Recent CLEAR Quick Poll Results

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The CLEAR Examination Resources and Advisory Committee (ERAC) periodically issues *Quick Poll* surveys. These *Quick Polls* are not designed as scientific studies but rather are intended to gather snapshot information regarding current issues and concerns within the regulatory community. This article discusses the results of four recent *Quick Polls* that were administered from June of 2023 through February of 2024.

Language Accommodations (Administered June 2023)

Questions

— *In which language(s) is/are your exam(s) offered? Select all that apply.*
   ☐ A list with 24 languages was provided
   ☐ A write-in response option for *Other* languages was also provided

— *Describe your organization's reasons for offering exam(s) in more than one language. (Multiple responses permitted.)*
   ☐ Required by law or regulation
   ☐ Large population of non-native speakers in candidate population
   ☐ Exam already available in translation from testing vendor
   ☐ Requested by an individual or a group speakers of the target language
   ☐ Other (*Please specify*.)

— *Do you offer any of the following types of language accommodations? Select all that apply.*
   ☐ Audio exam
   ☐ Extra time
   ☐ Interpreter
   ☐ Side by side screens/two languages
   ☐ Translation dictionary
   ☐ Other (*Please specify*.)

— *Do you translate ancillary materials? Select all that apply.*
   ☐ Exam information on website
   ☐ Exam preparation materials or study guides
   ☐ Candidate handbook
   ☐ Score reports
   ☐ Other (*Please specify.*)

— *What profession(s) does you organization regulate?*
   ☐ Healthcare
   ☐ Construction and trades
   ☐ Professional services (e.g., law, architecture)
   ☐ Human services (e.g., psychology, education, social work, counseling)
   ☐ Financial services
   ☐ Engineering

□ Information technology
□ Real estate and insurance
□ Other (*Please specify.*)

— *Where is your organization located?*
□ Canada
□ United States
□ Australia
□ New Zealand
□ Republic of Ireland
□ United Kingdom
□ Other (*Please specify*)
□ Asia (*Please specify*)
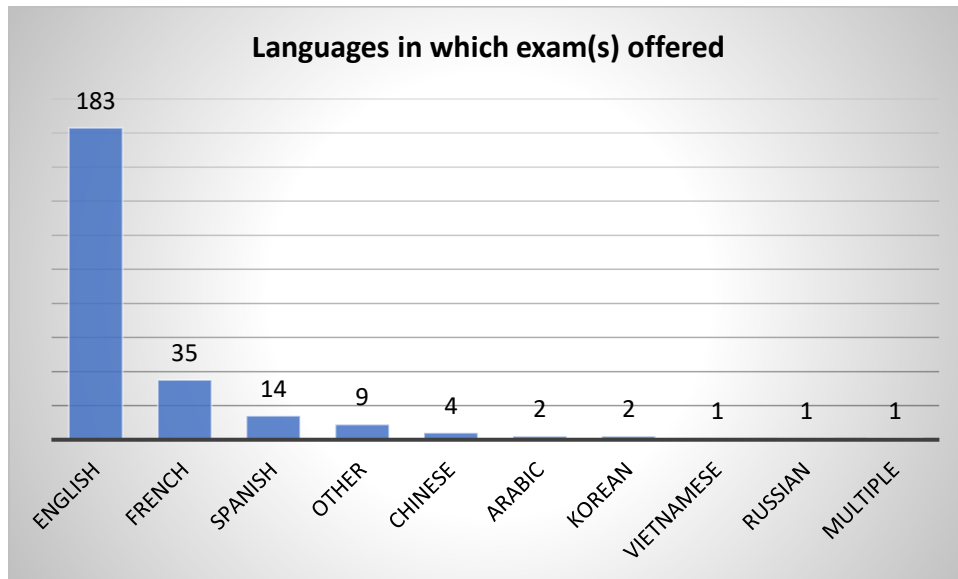
Number of respondents: 183

Results

One hundred eighty-three respondents completed the *Quick Poll* on examination languages. The majority of respondents (63%) offered their exam(s) only in one language, while 37% offered their exam(s) in more than one language. One percent did not not know, or did not offer exams.
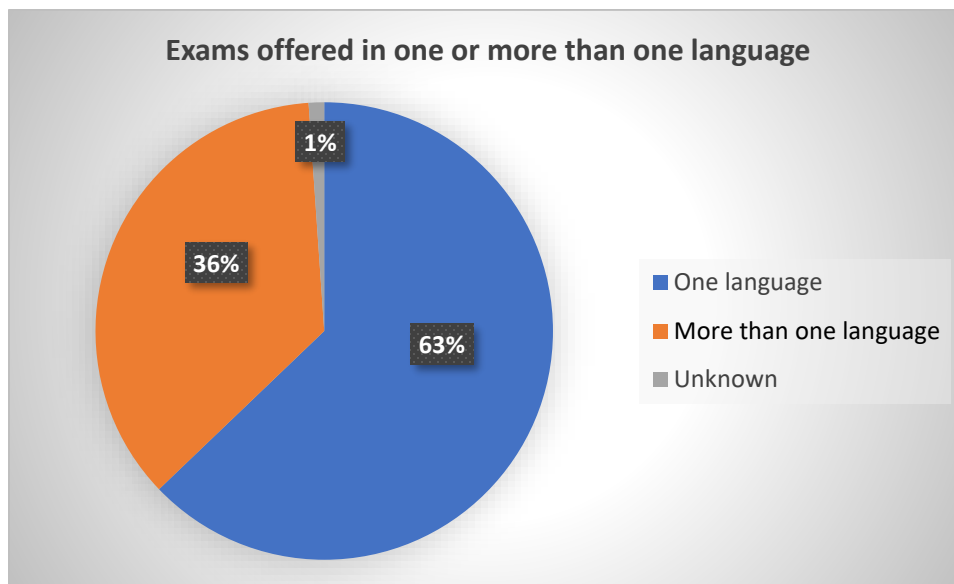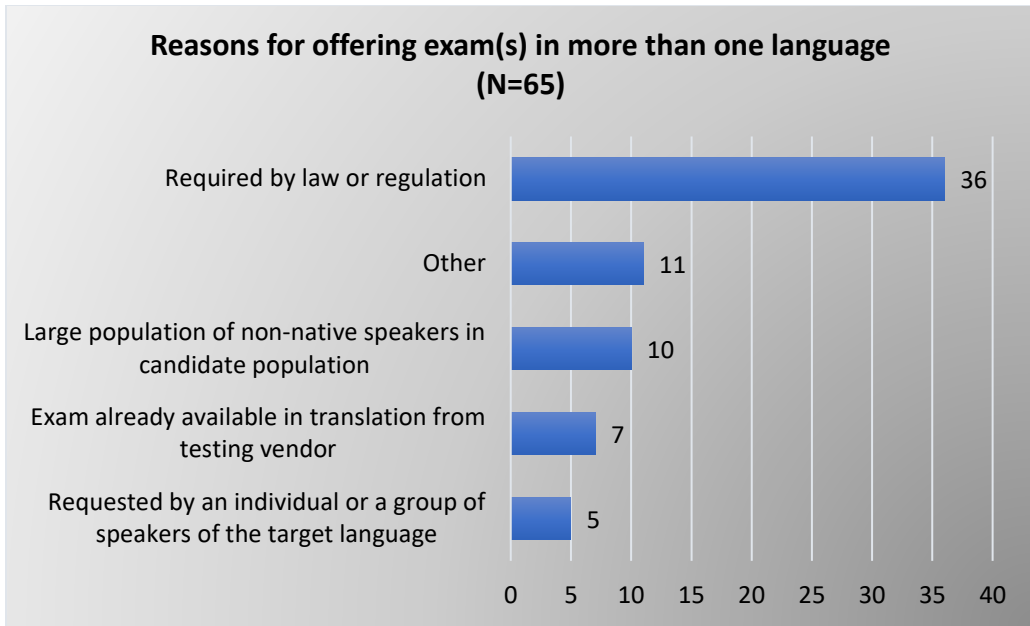

All respondents offered their exams in English, except for three respondents that did not sponsor exam programs. Of those offering exams in more than one language, French was the most common second language (N=35), followed by Spanish (N=14). A number of respondents who indicated they offered more than one language did not specify which additional language(s) they offered. Of those indicating some *Other* language, many wrote in that they did not know because the languages were controlled by the exam vendor or another third party, or(for those respondent organizations sponsoring more the one
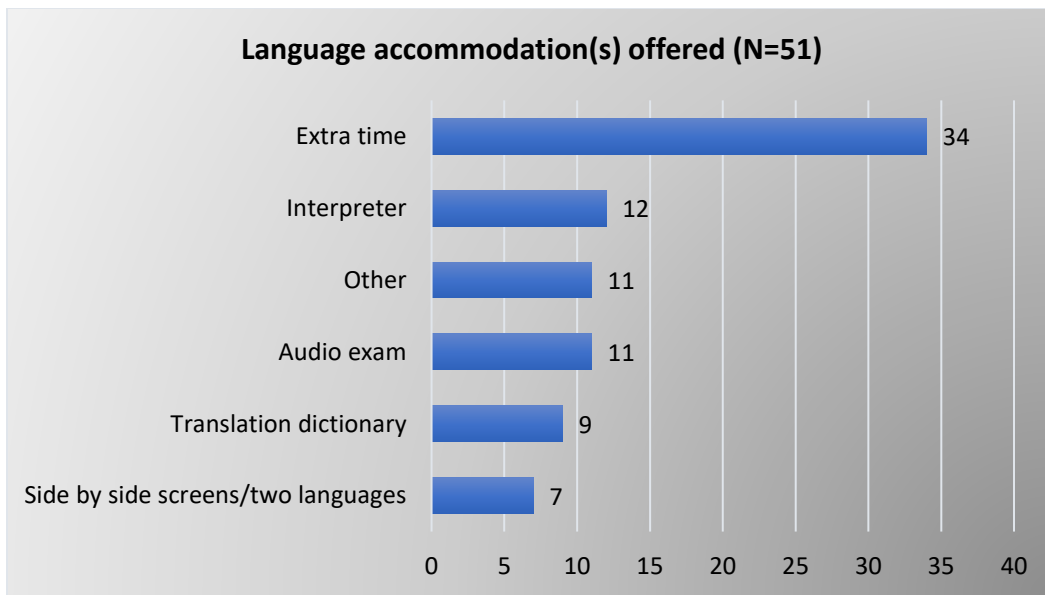
exam program) it depended on the program. One respondent offered their exam in multiple languages, including Amharic, Khmer, Laotian, Samoan, Somali, Tagalog, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese.

Languages in which exam(s) offered

| Language	Count
ENGLISH	183
FRENCH	35
SPANISH	14
OTHER	9
CHINESE	4
ARABIC	2
KOREAN	2
VIETNAMESE	1
RUSSIAN	1
MULTIPLE	1

Those organizations that offer exams in more than one language were asked for the reasons they did so. Multiple responses were permitted. Sixty-five respondents detailed their reasons. The most common response was that it was required by law or regulation (N=36; 55% of those answering this question), 11 respondents indicated some Other reason (17% of those answering), 10 indicated there was a large population of non-native speakers in the candidate population (15% of those answering), seven indicated that the exam was available from their vendor in more than one language, and five indicated they offered additional languages due to requests from candidates. Of those selecting Other, the write-in responses were either that the respondent's organization facilitated two languages even though they were not required by law or regulation, the respondent was unsure, or the question was not applicable since the respondent did not offer exams.

Reasons for offering exam(s) in more than one language (N=65)

Category	Value
Required by law or regulation	36
Other	11
Large population of non-native speakers in candidate population	10
Exam already available in translation from testing vendor	7
Requested by an individual or a group of speakers of the target language	5

Respondents were asked if they offered any other language accommodations, and multiple responses were permitted. Fifty-one respondents answered this question. The most commonly selected response was offering extra time (N=34, 67% of those answering), followed by offering an interpreter (N=12, 24%), and 11 each (22%) offering an audio exam or some other accommodation. Nine respondents offered a translation dictionary (17%) and seven (14%) provided side-by-side screens in two languages. Other accommodations included "based on request and supporting documentation," toggling back and forth", or a reader. Several respondents noted that they were not sure about accommodations.

Language accommodation(s) offered (N=51)

Category	Value
Extra time	34
Interpreter	12
Other	11
Audio exam	11
Translation dictionary	9
Side by side screens/two languages	7

Respondents were also asked whether their program translated any ancillary materials, and multiple responses were permitted. Thirty-one respondents answered this question. The most common type of ancillary materials translated were exam preparation materials or study guides (N=19, 61% of those responding), the Candidate Handbook (N=17, 55%), and exam information on the website (N=16, 52%). Others translated score reports (N=9, 29%) and Other (N=4, 13%). As can be inferred, many respondents translated more than one type of ancillary material. Among those selecting Other, it was mentioned that this varies across jurisdictions and exam programs, and that it will soon become a requirement to translate ancillary materials.
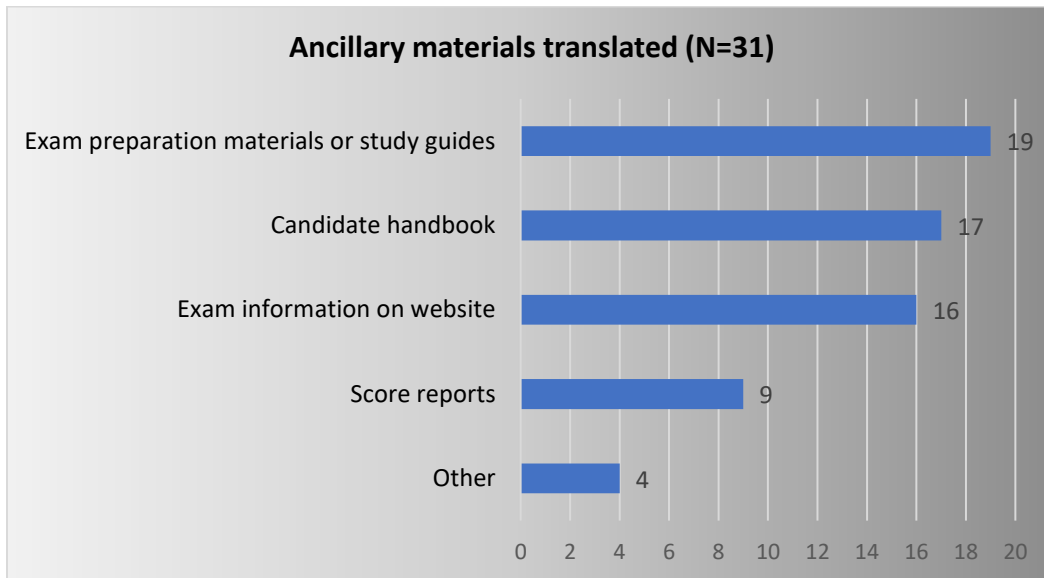
Characteristics of Respondents

One hundred and twenty respondents answered the question about where their organization was based; multiple responses were permitted. Seventy-four indicated their organization was based in the United States (62% of those answering this question), 42 organizations were based in Canada (35%), three organizations were based in Australia or New Zealand, and one organization each was based in the Republic of Ireland, the United Kingdom, and Latin America.

The same cohort of one hundred twenty respondents answered the question about the profession or professions their organization regulated. Multiple responses were permitted, and a number of respondents regulated a range of professions. Sixty percent regulated healthcare professions, 21% regulated professional services such as law or architecture, and 15% regulated human services professions, 12% each regulated construction and trades or Engineering. Smaller percentages regulated the other delineated professions. Of the 23 respondents indicating they represented some Other profession, write-in responses included immigration, dentistry, the cannabis industry and several others.

What profession(s) does your organization regulate? (N=120)

	N	%
Healthcare	72	60%

	N	%
Professional services (e.g., law, architecture)	25	21%
Other	23	19%
Human services (e.g., psychology, education, social work, counseling)	18	15%
Construction and trades	14	12%
Engineering	14	12%
Real estate and insurance	7	6%
Financial services	2	2%
Information technology	1	1%

There were no systematic differences between the responses of those regulating healthcare only, non-healthcare only, both healthcare and non-healthcare, and those not indicating the profession they regulated in the number of languages their exams were offered in, the types of other language accommodations offered, or what other ancillary material was translated.

Respondents from Canada were more than twice as likely to report that their organization offered exams in more than one language (28 in more than one language; 13 in one language). Conversely, respondents from the United States were more than twice as likely to report that their organization offered exams in just one language than in more than one language (49 in one language, 22 in more than one language).

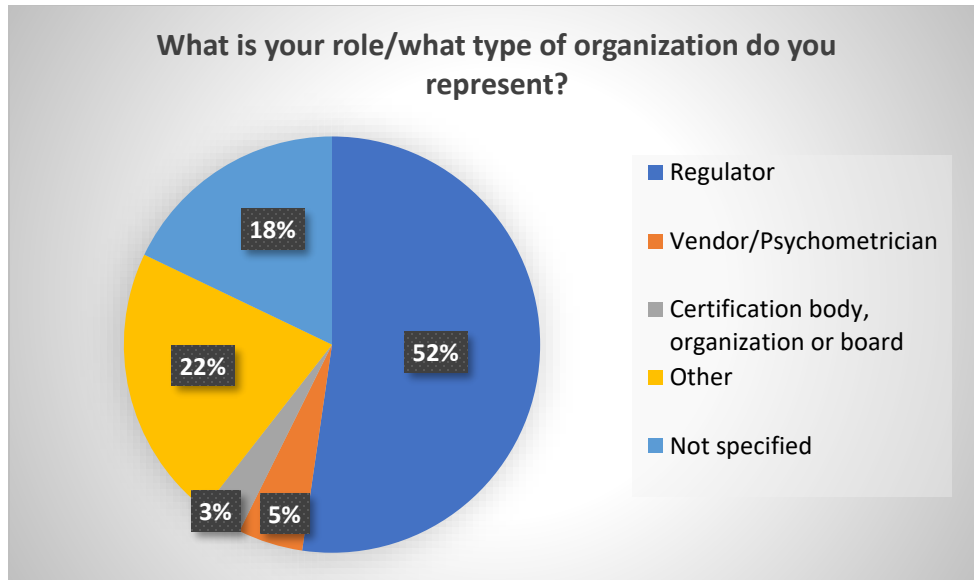## Evidence of Exam Validity (Administered September 2023)

Questions

— *What is your role/what type of organization do you represent?*
  - Regulator
  - Vendor/Psychometrician
  - Certification body, organization, or board
  - Other (*Please specify.*)

— *Does your licensure or certification program provide evidence to the public (e.g., candidates, legislative bodies, employers, or other stakeholders) that your examination program is valid?*
  - Yes. Followup: What types of evidence is provided?
  - No. Followup: Why not?
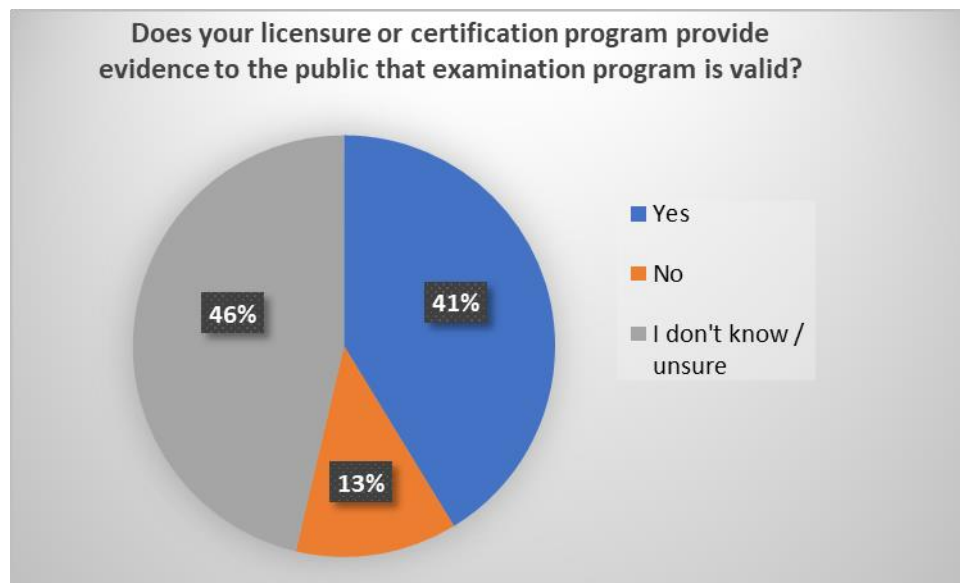 - I don't know/unsure

Number of respondents: 218

Results

More than half the respondents were regulators (N=114, 52%), 11 were vendors or psychometricians (5%), and 3% represented certifying bodies, organizations, or boards (N=7). More than 22% indicated some Other role (N=47) and 18% did not respond to this question (N=39). Of those specifying Other, common responses included Board members or advisors, investigators, inspectors, and examiners.

What is your role/what type of organization do you represent?

- Regulator — 52%
- Vendor/Psychometrician — 5%
- Certification body, organization or board — 3%
- Other — 22%
- Not specified — 18%

While almost half of respondents (N=101, 46%) did not know or were unsure whether their organization provided evidence related to the validity of their exam program, 41% (N=90) said they did provide evidence of validity and 12% (N=27) said they did not. (Note, the pie chart shows "No" responses rounded up so the percentages sum to 100%.)

Does your licensure or certification program provide evidence to the public that examination program is valid?

- Yes — 41%
- No — 13%
- I don't know / unsure — 46%

Perhaps not surprisingly, vendors/psychometricians and those from certification bodies, organizations, or boards were more likely to be sure and to answer "Yes" to the question about whether they provided the public with evidence of exam validity than were regulators and those in other roles, who were more likely to be unsure about this. About two-thirds of respondents who did not specify their role indicated they did provide evidence about exam validity.

	Type of organization				
Organization provides evidence of exam program validity	**Regulator**	**Vendor/ Psycho-metrician**	**Certification body, organization or board**	**Other**	**Not specified**
Yes	31%	100%	71%	28%	67%
No	14%	0%	14%	9%	15%
I don't know / unsure	55%	0%	14%	64%	18%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Among regulators, the types of evidence most frequently mentioned as being provided include pass rates, competencies being tested, standards of practice exam blueprints, standards of practice underlying their programs, reports pf job analysis and/or passing point studies, and statistical analyses of candidate performance. Some respondents also indicated that their exam programs are developed using best practices such the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (APA, AERA, & NCME) or that their exams or programs are accredited. Regulators also mentioned that they provided documentation on Regulators may provide this validity evidence on their websites and/or by request from candidates or legislative bodies.

Vendors/psychometricians and certification bodies, organizations and boards listed similar types of validity evidence, technical reports or executive summaries of job analyses, statistical data on candidate performance, reports of standard setting studies, or test form assembly specifications. They also mentioned if their programs were accredited by NCCA or Buros.

Among those who indicated some Other role, only a few specified the type of evidence they provided. Responses included license decisions, minutes of meetings, or public reporting of audits.

For those who do **not** provide evidence of exam validity, the most commonly cited reason was that they are not required to do so, or have not been asked. Regulators also mentioned privacy considerations related to confidentiality and protected information, or that they rely on third party vendors to report evidence.

One respondent whose role is to provide oversight of the regulator provided their insight on the usefulness of providing information on the validity and reliability of exam programs.

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In our jurisdiction, some do some don't. I think they should all do, at least in the form of an annual technical report with the relevant information and statistical data on validity and reliability. It's a question of transparency and credibility. Recent exam program failures could have been foreseen with that kind of regular reporting.

Quick Poll on Quick Polls (Administered December 2023)

In order to better serve the regulatory committee, the Examination Resources and Advisory Committee (ERAC) launched a Quick Poll late last year to explore the reach and relevance of Quick Polls themselves. This Quick Poll was intended to collect baseline information on who is responding to Quick Polls and reviewing the results. The poll was disseminated through a wider variety of methods than was done previously, including direct email and repeated posting in the CLEAR Communities.

Questions

— *How often do you answer CLEAR Quick Polls*?
- o Always or almost always
- o Sometimes, when the content is relevant to me or when I have time
- o Rarely or never, the Quick Poll topics generally aren't relevant to me and my work
- o I was not aware that Quick Polls existed

— *How often do you review the Quick Poll responses?*
- o Always, I read this feature in CLEAR Exam Review (CER) regularly
- o Sometimes, I occasionally review them in CER
- o Rarely, I think I've seen a conference session about them before
- o Never, I didn't know the results were reported anywhere

— *Do you have any suggestions for topics for future Quick Polls?*

— *What is your role/what type of organization do you represent?*
- o Regulator
- o Vendor/psychometrician
- o Certification body, organization, or board
- o Other (*Please specify*.)

Number of respondents: 132

Results

One hundred thirty respondents answered the poll. More than half were regulators, with representatives of certification bodies, organizations, or boards making up more than 20% of respondents. Additional respondents also participated, including vendors/psychometricians, those selecting some Other role and those who did not specify their role. Among the write-in responses for those selecting other role were educators, investigator, and global organization.

What is your role/what type of organization do you represent?

- Regulator
- Certification body, organization, or board
- Vendor/psychometrician
- Other
- Did not respond

53%, 22%, 9%, 5%, 11%
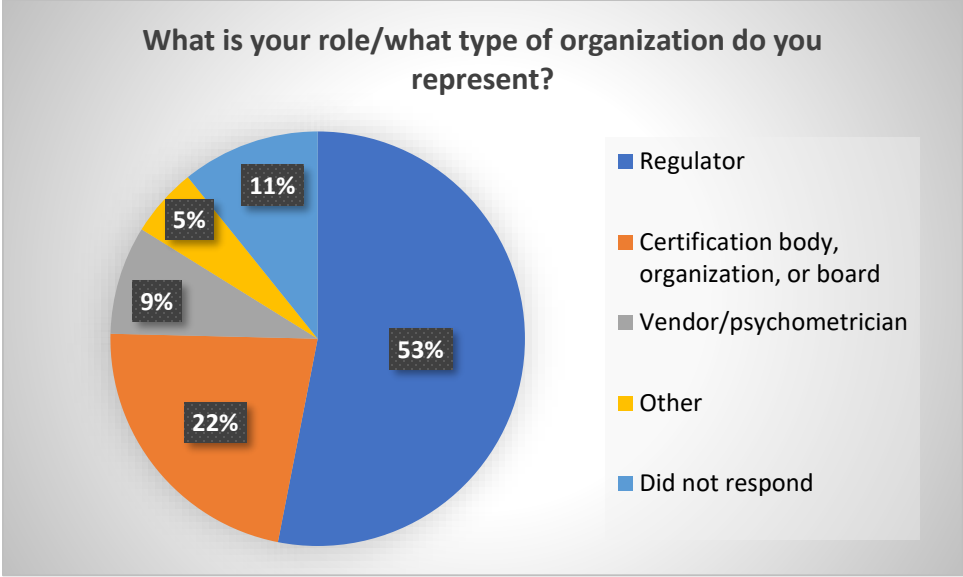
Almost half the respondents (47%) indicated they sometimes responded to Quick Polls when the content was relevant to them or they had time, and about 15% each were at opposite ends of the spectrum, indicating they either always or almost always responded, or rarely/never responded. Twenty-three percent of respondents had not been aware that Quick Polls existed.

Answer Quick Polls

- Not aware QPs existed
- Rarely or never
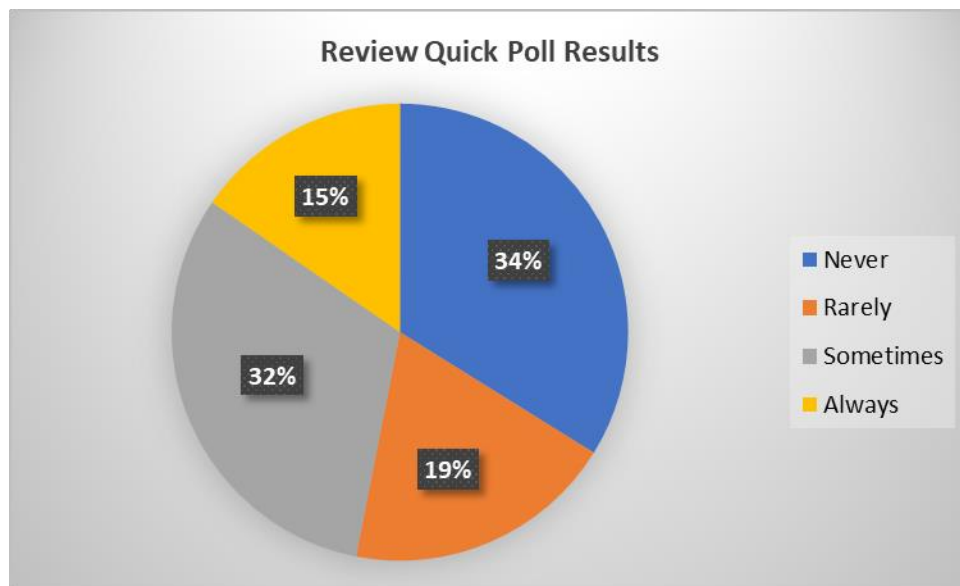- Sometimes
- Always/almost always

23%, 15%, 47%, 15%
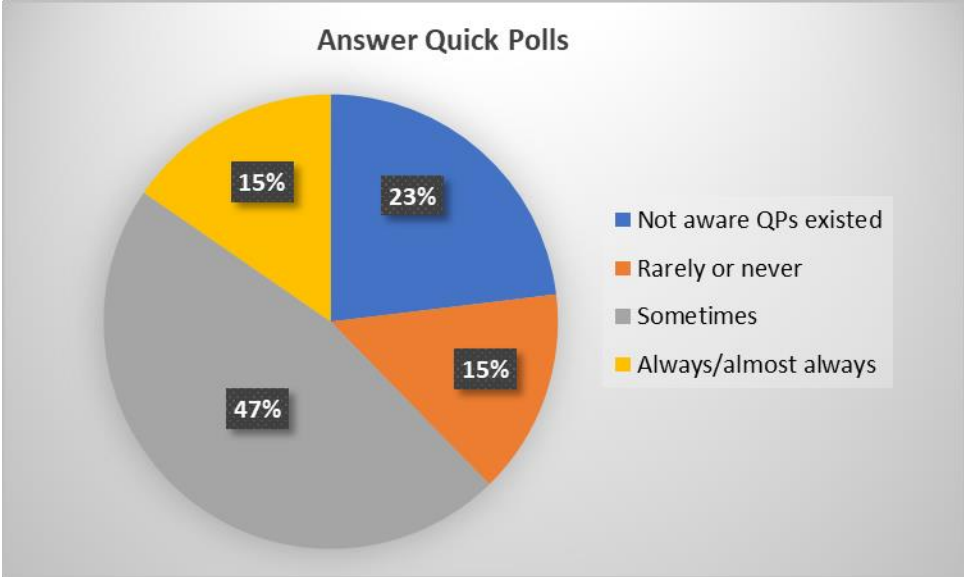
Respondents' levels of engagement with Quick Polls varied by their role or type of organization they represented. Vendors and psychometricians were most likely to respond to Quick polls—all these respondents always or sometimes responded. Of the representatives of certification bodies, organizations, or boards, nearly 70% always or sometimes responded. More than 60% of the regulator
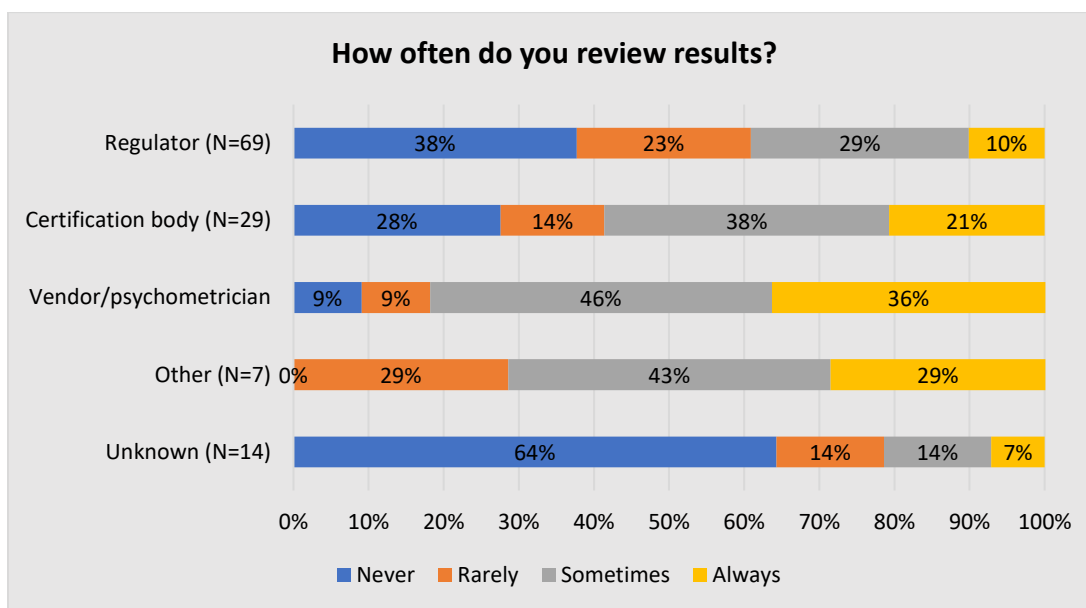
respondents sometimes or always responded to Quick Polls, whereas 23% of regulators were not aware that Quick Polls existed.
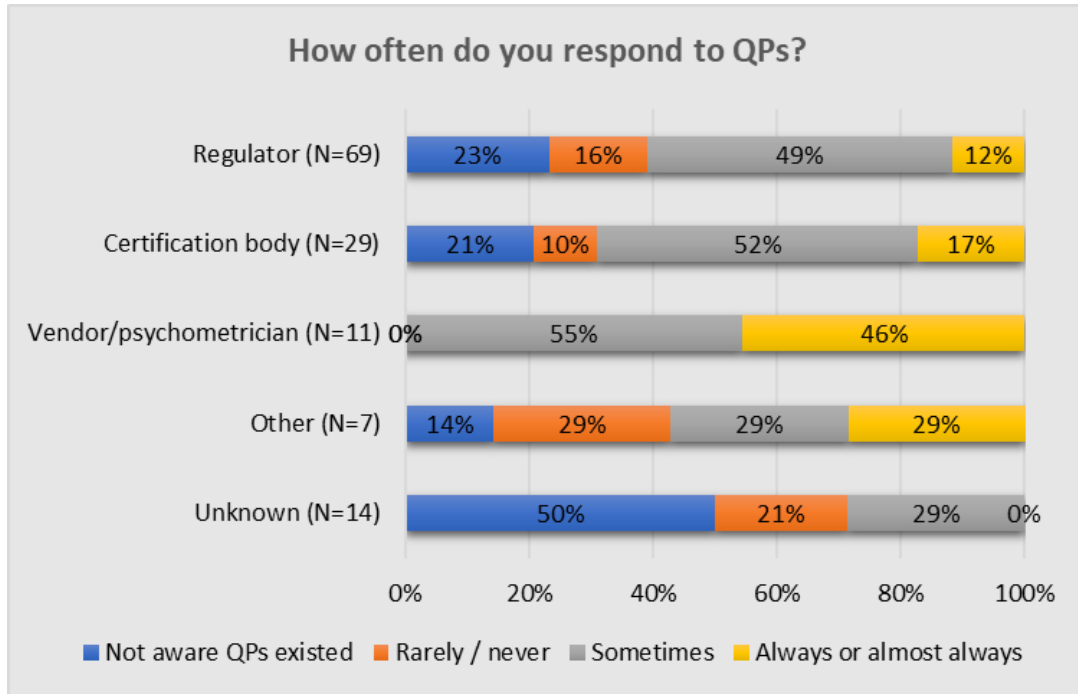
Respondents were asked how often they reviewed Quick Poll results. Quick Poll results are reported in the biannual *CLEAR Exam Review* (*CER*) journal. Fifteen percent of respondents indicated that they always or regularly read the Quick Polls report in CER. More than one third of respondents (34%) indicated they never reviewed the results or were not aware that the results were reported anywhere. Just under one third (32%) indicated they sometimes reviewed results in CER.

Frequency of reviewing Quick Poll results associated with the role of respondents were similar to those associated with responding to the polls. Vendors and psychometricians were most likely to review results (82% indicating sometimes or always), followed by representatives of certification bodies (59% indicating they sometimes or always review the results). Regulators, in contrast, were far less likely to review Quick Poll results, with only 39% indicating then do some sometimes or always, and 38% indicating they never review the results.

How often do you review results?

Role	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Regulator (N=69)	38%	23%	29%	10%
Certification body (N=29)	28%	14%	38%	21%
Vendor/psychometrician	9%	9%	46%	36%
Other (N=7)	0%	29%	43%	29%
Unknown (N=14)	64%	14%	14%	7%

Not surprisingly, those who responded more often to Quick Polls were also more likely to review results, while those who were not aware of Quick Polls were very unlikely to review the results.

	How often do you respond to Quick Polls?			
How often do you review results?	**Always/ almost always**	**Some-times**	**Rarely/ never**	**Was not aware of QPs**
Always	50%	15%	5%	0%
Sometimes	35%	51%	16%	0%
Rarely	10%	20%	47%	7%
Never	5%	15%	32%	93%

Respondents were offered the opportunity to suggest topics for future Quick Polls. Some topics of interest that could be explored using a brief targeted poll included jurisprudence exams, how to assess internationally-trained candidates, inter-jurisdictional mobility, compliance issues, and pass rates. Other suggested topics went beyond what could easily be addressed in a Quick Poll, but might better be explored in a more expansive forum such as a webinar or conference session. These suggestions included how to expand regulation to a governance model, a range of issues related to compliance,

including moving to a proactive compliance model from a reactive complaints-based model, how to address issues related to professionalism, the use of artificial intelligence and the future of assessment.

Take-Aways

ERAC's commitment to be more relevant to regulators and more visible to the CLEAR membership as a whole has led to some changes in Quick Poll reporting. In addition to queuing up suggestions for future Quick Polls received from respondents into the list of future Quick Polls, ERAC will be expanding the number of dissemination avenues for Quick Polls to make them more visible; in addition to sending out dedicated emails, CLEAR will be posting repeated invitations to Quick Polls in its various communities. We have already begun providing brief reports showing the results of recent polls together with with new polls so that CLEAR members do not need to wait for the CER article, and we are planning to make all Quick Poll results articles available as a resource on the CLEAR website for members to access independent of the individual CER articles. These efforts will hopefully make Quick Polls a more relevant and accessible mechanism for regulators and other members of the CLEAR community to explore issues of current interest.

Number of Exam Attempts (Administered February 2024)

In February 2024, ERAC launched a Quick Poll about organizations' policies related to the number of times candidates are permitted to take licensure or certification examinations, including both the initial attempt and any subsequent re-takes. The poll also asked whether policies varied based on modality to explore if in-person or remote testing impacted the number of exam attempts permitted.

Questions

— *What is your role/what type of organization do you represent?*
  o Regulator
  o Vendor/psychometrician
  o Certification body, organization, or board
  o Other (*Please specify*.)

— *Does your organization limit the number of examination attempts, including the first attempt and any re-takes?*
  o Yes. What is the total number of attempts permitted?
  o No

— *Does your organization require a waiting period before candidates are eligible to re-take the examination?*
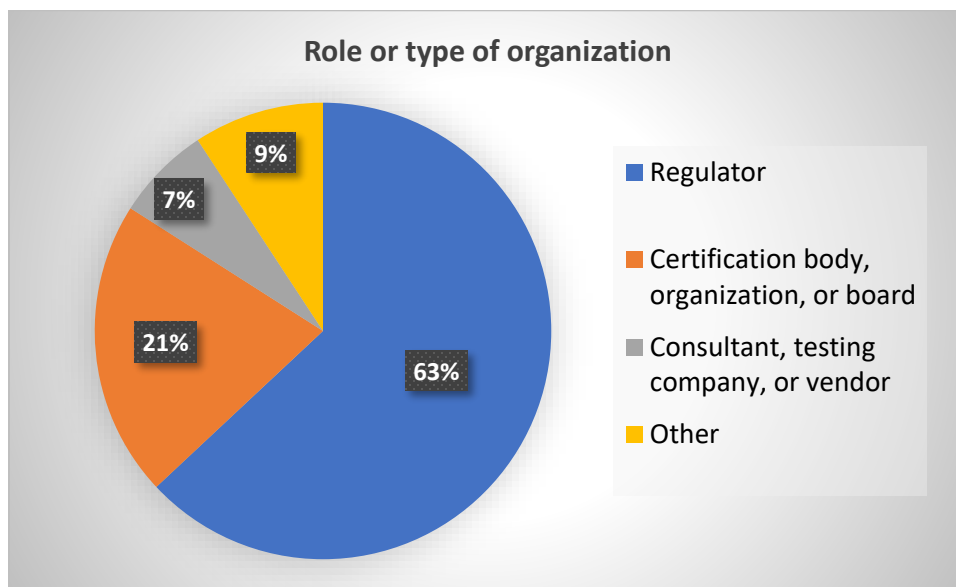 o Yes. What is the waiting period?
  o No

— *Does the number of attempts differ depending on whether the exam is administered by live remote proctoring or at a testing center?*
  o Yes, more attempts for live remote proctoring
  o Yes, more attempts for testing center or site
  o No
  o Other (*Please specify*.)

— *Please provide any additional comments about this topic.*
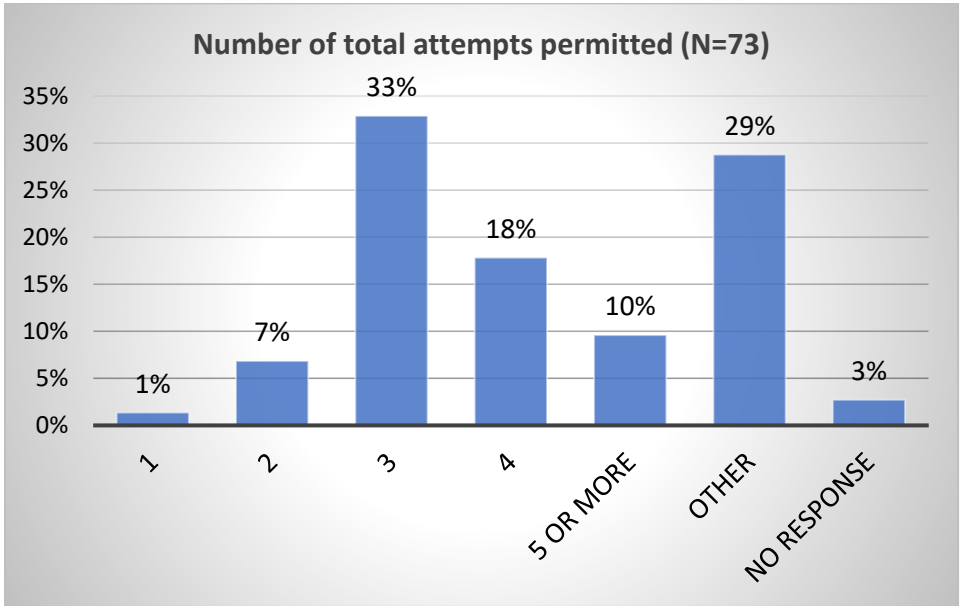
Number of respondents: 119

Results

One hundred nineteen respondents answered the poll. Almost two-thirds (63%) were regulators, with representatives of certification bodies, organizations, or boards making up more than 21% of respondents. Other respondents included vendors/psychometricians (7%), and 9% said they were in some *Other* role, including those identifying themselves as investigators or educators, among others. One respondent indicated that they were an umbrella organization regulating a range of licensure programs, and requested that this be added as a response option, since this impacted their answers. Future Quick Polls will include this role as an option.

Role or type of organization

- Regulator
- Certification body, organization, or board
- Consultant, testing company, or vendor
- Other

63%
21%
7%
9%

Sixty-one percent of respondents (N=73) limit the total number of times candidates are permitted to take their exam; this includes both the initial attempt and any re-takes by candidates who failed their initial or subsequent attempts. Thirty-nine percent of respondents answered "No" to this question, indicating that they do **not** limit the number of exam attempts permitted.

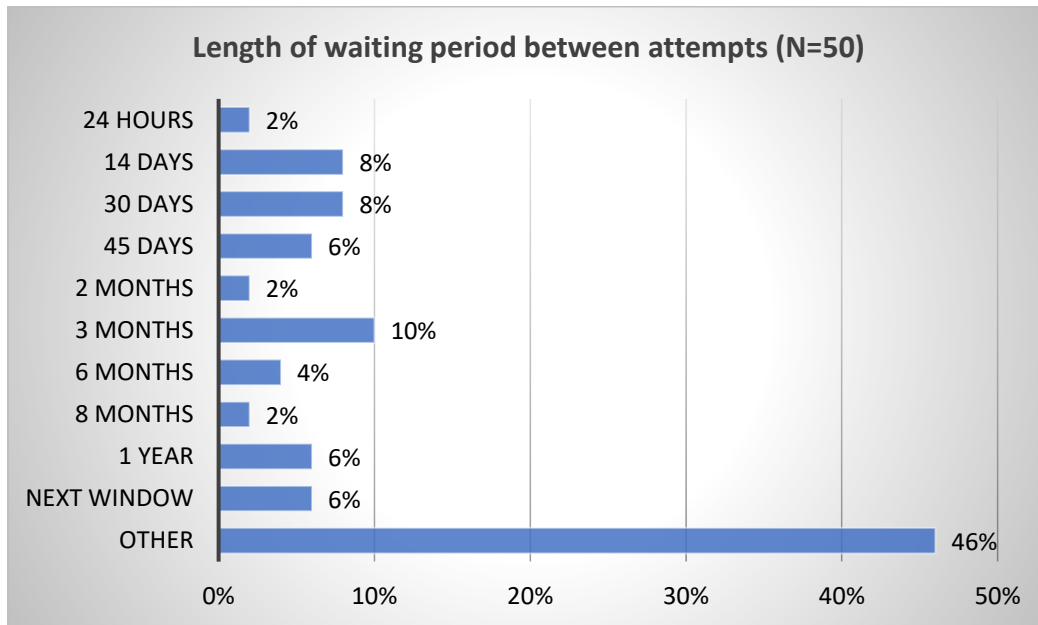**Organization limits total number of exam attempts**

- Yes: 61%
- No: 39%
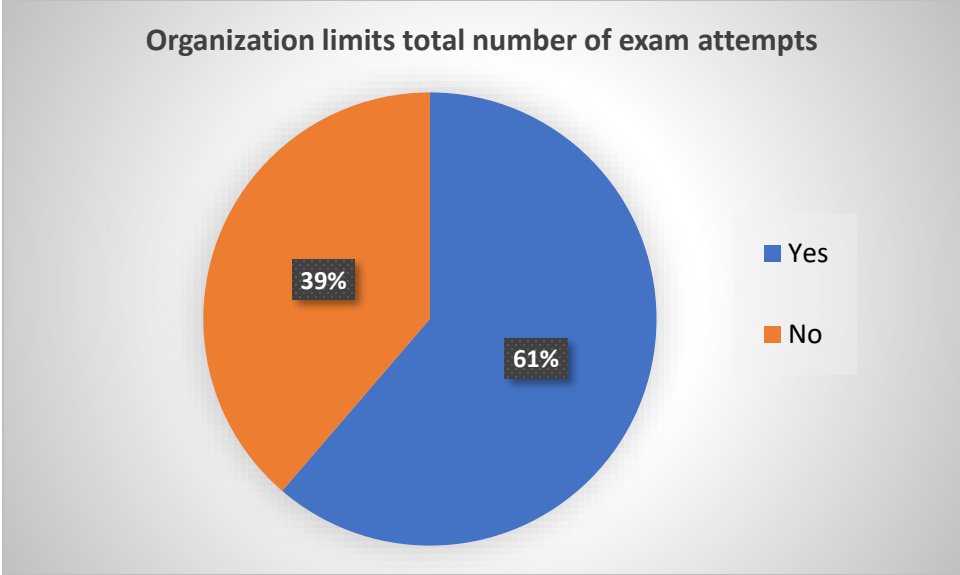
Of the 73 organizations limiting the total number of exam attempts, the number permitted ranged from 1 attempt (1%) to 5 or more attempts (10%), with the most common response being 3 attempts (33%). An additional 29% indicated some Other number of attempts; write-in responses mentioned such considerations as differing requirements for different exam programs, lock-out requirements, the need for candidates to take remediation or additional education after a certain number of failed attempts, and different requirements for multiple hurdle programs (e.g., MCQ plus performance).

Number of total attempts permitted (N=73)

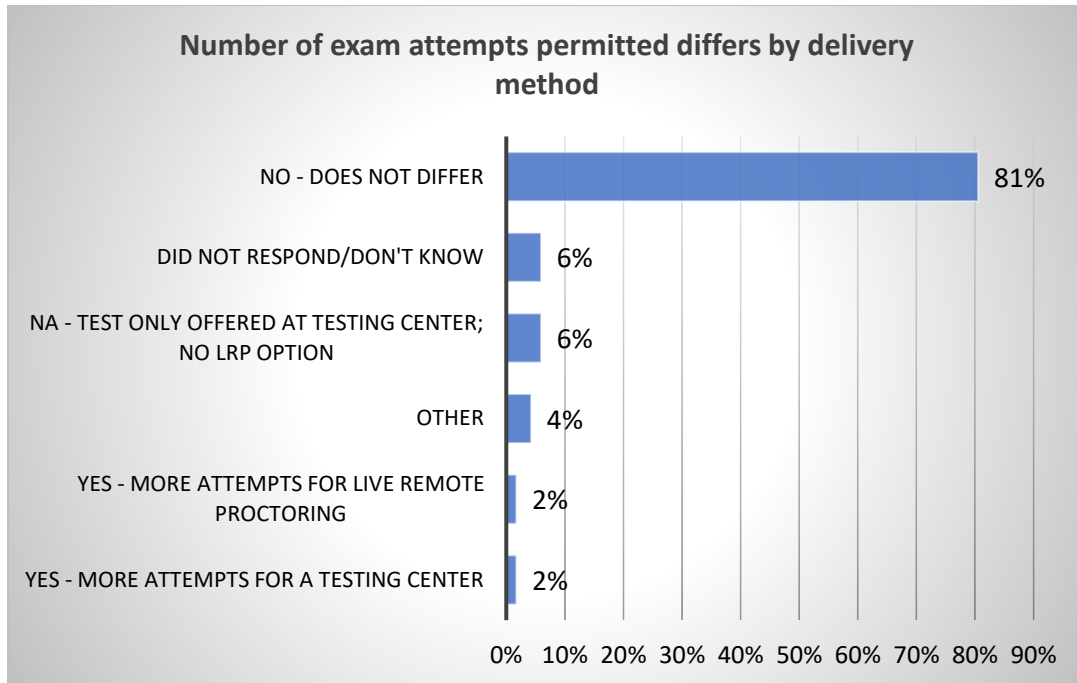| Category	Percentage
1	1%
2	7%
3	33%
4	18%
5 OR MORE	10%
OTHER	29%
NO RESPONSE	3%

Note: Totals do not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Respondents were asked if they imposed a waiting period between exam attempts; 51 respondents (43%) indicated that they did impose a waiting period, while 68 respondents (57%) said there was no

waiting period. Fifty respondents answered a followup question on the length of the waiting period. Waiting periods ranged from 24 hours to one year, with the most common waiting period being 3 months/90 days (10% of those requiring a waiting period). Almost half (46%) of those requiring a waiting period provided a write-in response explaining their waiting period. The most typical write-in response was that candidates needed to wait until the next exam window (with varying frequencies of the exam windows based on individual exam programs). For those respondents regulating or sponsoring multiple programs that the waiting period varied by the exam program. Other responses were that it varies by how long it takes candidates to complete required education/remediation following a failed attempt.

Length of waiting period between attempts (N=50)

Category	Percentage
24 HOURS	2%
14 DAYS	8%
30 DAYS	8%
45 DAYS	6%
2 MONTHS	2%
3 MONTHS	10%
6 MONTHS	4%
8 MONTHS	2%
1 YEAR	6%
NEXT WINDOW	6%
OTHER	46%

Respondents were asked if the total number of times candidates are permitted to take the exam differs by the method by which exams are delivered. This question was intended to explore whether regulatory bodies or credentialing organizations perceive that exams might be vulnerable to cheating or item harvesting to a greater or lesser extent depending on whether they were offered in a traditional testing center or by live remote proctoring, and that limiting the number of attempts might be a way to control for this. The vast majority (81%) indicated that there is no difference in the number of attempts permitted regardless of delivery method, 6% did not know if there was a difference or did not respond, and 6% indicated that this did not apply since they only offered their exam(s) at a testing center. Only two respondents indicated that they permit more attempts for live remote proctoring, and only two respondents indicated that they permit more attempts for delivery at a testing center.

Number of exam attempts permitted differs by delivery method

Category	Percentage
NO - DOES NOT DIFFER	81%
DID NOT RESPOND/DON'T KNOW	6%
NA - TEST ONLY OFFERED AT TESTING CENTER; NO LRP OPTION	6%
OTHER	4%
YES - MORE ATTEMPTS FOR LIVE REMOTE PROCTORING	2%
YES - MORE ATTEMPTS FOR A TESTING CENTER	2%

Because respondents overwhelmingly do not vary the number of total exam attempts based on delivery method, they very likely do not perceive that either delivery method is more or less vulnerable to misuse.

A review of the write-in responses to the request for final comments found a number of themes:

- Statutes and regulations may impact the number of attempts permitted.
- There are variations depending on the specific licensure board's requirements.
- There are variations based on multiple-hurdle exam programs or based on the number of sections of the exam passes/not passed.
- Some programs have unlimited attempts in a proscribed time period; if the candidate is unsuccessful they need to start the application process again.
- Candidates can ask for review by the Board if they have used all attempts

Some concern was expressed that candidates failing an exam the maximum number of times in a particular jurisdiction can go to another jurisdiction to begin the process again—this assumes that the exam in not national in scope.