

# Helping the medical industry to set and improve standards



Knowledge assessments within the medical sector are an established means of ensuring the highest professional standards are in place. The emergence of computer-based testing (CBT) is helping to maintain and improve these standards by providing an efficient and scalable assessment framework to a growing international medical community.

Improved management information, faster results and operational efficiencies are just some of the reasons why a large number of medical organizations are now opting to deliver their assessments via CBT.

## Beyond the 'cutting edge'

Traditional paper-based exams are time intensive, requiring extensive resources for set-up and delivery. They can also be lost in transit, stolen or viewed prior to scheduled exam slots. Computer-based testing (CBT) eliminates these frustrations and risks. Taking place in highly secure and invigilated environments. Instant result notification allows candidates to plan the next stage of their career quicker than ever before. It is no surprise then that CBT is becoming the industry standard, rather than the cutting edge.

## Building and delivering better tests

Those adopting CBT are not just enjoying the benefits of ensuring higher security, exam consistency and a much faster turnaround time of training to accreditation. The harnessing of many value-added benefits which better test candidates' ability are being put to great use.

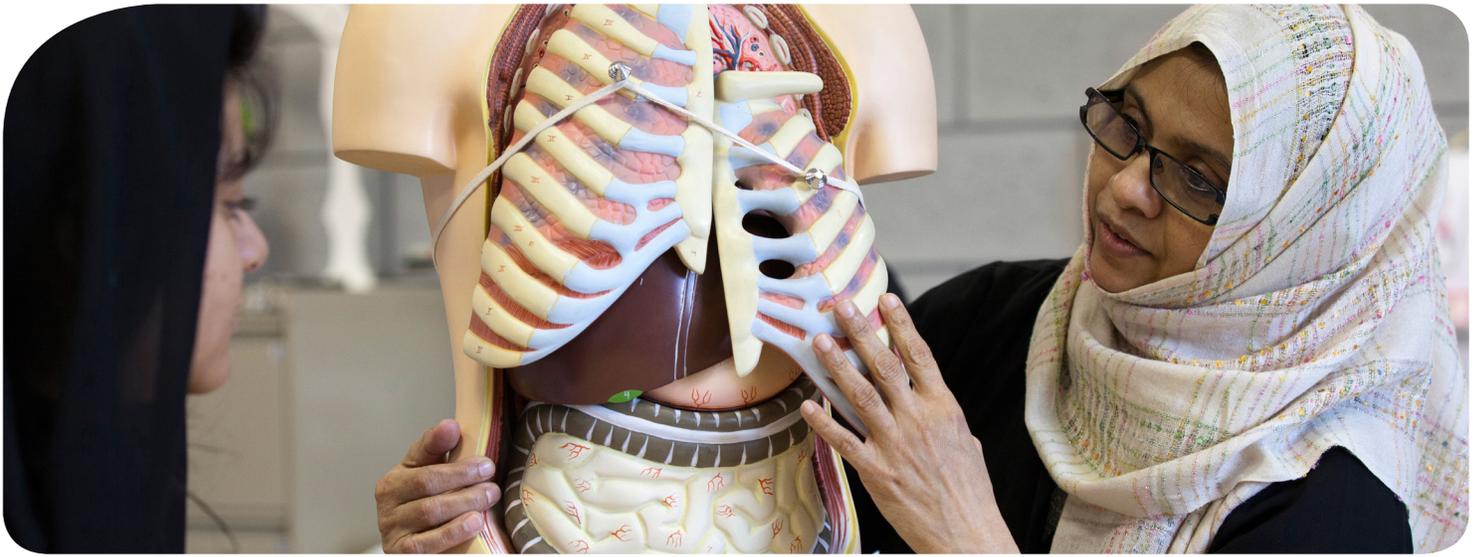
Management information generated by Pearson VUE's CBT systems is easy to use and can be manipulated to show where improvements in learning are required. This allows Pearson VUE and test owners to further enhance assessment and learning experiences. Performance information is transmitted from Pearson VUE's

management system in a timely fashion so that test owners are kept up to date of all relevant assessment activity.

## Item development

Effective CBT requires professional test development which relies on blueprinting and high quality item development.

Committed to pioneering healthcare licensure and regulation throughout the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the Health Authority of Abu Dhabi (HAAD) approached Pearson VUE to discover how it could deliver CBT to record fair and accurate assessments of candidate competencies.



“Pearson VUE delivery of HAAD exams outside of the UAE is of significant convenience to our candidates, as they are able to undertake localised testing. This arrangement also assists us greatly, as successful candidates arrive in the region certified and able to improve the health of our citizens.”

Dr Omniyat Mohammed Al-Hajeri, Manager of Health Professionals Licensing and Health Regulation, HAAD

Part of the agreement saw HAAD appoint Pearson VUE to perform item development to ensure the long-term integrity of the exam. Item development enables questions to remain measurable, relevant and of the required level of difficulty; a complex science which is also a necessity. The partnership sees subject matter and assessment experts collaborate to ensure that questions are appropriate. Use of Pearson VUE test centers located around the world have helped thousands of HAAD candidates to obtain meaningful certification and progress their medical careers.

هيئة الصحة - أبوظبي  
HEALTH AUTHORITY - ABU DHABI



With a large proportion of its medical workforce made up of professionals from India and the Philippines, HAAD appointed Pearson VUE to make its Nursing exams and Allied Health Specialties available within those countries. The move saw the first delivery of HAAD exams outside of the UAE and allowed workers to arrive in the region with the necessary certification.

#### Test windows

With traditional medical exams forming test events, this type of delivery often proves problematic. Thankfully, converting to test windows significantly reduces risks.

Historically, the National Recruitment Office for General Practice Training (NRO) assessed trainee doctors undergoing its Stage Two Assessment via paper-based testing. Consisting of Clinical Problem Solving and Professional Dilemmas sections, established professionals were on-hand to assess test performances on a single annual date. Fully aware of the advantages of CBT, and with General Practice remaining the largest specialty medical training program in the UK, the NRO commissioned Pearson VUE to perform two successful pilots. Assessments now run



over a six-day period at centers located within close proximity to hospitals and NHS trusts. This arrangement not only ensures that the NHS does not lose multiple professionals on a single day, but mitigates risk as tests can be rescheduled to take place during remaining dates in the window.

#### Assessing aptitude

Use of advanced measures to accurately assess candidate suitability for medical programs has become increasingly popular over recent years.

With dentistry and medical courses at UK universities in high demand, the UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT) Consortium sought a highly efficient process to help its 24 member universities identify candidates' likely aptitude for a clinical career.

Based on its experience working with medical organizations and providing robust delivery systems, Pearson VUE was appointed by the Consortium in 2005 to perform computer-based delivery of the test. Delivery commenced the following year – marking the Consortium's first use of CBT. The end-to-end solution sees Pearson VUE undertake marketing activity for the test, including the management of the UKCAT website, [www.ukcat.ac.uk](http://www.ukcat.ac.uk). The Pearson business is also responsible for test registration, booking and payment processes.

UK  
Clinical  
Aptitude  
Test



Pearson VUE supports over 100 of the most prestigious medical exams worldwide

In 2013, Pearson VUE worked closely with the UKCAT to develop a multi-media test preparation toolkit and mobile app for candidates.

#### Recertification

Physician assistants play a crucial role in the delivery of quality healthcare. With its vision to transform healthcare by certifying qualified physician assistants through programs that improve patient care, the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) used Pearson VUE to work toward making this vision a reality.

Recognized by all 50 US states, the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE) is a mark of professional accomplishment, indicating the achievement of established levels of knowledge and clinical skills. Pearson VUE's computer-based solution provides candidates with the platform to take their initial certification exams. Its partnership with the NCCPA also allows successful candidates to pursue recertification by administering the Physician Assistant National Recertifying Examination (PANRE) every six years as demonstrable proof that their knowledge is up to date and valid.

In 2010, the NCCPA saw a 9% annual increase in Pearson VUE-delivered exams.

With its credential management capabilities, Pearson VUE can automate and simplify the management of clients' credential programs. Integration of data sources, such as business and learning systems, are performed seamlessly to ensure data accuracy and the elimination of duplicate and incorrect information. Whether clients deliver a thousand or a million exams a year, the solution provides the automation and self-service functionality needed to reduce program costs and increase revenue.



#### Why Pearson?

From admissions to specialty tests, assessment methods vary across the globe. Many prove cumbersome and require resources best used in other aspects of medical practice. Through its experience working with over 100 of the most prestigious medical organizations around the world, Pearson VUE has created and delivered CBT solutions to meet a diverse range of specific assessment needs. This has led to the identification of accessible, invigilated and highly secure assessment environments as the most effective means of ensuring quality testing and results which are always beyond dispute.

“We can now be confident that all 5,000 junior doctors applying for our training rotations are robustly assessed against a common selection standard using our two carefully developed Machine-Marked Tests. At the same time we are able to ensure that all UK hospitals continue to have the required medical cover to provide a safe and effective service to patients.”

Dr. Richard Jones,  
Convenor of Stage Two, NRO

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