

INTRODUCTION

Test administration procedures are developed for an exam program in order to help reduce measurement error and to increase the likelihood of fair, valid, and reliable assessment. Specifically, appropriate standardized procedures improve measurement by increasing consistency and test security. Consistent, standardized administration of the exam allows you to make direct comparisons between examinees' scores, despite the fact that the examinees may have taken their tests on different dates, at different sites, and with different proctors. Furthermore, administration procedures that protect the security of the test help to maintain the meaning and integrity of the score scale for all examinees.

IMPORTANCE OF TEST ADMINISTRATION

Consistency

Standardized tests are designed to be administered under consistent procedures so that the test-taking experience is as similar as possible across examinees. This similar experience increases the fairness of the test as well as making examinees' scores more directly comparable. Typical guidelines related to the test administration locations state that all the sites should be comfortable, and should have good lighting, ventilation, and handicap accessibility. Interruptions and distractions, such as excessive noise, should be prevented. The time limits that have been established should be adhered to for all test administrations. The test should be administered by trained proctors who maintain a positive atmosphere and who carefully follow the administration procedures that have been developed.

Test Security

Test security consists of methods designed to prevent cheating, as well as to protect the test items and content from being exposed to future test-takers. Test administration procedures related to test security may begin as early as the registration procedures. Many exam programs restrict examinees from registering for a test unless they meet certain eligibility criteria. When examinees arrive at the test site, additional provisions for test security include verifying each examinee's identification and restricting materials (such as photographic or communication devices) that an examinee is allowed to bring into the test administration. If the exam program uses multiple, parallel test forms, these may be distributed in a spiraled fashion, in order to prevent one examinee from being



able to copy from another. (Form A is distributed to the first examinee, Form B to the second examinee, Form A to the third examinee, etc.) The test proctors should also remain attentive throughout the test administration to prevent cheating and other security breaches. When testing is complete, all test related materials should be carefully collected from the examinees before they depart.

Summary

The use of orderly, standardized test administration procedures is beneficial to examinees. In particular, administration procedures designed to promote consistent conditions for all examinees increase the exam program's fairness. Test administration procedures related to security protect the integrity of the test items. In both of these cases, the standardization of test administration procedures prevents some examinees from being unfairly advantaged over other examinees.

