



Questionmark Case Study

University of Maryland Medical School Delivers Evaluations and High Stakes Examinations Online

Background

There can be no higher stakes examinations than those delivered by medical schools. The students who pass the courses and graduate hold the lives of patients in their hands. The University of Maryland Medical School uses contemporary technology to achieve both goals: training outstanding medical professionals and doing so to the very highest standards.

In the past the school used paper and pencil tests and evaluations, scoring each using Scantron devices. The problem was that parts of both instruments included hand written comments, particularly the evaluations. As a result departmental administrative assistants had to retype all the evaluative comments from various students, often deciphering the handwriting of these future doctors. It was a very time consuming and, therefore, costly task.

Scenario

The school chose Questionmark™ Perception™ so that students could not only take their tests right on their laptop computers but also complete the mandatory course evaluations electronically.

All of the second year students take their exams using Perception while nearly 85 percent of first year exams employ computerized testing. According to Kevin Brown, Maryland's director of instructional technology, the medical school's instructors love the fact that they can obtain real time statistics as the students are completing the exam.

"They can start looking for trends almost immediately to identify any bad questions," Brown said. "As we develop our question bank, some of the questions are brand new and we need to see how they perform."

In addition, instructors and the office of medical education staff are able to review these stats while half of the class is still taking the exam. If the instructional team identifies a question that most or all the learners get wrong they can notify the remainder of those scheduled to take the exam to disregard that question. Even better, Perception's feedback feature provides instructors with the opportunity to provide feedback on questions that the students get wrong.

The school also regards the course evaluations as a vital element of its effort to maintain high standards. This feedback helps Maryland's medical school improve the curriculum and keep teaching standards high.

After students complete their exams a link takes them directly into the evaluation section of Perception. In addition, the school can conduct periodic evaluations that students can complete at home or through the school's wireless network.

Results

The University of Maryland Medical School discovered that it saves both time and money using Perception. Now, instead of having administrative assistants retype information from evaluation forms, the school has access to the information electronically and immediately. The school's staff can turn the information around much faster than in the past organizing the materials so that a report's data can be applied immediately.

More information

Questionmark Contact:

Email: info@questionmark.com

Phone: (800) 863-3950 • (203) 425-2400

Web: <http://www.questionmark.com/>

