

IN THIS ISSUE

Following the recent live implementation of the new OSCE system for practical assessment examinations, we look at the feedback from examiners regarding the use of tablet technology and the structure required to run a successful online OSCE system. We also look at the latest software releases including the new survey and examination system designed for tablet and on-line use, which will allow you to combine both paper and on-line formats together seamlessly. Other items include details of a new software release for online marking of Examination scripts by Assessors, which has been successfully implemented by the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) in Dublin recently.

New Online OSCE System Wins Praise from NEBDN

Following the first live implementation of the new Trax Online OSCE Examination system on Friday, 5th July in London for the National Examining Board for Dental Nurses, we are pleased to announce that the feedback from examiners was totally positive. Praise for the new system related not only to all aspects of software operation including intuitive ease of use but also to the choice of tablet used regarding both portability and lightness. The NEBDN exam is possibly the largest OSCE carried out in Europe and the new Online option was combined with our standard paper based system.

For the purposes of this OSCE a central location in London was chosen with three circuits timetabled for the day. Prior to commencing the exam and in order to alleviate any delays before the circuits started, the following steps were taken -

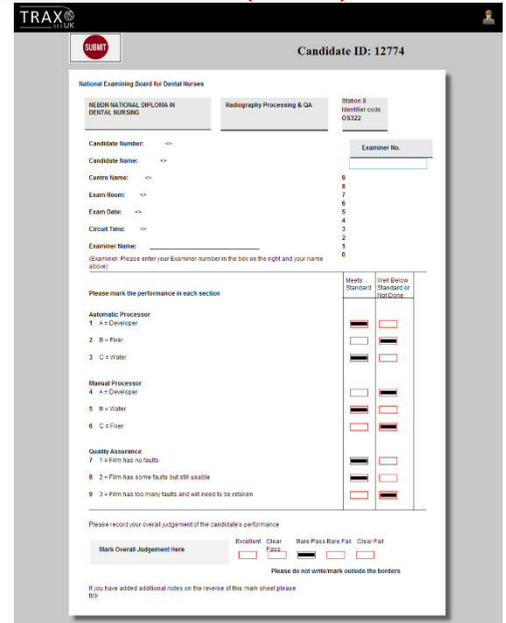
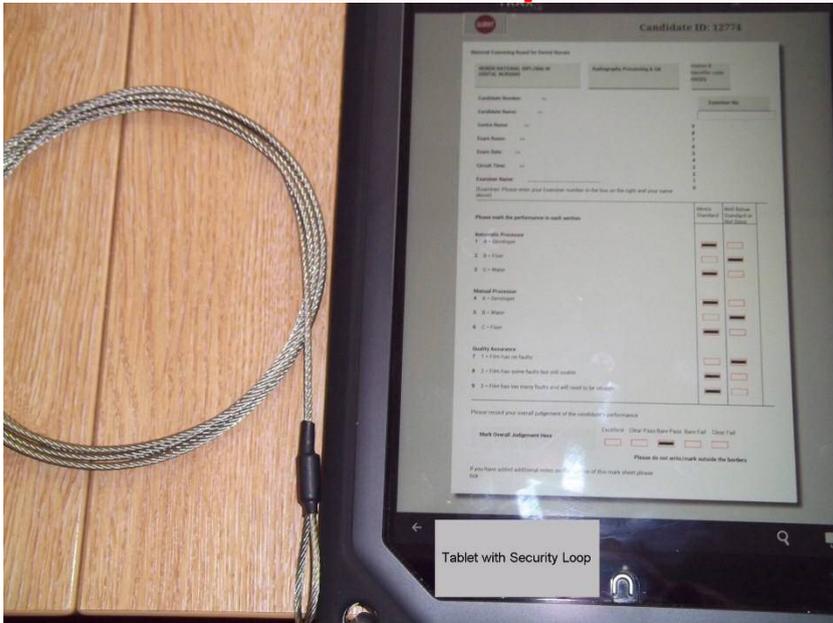
- i. Administration procedures were undertaken, including the import into the main SQL Server database of candidate and examiner details plus OSCE forms for each station on each circuit .
- ii. Upload of all candidate and examiner details for each circuit in station/circuit rotation order and the upload of OSCE forms for each station to the MYSQL web database.
- iii. Assignment of Tablet computers to each OSCE station (each tablet was assigned to a single station throughout the day).
- iv. Brief overview and briefing of examiners half hour prior to start of first circuit including log in of examiners using the specified tablet on a particular station.

During the running of the exam circuits, the following points and issues were noted:-

- a. Each station using the tablet also had a marker completing a manual mark sheet as a back up and double check to ensure that the results were correct. During the subsequent processing, the Online results were checked against the mark sheets and all results were shown to match.
- b. The attempt to make a last minute change of examiner once a circuit had started whereby one examiner would need to sign out and another to sign in. Due to the tight time constraints between each candidate (one minute) it was therefore decided to note down the changeover so that the database could be updated at the end of a circuit rather than interrupt the OSCE flow.
- c. The energy saving option on one particular tablet was set too low at two minutes, which meant the examiner had to log in or keep ensuring the screen was kept active. This was changed before the start of the second circuit and caused no further problem.
- d. Some examiners would like the ability to make comments but it was pointed out that these would need to be typed in, however we are now going to include three combo boxes covering Skills, Knowledge and Attitude, which will allow the administrator to incorporate a series of short predefined user comments.
- e. The Nook HD+ tablets gave outstanding performance and were well liked by examiners as they were light and portable (even though secured to each table by a very light wire strop). Battery life proved excellent with one tablet being run for the whole day without recharging (from 0915 to 1730 and in operation for about six hours).
- f. The examiners found the software very easy to use and comments made included remarks such as 'much easier to use than paper'

Please turn the page to view a typical OSCE station on screen and a picture of one of the Nook tablets used, with its security strop, for the examination. Should you require further details or you are interested in a system demonstration then call or email Colin Woolhouse - colin@traxuk.com

New Online OSCE System Wins Praise from NEBDN (Cont)



Picture of tablet and screenshot of form. System uses the same layout as a paper based form to maintain familiarity for the user.

New Combined On-line/Paper Version of Print & Scan Released

The new combined on-line and paper based version of Print & Scan is now available. It forms part of the new suite of paperless/electronic modules employing on-line technologies to capture the same data as the paper based version and retains the same versatility, simplicity and ease of use. It is designed to be highly portable so that it can be used on any browser running under operating systems such as Android, Windows etc. One of its main functions will be to operate on tablet and hand held type devices as well as conventional desktop/laptop environments.

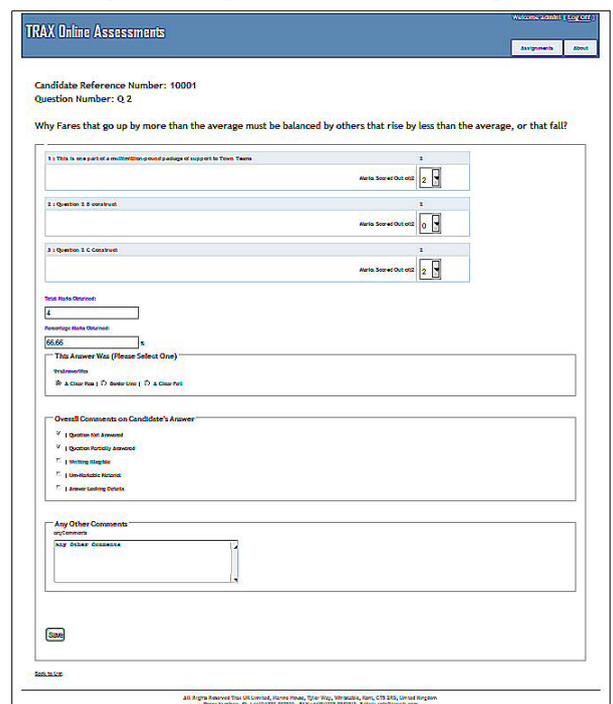
As well as gathering electronic data, users may also print OMR/ICR forms where a combination of both technology types is needed (paper and electronic). As with the original 1999 system, this new version retains its ability to duplicate a paper based form thus allowing different technologies, (OMR/ICR, online etc.) to utilise a common platform for designing, printing, linking and processing surveys, exams, assessments etc. This means that the same form design and SQL Database options are used for both the electronic and paper based options thus avoiding the need to learn new techniques or complicated procedures for each technology type.

NEW ONLINE MARKING SYSTEM INSTALLED FOR ICGP

A new online marking system for examination scripts has been installed at the Irish College of General Practitioners in Dublin. The system uses the ICGP's own Web servers which, for this project, are Windows based as the programming language used is ASP.NET, which was considered to give the flexibility needed. Following a pilot workshop in January and some minor system tweaks, the first major test took place in April, which resulted in positive feedback from administrators, examiners and staff alike.

The basis of the system is to allow online marking of examination scripts, which cannot be machine evaluated and therefore require to be assessed, judged and manually marked. The system can allow two different methods of reviewing scripts to mark, the first by entering scores directly online after reviewing a paper script (the method used by ICGP) or, alternatively, the scripts could be displayed and marked onscreen after scanning the answer paper.

Options for online mark entry include the ability for an assessor to be assigned complete question/answer papers for marking or individual questions only (where each question/answer takes a single page) or even double check marking, whereby two assessors mark the same question/paper independently to ensure marking consistency. The new system has been specifically written for the ICGP but clients wishing to mark or score scripts online can contact Colin Woolhouse on colin@traxuk.com for further information and to discuss their requirements further.



Last Word - Business Solutions News

Please go to our Business Solutions newsletter for all the latest news on the 'Organiser' Sage document management solution at www.traxuk.com or contact Barry Snashall on 01227-793200