

Identifying Applicant Potential Through Admissions Testing

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Abstract : Objectives: Communicate common test constructs of well-known higher education admissions tests. Discuss influences on admissions test construct definition and design and discuss research on related to factors influencing success in academic study. Discuss how admissions tests can be used to identify relevant talent. Examine how admissions test can be used to facilitate educational mobility and inform selection decisions when the prerequisite curricula is not standardized. Observations: Generally speaking, constructs of admissions tests can be placed along a continuum from curriculum-related knowledge to more general reasoning abilities. For example, subject-specific achievement tests are more closely aligned to a prescribed curriculum, while reasoning tests are typically not associated with a specific curriculum. This session will draw reference from the test-constructs of well-known international higher education admissions tests, such as the UK clinical aptitude test (UKCAT) which is used for medicine and dentistry admissions. Conclusions: The purpose of academic admissions testing is to identify potential students with the prerequisite skills set needed to succeed in the academic environment, but how can the test construct help achieve this goal? Determination of the appropriate test construct for tests used in the admissions selection decisions should be influenced by a number of factors, including the preceding academic curricula, other criteria influencing the admissions decision, and the principal purpose for testing. Attendees of this session will learn the types of aptitudes and knowledge that are assessed higher education admissions tests and will have the opportunity to gain insight into how careful and deliberate consideration of the desired test constructs can aid in identifying potential students with the greatest likelihood of success in medical school.

Keywords : admissions, measuring success, selection, identify skills

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