

The International Group of Protection & Indemnity Clubs' P&I Qualifications are Accessible Worldwide Using Robust Online Proctoring Exam Delivery and Randomised Exam Papers

IGP&I

"We are very happy working with TestReach. Our TestReach project managers learned about the specific nature of the protection and indemnity industry and understood the unique challenges this presented. The company have always been able to accommodate our requirements. Using TestReach has massively increased the scale at which we can offer our qualification worldwide and, as a result, demand continues to grow. Our candidates have responded positively to the online delivery of the exams, they are happy to have the flexibility to sit their exams at a place and time that suits them, and welcome having results feedback delivered immediately on submission of the exam."

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Background

The International Group of Protection and Indemnity Clubs' P&I Qualification programme (P&IQ) provides targeted high-quality training in all aspects of protection and indemnity (P&I) insurance for the world's maritime industry. This is a rigorous programme of education through which those working in the protection and indemnity industry can gain invaluable knowledge. The P&IQ is recognised as a unique and challenging professional qualification.

First launched in 2010 the P&I Qualification was available only to the International Group of P&I Club staff. Examinations were completed on paper in local club offices, with an in-person invigilator. In response to its success and a growing demand from those outside the clubs the decision was taken to open the programme up to external candidates, initially to the network of club correspondents located in ports all around the world and ultimately to anyone wishing to take part. In order to achieve this, the International Group needed to find a flexible and rich system of authoring, and a convenient method of delivering the exams to a worldwide audience, without compromising the secure, rigorous and robust testing mechanism already in place.

Solution

Initially the International Group used TestReach for authoring questions for computer-based delivery at third-party test centres. However, it became apparent that this did not fulfill the criteria of meeting the needs of a global audience. Most test centres were located in city centres, not in coastal ports. This required some candidates to travel long distances to take their exam, and as many were self-employed, they wanted to limit the time spent away from their normal place of business.

The International Group therefore chose to use TestReach for the end-to-end examination process, including exam authoring, exam delivery, marking, reports and candidate feedback. The TestReach solution incorporated a professional online proctoring

(remote invigilation) service as part of the assessment application, so that a secure, exam hall experience could be re-created online. In this process, a trained TestReach invigilator checks the candidate's ID and environment, then monitors the candidates in real-time for the duration of the exam using audio, video and remote screen-share. For the International Group, this meant that the exam could be accessible to candidates at any location.

Results

The International Group's primary concerns when moving to remote invigilation were to maintain the rigour of the qualification and security - any cheating or sharing of content could not be permitted. With TestReach, the ability to set clear exam protocols coupled with the provision of real-time invigilation and very close monitoring of individual candidates maintained security. TestReach met all requirements for the International Group, who welcomed the collaborative question authoring platform, the range of question types and the flexibility to run invigilated exams worldwide. Other very useful features included detailed question reports, automated candidate feedback and the facility to generate randomised papers.

Numerous question types are used, ranging from the standard multiple choice, multiple response and drag & drop formats, to more sophisticated formats including the TestReach interactive canvas. This canvas is used for the gold-standard diploma where candidates have to write an essay and require online access to case study resources. Using the sophisticated functionality within TestReach, the questions for each exam are picked at random from banks of questions, so no two exams sat at any time by different candidates will be the same. The process allows strict controls to be put in place to ensure that the randomisation process results in every candidate having the same number of questions for each learning objective, and the same level of complexity for each exam, making each exam balanced and fair for every candidate. This also helps to protect question content and increases the longevity of the question banks. Detailed

statistical question reports within TestReach enable the International Group to monitor question efficacy with questions reviewed after each exam session.

TestReach has also facilitated the full automation of results management. As well as receiving their result and a pdf certificate, each candidate receives a link to an individual feedback report, which gives a percentage mark relating to each learning objective within the syllabus. In this way, candidates can see where they have performed well or poorly.

Since the qualification was made more accessible, not only have more International Group correspondents taken part, but demand has continued to grow from other non-members, including brokers, underwriters, lawyers and students. Exams are now available to anyone interested in having a qualification in P&I insurance - they can just register online, study at their own pace and sit their secure exam at a time and place of their choice.

The International Group commented that: "We are very happy working with TestReach. Our TestReach project managers learned about the specific nature of the protection and indemnity industry and understood the unique challenges this presented. The company have always been able to accommodate our requirements. Using TestReach has massively increased the scale at which we can offer our qualification worldwide and, as a result, demand continues to grow. Our candidates have responded positively to the online delivery of the exams, they are happy to have the flexibility to sit their exams at a place and time that suits them, and welcome having results feedback delivered immediately on submission of the exam."

"We continue to ensure that our question types are varied and difficult, we use randomised question selection and make use of the detailed question reports so that the rigour of the qualification is maintained. This rigour was fundamental as our overall aim is to help people be better at the job."