

Position on Un-proctored Internet Testing (UIT) for Cognitive Ability Tests

Effective April 24, 2006

Standard Policy:

There are several issues associated with un-proctored Internet testing in employment settings, particularly with respect to cognitive ability tests (e.g., cheating, violation of copyright by printing item content, etc.). A recent article that explores the pros and cons of un-proctored Internet testing is "Un-proctored Internet Testing (UIT) in Employment Settings" by Tippins et al (*Personnel Psychology*, 2006, 59, 189-225).

Harcourt recognizes that there is a desire for un-proctored, online assessment to improve the recruiting/hiring process with respect to time and cost. Therefore, Harcourt is working on delivery systems and process improvements that better accommodate these needs without jeopardizing test results, compromising intellectual property, or restricting the options available to our customers. **In the near term, Harcourt will continue to support and enforce proctored cognitive ability assessment.** However, Harcourt is willing to work with individual clients to determine appropriate, situation-specific controlled-environment processes that meet both the client and Harcourt's needs and standards.

Future efforts will focus on establishing mechanisms to reduce the potentially negative consequences of un-proctored Internet testing on assessment results.

These efforts may include, but are not limited to:

- Rotating items using an item bank approach.
- Periodically changing order of presenting items and response options.
- Encouraging customers (test users) to verify results of UIT by conducting appropriate follow-up assessments (e.g., using a two-step testing approach in which candidates that pass the first UIT step would be required to undergo a second but shorter/quicker cognitive ability testing in a proctored environment).
- Creating short assessments to be used in a proctored follow-up test sessions mentioned above.
- Creating proctored-only versions of assessments.

Harcourt Assessment's (Harcourt) standard policy, which applies to all assessment administration not covered separately by a client or situation-specific policy, is to disallow un-proctored test sessions for all Harcourt ability-based assessments. Having a proctored environment ensures confirmation of the identity of candidates, more control over security of the test information, and more control over distractions and noise in the testing situation.