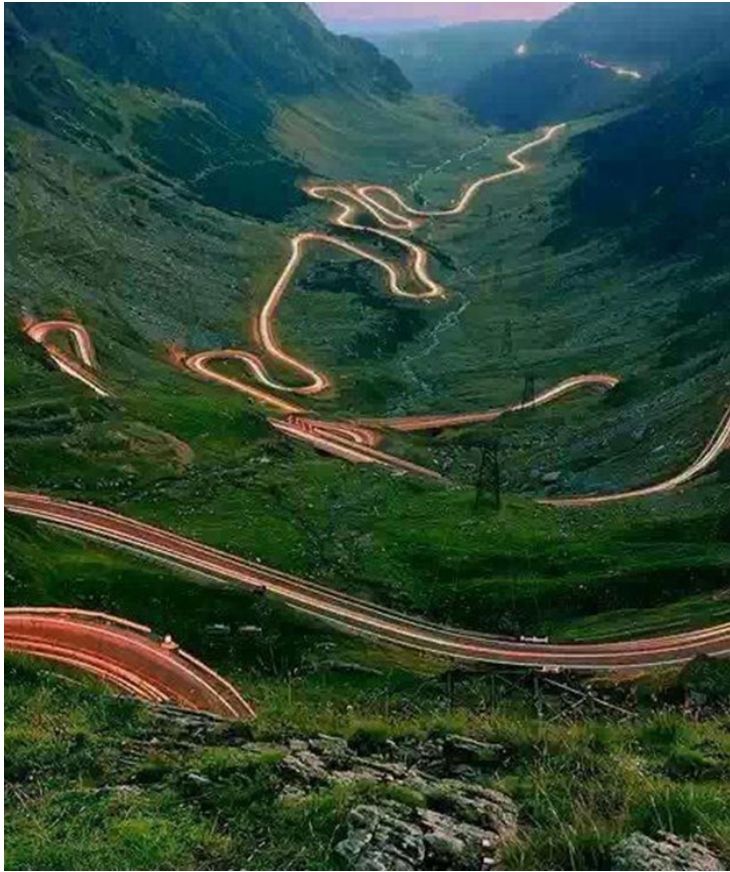
Concerns about numbers and abilities of candidates

"We have received more complaints since the start of the pandemic, due to the increased number of candidates who have failed. In addition, the number of candidates is decreasing. Thus, we believe some have given up on the exams."

"The people who teach review courses say the students are less well prepared."

"We developed and provided a free study guide to help improve candidate performance. **It worked.**"





And now what.....?



Trends that are Here to Stay

- Technology
- Artificial Intelligence
- Mobility and immigration
- Accreditation changes
- Work/life balance focus



Impacts on Mission and Vision

- Focus or intent of credential
- Candidates and target population
- Meeting workforce needs
- Development of alternate pathways



Informing Organizational Decisions

- Formalize on-the-fly pandemic-related decisions
- Program policies and procedures
- High and low stakes issues



Bonus Discussion—Legislative Impacts Arising from Covid-19 Pandemic

- Laws and regulations related to eligibility, mobility, exams, other
- Impacts on policies and procedures
- Concerns for the future
- Impacts on exam delivery, modality, construction, or other issues that may impact P/F determination



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Do you think the events of the last 3 years will continue to influence additional changes to your program, or have you settled into a New Normal?

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Discussion



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Thank You

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