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 rather are intended to gather snapshot data regarding current practices and concerns. This article discusses the results of three recent *Quick Polls* that were administered from December 2022 through June 2023.

## Rate of Technological Change (*Quick Poll* administered December, 2022)

Questions
— *How often is the profession you regulate impacted by significant changes in technology?*
  ☐ Continuously (more than once a year)
  ☐ Frequently (every 1 to 2 years)
  ☐ Somewhat frequently (every 3 to 5 years)
  ☐ Infrequently (less than every 5 years)
— *How do you reflect these changes in your exams or assessments? (Multiple responses permitted.)*
  ☐ Categorize new items within existing content outline
  ☐ Cover new technology in continuing education requirements
  ☐ Make minor adjustments to content outline
  ☐ Conduct full job analysis
  ☐ Require that new technology is covered in pre-licensure coursework
  ☐ Other (*Please specify*)
— *How often do you conduct a full job analysis?*
  ☐ About every 1-2 years
  ☐ About every 3-4 years
  ☐ About every 5-6 years
  ☐ About every 7 years or more
— *What profession(s) does your organization regulate?*
  ☐ Healthcare
  ☐ Human services (e.g., psychology, education, social work, counseling)
  ☐ Professional services (e.g., law, architecture)
  ☐ Construction and trades
  ☐ Real estate and insurance
  ☐ Engineering
 ☐ Other (*Please specify*)

Number of responses: 64

Results

The 64 respondents to this *Quick Poll* reported rapid rates of technological change impacting the professions they regulate. More than 60 % of respondents indicated that significant changes in technology happen *Continuously (more than once each year)* or *Frequently (every 1 to 2 years)* (both time periods selected by 31% of respondents). An additional 27% selected *Somewhat frequently (every 3*

to 5 years) (27%), while only 11% responded that technological change impacting the profession they regulate *Infrequently (less than every 5 years)*.
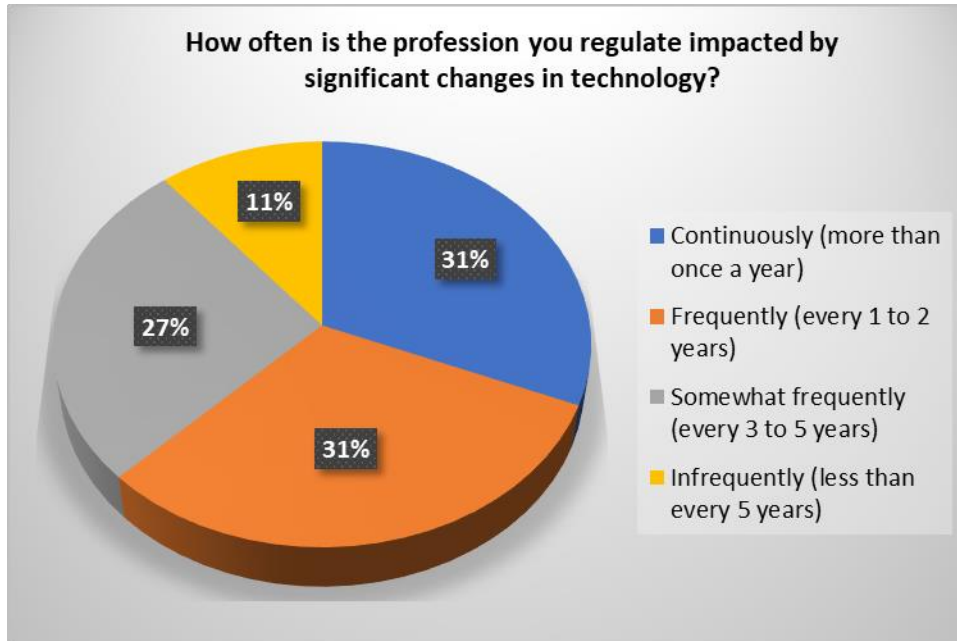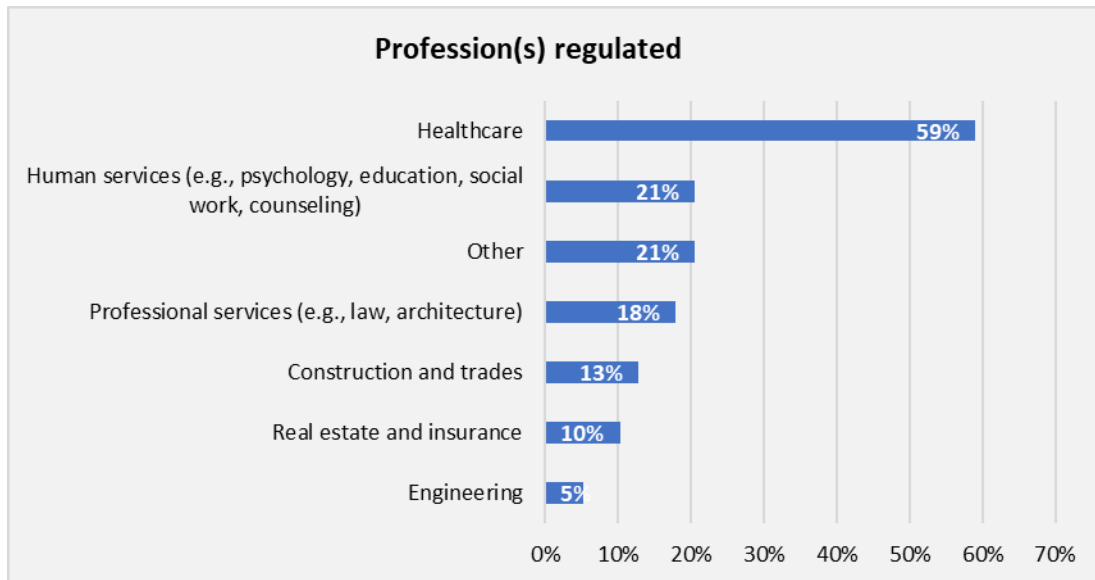

In response to the question regarding how their organizations reflect these technological changes in exams or assessments, respondents were able to select all options that applied. (Note: As a result, totals do not sum to 100%.) Respondents were most likely to *Cover new technology in continuing education requirements* (28%) or to *Categorize new items within their existing content outline* (28%). Twenty-three percent of respondents *Make minor adjustments to their content outline* while only 13% *Conduct a full job analysis*. Just 6% require that new technology is *Covered in pre-licensure coursework*. Of those indicating some *Other* approach (11%) to reflecting changes in technology, write-in responses include having SMEs determine what to test via an external facilitation organization, or making small changes in the exam.

How do you reflect these changes in your exams or assessments?

Category	Percentage
Cover new technology in continuing education requirements	28%
Categorize new items within existing content outline	28%
Make minor adjustments to content outline	23%
Conduct full job analysis	13%
Other	11%
Require that new technology is covered in pre-licensure coursework	6%
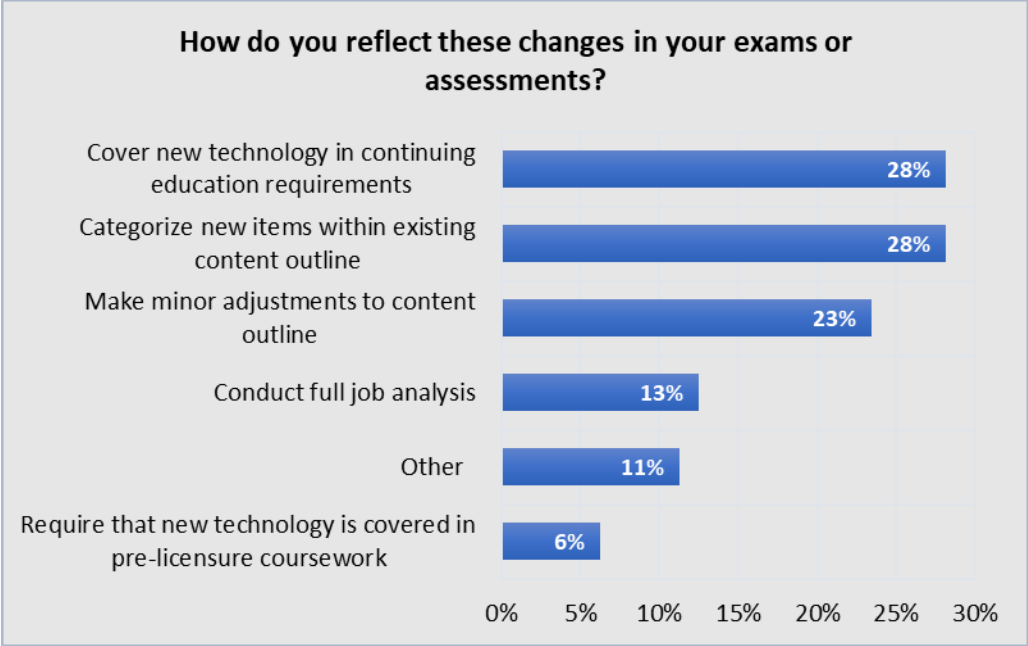
In general, however, it does not appear that respondents have increased the rate at which they conduct full job analysis studies. Forty respondents answered this question, with the greatest percentage conducting such studies *About every 5-6 years* (50% of those answering this question), followed by *About every 7 years or more* (23% of those answering this question.) Only four respondents conducted full job analyses *About every 1-2 years*.

How often do you conduct a full job analysis?	n	%
About every 1-2 years	4	10%
About every 3-4 years	7	18%
About every 5-6 years	20	50%
About every 7 years or more	9	23%
Total	40	100%

In an effort to further explore the rate of technology change and the ways organizations reflect these changes in their exams or assessments, the *Quick Poll* also asked about the type of profession(s) regulated. Respondents were permitted to indicate multiple professions. Of the 39 respondents who answered this question, *Healthcare* was most frequently selected (59%), followed by *Human services* and *Other* (each at 21%) and *Professional services* (18%).

Profession(s) regulated

Profession	Percentage
Healthcare	59%
Human services (e.g., psychology, education, social work, counseling)	21%
Other	21%
Professional services (e.g., law, architecture)	18%
Construction and trades	13%
Real estate and insurance	10%
Engineering	5%

Professions were combined to create subgroups consisting of *Healthcare only*, *Healthcare plus other professions*, and *Non-healthcare*. We were able to analyze the rate of technology change by type of profession(s) regulated. Keeping in mind that the numbers in each category are quite small, in general it appears that the *Healthcare only* profession had slightly more rapid rates of technological change than did *Non-healthcare* professions.

Rate of change by type of profession(s) regulated	Healthcare only (n=19)	Non-healthcare (n=16)	Healthcare + other(s) (n=4)	Unknown (n=25)
Continuously (more than once a year)	32%	13%	50%	40%
Frequently (every 1 to 2 years)	32%	44%	0%	24%
Somewhat frequently (every 3 to 5 years)	21%	19%	25%	36%
Infrequently (less than every 5 years)	16%	25%	25%	0%

Finally, an analysis of how changes in technology are reflected in exams or assessments by type of profession(s) regulated was conducted. Again, with caveats to the small number of respondents in each category, the most likely approach for those in healthcare professions is to *Categorize new items within existing content outline* (63%), followed by *Cover new technology in continuing education requirements* (47%). For Non-healthcare professions, the most likely approach is to *Cover new technology in continuing education requirements* (56%), followed by *Make minor adjustments to content outline* (38%). For those regulating healthcare professions, the least frequently selected approach to reflect changes in technology is to *Conduct a full job analysis* (11%), while for those regulating non-healthcare professions, the approach least likely to be selected was *New technology is covered in pre-licensure coursework* (6%).

How changes in technology are reflected in exams or assessment, by type profession(s) regulated (*Multiple responses permitted*)	Healthcare only (n=19)	Non-healthcare (n=16)	Healthcare + other(s) (n=4)
Conduct full job analysis	11%	31%	25%
Make minor adjustments to content outline	37%	38%	25%
Categorize new items within existing content outline	63%	25%	50%
Cover new technology in continuing education requirements	47%	56%	0%
Require that new technology is covered in pre-licensure coursework	16%	6%	0%

Requests for Testing Accommodations (*Quick Poll* administered in March, 2023)
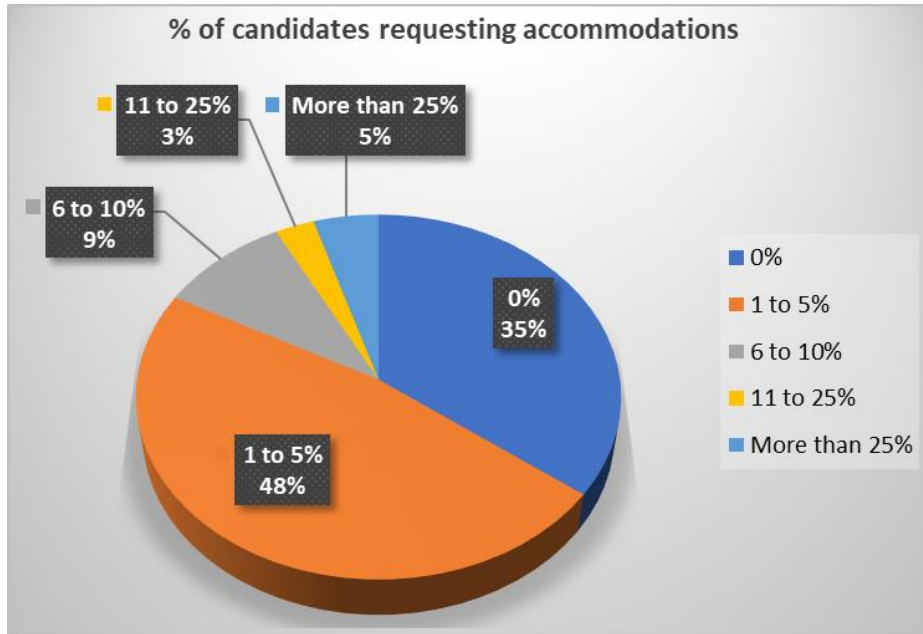
Questions
— *What percentage of your program's candidates typically request an accommodation?*
— *What disability accommodations has your program made in response to requests? Select all that apply.*
  ☐ Allowing the candidate to think out loud
  ☐ Braille (including paper braille, refreshable braille devices, tactile graphics)
  ☐ Extra time, including multiple days for exam and/or additional breaks
  ☐ Human reader/scribe
  ☐ Paper exams, with or without increased font size
  ☐ Removal of pretest items
  ☐ Screen magnification (e.g., Windows Magnifier, ZoomText)
  ☐ Screen readers (e.g., JAWS, NVDA)
  ☐ Separate room
  ☐ Testing at a non-test center site
  ☐ Text to speech (e.g., an audio version or an application that reads text, e.g., WordQ)
  ☐ Use of a glossary
  ☐ Use of calculator
  ☐ Use of ergonomic equipment (chairs, keyboards etc.)
  ☐ Other (Please specify)
— *When an accommodation is requested, is evaluation/approval the responsibility of the program or the vendor?*
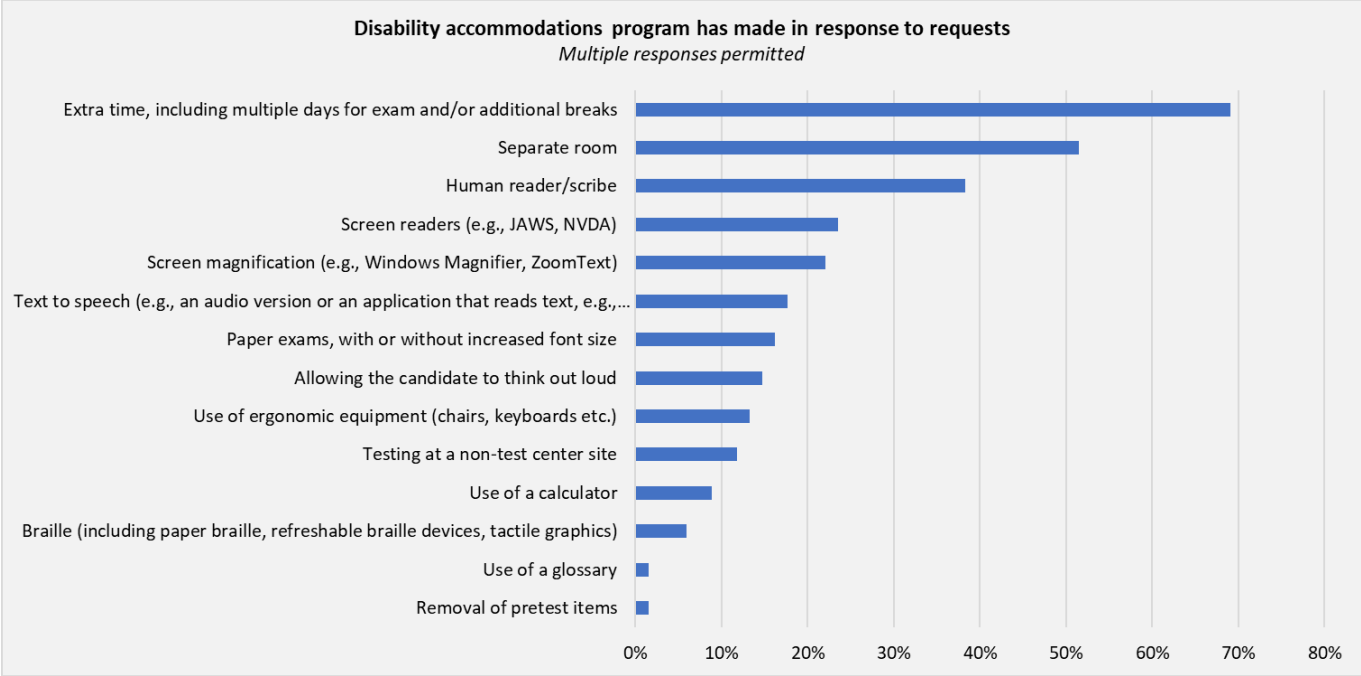 ☐ Program
  ☐ Vendor

Number of responses: 105

Results

Respondents indicated a wide range in the percentage of candidates that typically request an accommodation, from a low of 1% to 5% to a high of more than 25%. Nearly one half of the respondents (48%) indicated that the percentage of their candidates most frequently requesting accommodations was between *1 and 5%;* 9% of respondents indicated that *6% to 10% of their candidates* requested

accommodations; and 3% of respondents indicated that *11 to 25% of their candidates* requested accommodations. Finally, at the two extremes, 5% of the respondents indicated that *More than 25% of their candidates* requested accommodations, and 35% of the respondents indicated that 0% of the candidates requested accommodations.

Sixty-eight respondents who indicated they received requests for accommodations from candidates answered two follow-up questions—about the type of disability accommodations their program has made in response to candidate requests, and whose responsibility it is to evaluate and approve candidates' accommodation requests. Respondents were able to select from a range of types of accommodations and were permitted to select all options that applied. *Extra time* was by far the most common accommodation provided, with 69% of these respondents providing various extra time options, including multiple days and additional breaks. The next most commonly provided accommodation was a *Separate room* (provided by 51%), followed by *Human reader/scribe* (38%). Among other commonly provided accommodations were those that enable candidates to access the test content, such as *Screen readers* (245); *Screen magnification* (22), and *Text to speech* (18). A range of other accommodations were also provided, as shown in the figure below. Write-in responses included the use of adaptive technology for OSCE exams (e.g., amplified stethoscope, Doppler stethoscope) or note takers.

Disability accommodations program has made in response to requests
Multiple responses permitted

Accommodation	Percentage
Extra time, including multiple days for exam and/or additional breaks	~69%
Separate room	~51%
Human reader/scribe	~38%
Screen readers (e.g., JAWS, NVDA)	~23%
Screen magnification (e.g., Windows Magnifier, ZoomText)	~22%
Text to speech (e.g., an audio version or an application that reads text, e.g.,…	~18%
Paper exams, with or without increased font size	~16%
Allowing the candidate to think out loud	~15%
Use of ergonomic equipment (chairs, keyboards etc.)	~13%
Testing at a non-test center site	~11%
Use of a calculator	~9%
Braille (including paper braille, refreshable braille devices, tactile graphics)	~6%
Use of a glossary	~2%
Removal of pretest items	~2%

Of the 68 respondents who have received requests for accommodations, it is most typical that the exam program itself is responsible for evaluating the request, making a determination about granting it, and the type(s) of accommodation(s) to provide, with 75% indicating that they have this responsibility. The exam vendor is responsible for evaluating accommodation requests for 25% of the respondents.

Who is responsible for evaluating accommodations requests?

- Program 75%
- Vendor 25%
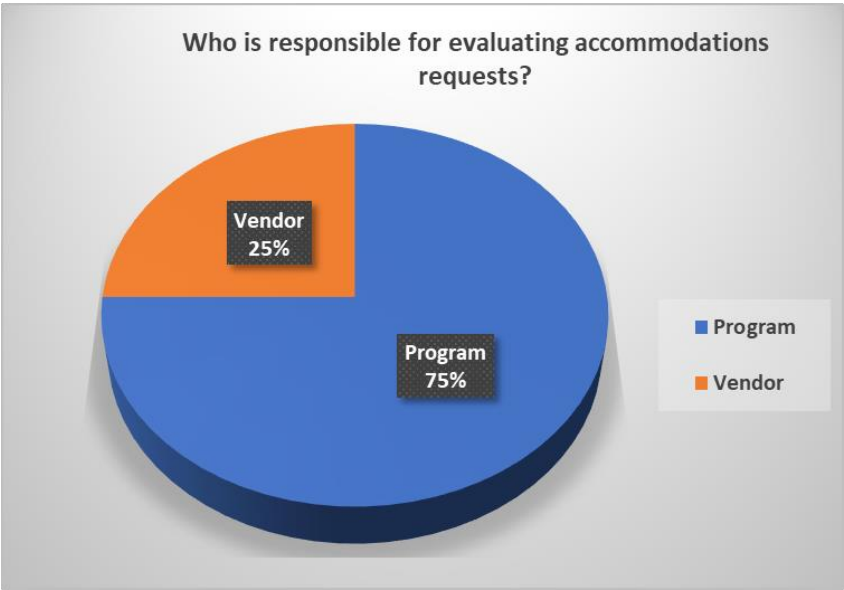
CLEAR Exam Review (*Quick Poll* administered in May, 2023)

Questions

— *Are you familiar with the CLEAR Exam Review ("CER") online journal? You can access the current issue using this link <Hyperlink to current issue was provided>.*
(If Yes) Do you read the articles and features on a regular or semi-regular basis?
(If No) Why not? (Select all that apply.)

- ☐ Not familiar with the publication
- ☐ Not interested in content
- ☐ Not relevant to my job
- ☐ Too busy, don't have time
- ☐ Other (*Please specify*)

— *How useful do you find each type of article or feature? Please use the following scale: Not useful, somewhat useful, moderately useful, highly useful*

- ☐ Long-form articles on examination and testing topics
- ☐ Long-form articles on other topics of interest to the credentialing and regulatory communities
- ☐ Abstracts and Updates – Regular column providing descriptions and overview of recent publications, including books, articles, and presentations of interest to the credentialing and regulatory communities
- ☐ Legal Beat – Regular column featuring important case law and regulatory/legislative initiatives impacting the credentialing and regulatory communities
- ☐ *Quick Poll* Results – Regular column detailing the results of recent *Quick Polls*
- ☐ Other (*Specify the type of content you have found useful*.)

— *What are some specific **exam-related topics** you would like to see addressed in CER?*
— *Are there specific areas **other than exams** that you'd like to read about in CER, or in a different CLEAR resource or publication?*

Number of responses: 264, with various numbers of respondents answering follow-up questions.

Results

This *Quick Poll* received a large number of responses compared to other recent polls. Unfortunately, it appears that a large majority of respondents (68%) are **not** familiar with *CLEAR Exam Review* (*CER*) while only 32% are familiar with the online journal.

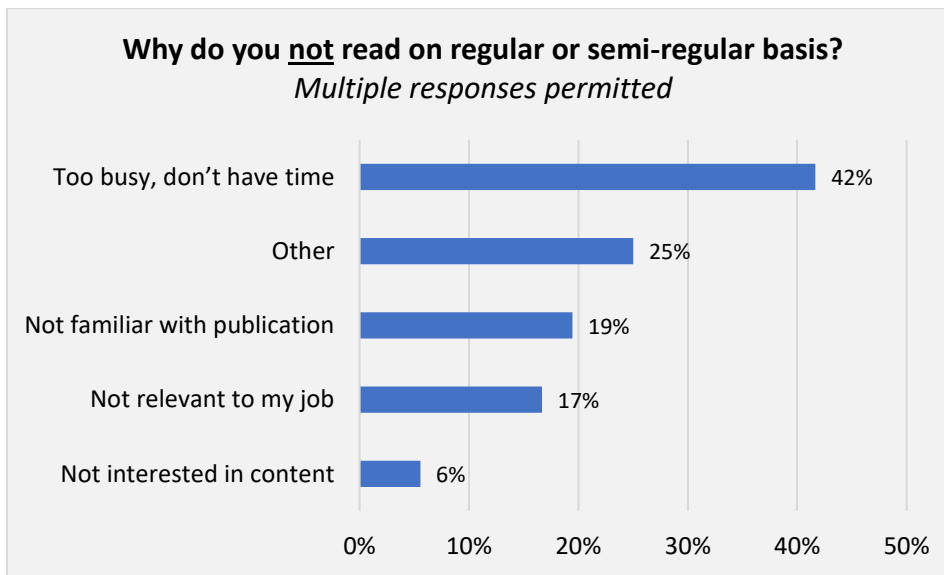| Are you familiar with the *CLEAR Exam Review* (*CER*) online journal?		
	N	**%**
No	180	68.2%
Yes	84	31.8%
Total	264	100.0%

The 84 respondents who responded that they **are** familiar with *CER* received a follow-up question asking if they read the articles and features on a regular or semi-regular basis. Fifty-seven percent) indicated

that they did read the articles or features regularly or semi-regularly, while 43% indicated that they did not.


Do you read the articles and features on a regular or semi-regular basis?

No 43%

Yes 57%
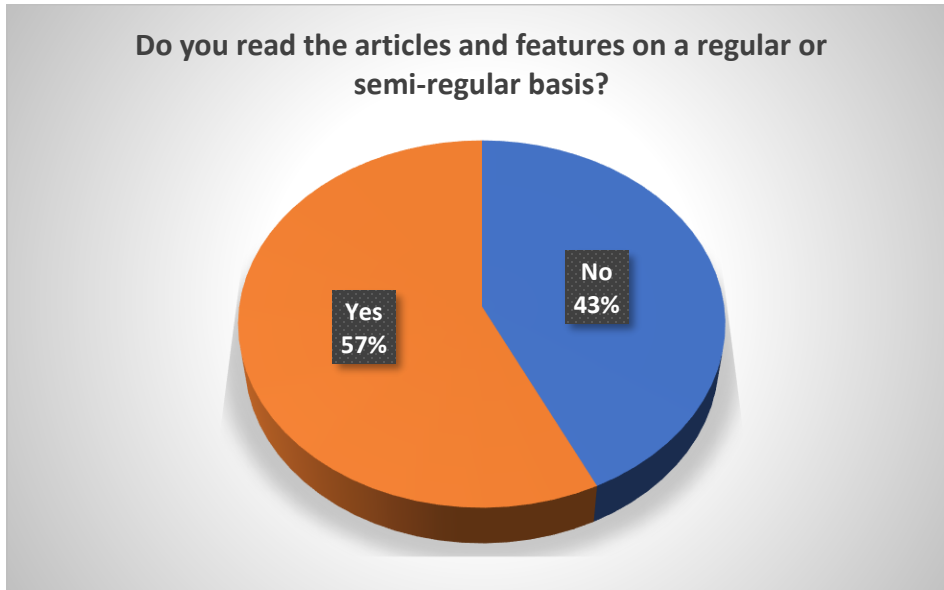
The 36 respondents who indicated that they did *not* read *CER* on a regular or semi-regular basis were given the opportunity to describe why they did not do so from a list of potential reasons. Respondents were able to select all that applied. The most commonly selected response was that they were *Too busy and did not have time* (42%). The second most common reason selected was that they were *Not familiar with publication* (19%). Smaller percentages selected the other available response options, including *Not relevant to my job* (17%) and *Not interested in content* (6%). Respondents selecting some *Other* reason (25%) provided a range of write-in responses, including access issues, that their organization outsources exam development to a vendor or non-profit, and "so many other things to read."

Why do you <u>not</u> read on regular or semi-regular basis?
Multiple responses permitted

Too busy, don't have time	42%
Other	25%
Not familiar with publication	19%
Not relevant to my job	17%
Not interested in content	6%

0%   10%   20%   30%   40%   50%

The 84 respondents who initially indicated they are familiar with *CER* were asked to rate the usefulness of various types of articles and regular *CER* featured columns using a 4-point Likert scale, with responses options ranging from *Not useful* through *Highly useful*. The articles and features were described as follows:

- Long-form articles on examination and testing topics
- Long-form articles on other topics of interest to the credentialing and regulatory communities
- Abstracts and Updates – Regular column providing descriptions and overview of recent publications, including books, articles, and presentations of interest to the credentialing and regulatory communities
- Legal Beat – Regular column featuring important case law and regulatory/legislative initiatives impacting the credentialing and regulatory communities
- *Quick Poll* Results – Regular column detailing the results of recent *Quick Poll*s

Fifty-nine respondents made these ratings. These respondents came from those who both did and did not regularly or semi-regularly read the journal. Generally speaking, respondents found all article types and features at least *Moderately* to *Highly useful*, with about two-thirds selecting one of those response options for each category of *CER* content. It is apparent that even among those who are not regular or semi-regular readers of *CER*, the various types of content typically provide very useful content.
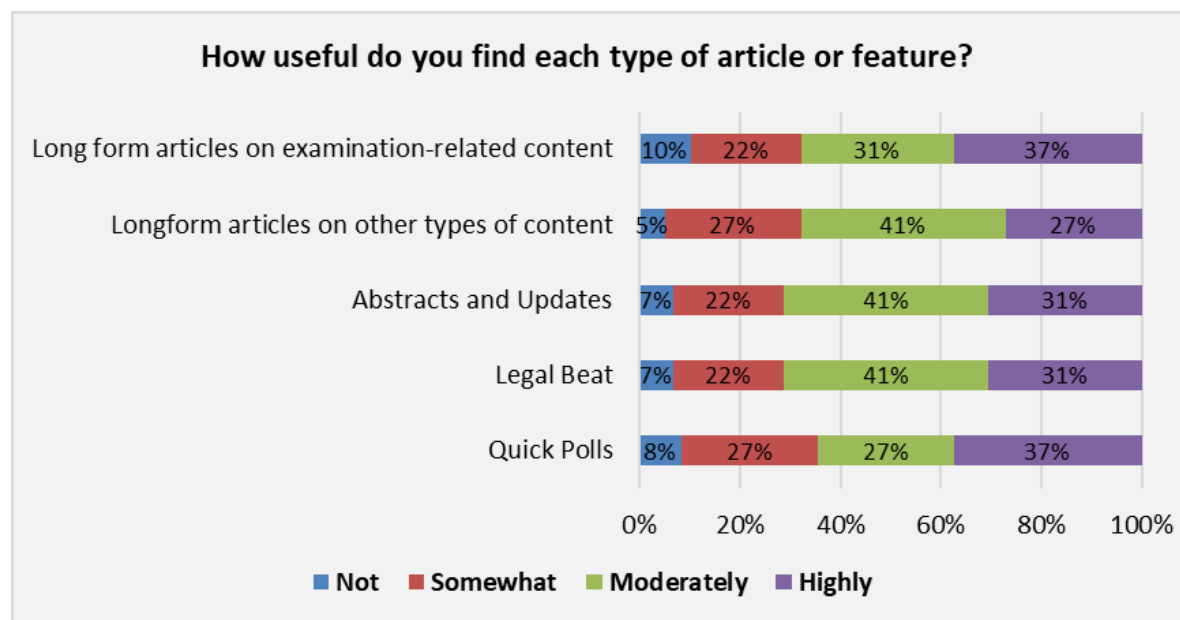
Other types of content that readers have found useful include: "Anything related to the methodology of test administration, scoring, reporting, data analysis, especially methods that represent improvements and cost savings without loss of validity."

Respondents were then given the opportunity to provide open-ended suggestions regarding the types of exam-related content they would like to see addressed in *CER*, as well as suggestions regarding specific areas **other** than exams they would like to read about in *CER*. Some themes that emerged regarding exam-related content include the following:

- Diversity, equity, inclusion issues, which may encompass pass rates by demographic groups, bias reviews, ensuring DEI (or EDI, depending on geographic region) considerations are incorporated in all exam-related activities; DEI/EDI's relevance to testing in professional regulation
- Use of technology and "Next Gen" approaches, including impact of artificial intelligence in credentialing community, use of AI in content development, technologies used in exam administration, and technological advances in remote proctoring and security
- Psychometric topics such as content development, which was also mentioned with the use of AI, comparisons of test development and delivery, item scaling, external validity and uses of exams
- Best practices in assessment of non-technical skills in licensure exams
- Broader questions like the pros and cons of national exams and the research evidence supporting their use
- Conceptual content; for example, trends in assessment, non-exam methods for ensuring competence to practice

Suggestions related to non-exam content, which would be a departure from the traditional focus of *CER*, were also made:

- A number of topics geared more to the regulators' perspective were offered; challenges to regulation in a changing global and political environment was mentioned, as were the design of health workforce regulation and evaluation of regulatory systems at the national and sub-national levels (this respondent noted a dearth of literature on this topic)
- Educational program accreditation issues
- Scope of practice issues
- Following the DEI/EDI theme, the topic of equity in access to professions

> I'd like to see a "regulator-specific" section, not for testing professionals. This way, non-testing professionals could easily find a section targeted to their interests/level…such as "entry level" testing issues/questions that regulators want answered, or recap well-received sessions from the AEC.

On the other hand, a number of respondents stated that *CER* should remain focused on exam-related content only.

It is obvious that *CER* serves a need and provides quality content. The challenge facing the journal is getting in front of more readers so that this content is accessible and informs decision-making for regulatory organizations, exam developers, vendors, and others with a stake in high-quality regulatory assessment.