



IDEAL Consortium

Sharing Medical Student Assessment Banks

By Laws

Article I: NAME

- A. The name of this organization shall be the IDEAL Consortium (International Database for Enhanced Assessments and Learning).

Article II: PURPOSE

- A. The purpose of the Consortium is to:
 1. establish a voluminous high quality test item bank for medical education;
 2. share item banks with medical schools and institutions thereby facilitating the development, maintenance and use of a much larger item bank by members of the Consortium;
 3. facilitate the sharing of item banks by use of the IDEAL software.
 4. improve methods for sharing item banks among member institutions;
 5. encourage communication among medical schools and institutions concerning quality standards in assessment; and
 6. promote research for developing international standards in assessment of medical competence.

Article III: MEMBERSHIP

- A. Membership in this Consortium is open to medical schools and institutions that:
 1. acknowledge conditions set out in the Consortium's Memorandum of Agreement and agree to comply with its Bylaws by the signature of the appropriate institutional authority;
 2. produce and submit to the Consortium their existing item banks plus, on an annual basis, a minimum of 150 (A-type, R-type or Short Answer Questions and/or the equivalent in the form of 30 OSCE stations or Modified Essay Questions) which have been:
 - a. written and administered in English,
 - b. submitted to a quality control process, including:
 - i. peer reviewed and approved for accuracy of content, succinctness in writing style, elimination of item writing errors, and adherence to internationally recognized copyright laws for each submitted item and if applicable the item's embedded object(s) (i.e., pictures, graphs, tables, drawings, videos and/or sound),
 - ii. administered to at least one cohort of examinees,
 - iii. coded according to the IDEAL item classification system;
 3. pay an annual fee based upon a business plan developed and approved by the Consortium Policy Committee (CPC);
 4. maintain the integrity of the Consortium's banks by not sharing and not selling any item in the banks to any individual, school, agency or institution outside the Consortium;
 5. assign staff to serve in the Consortium's standing committees and task forces as described in Article V;
 6. maintain high security measures for restricted questions as defined in Article VI; and
 7. review for relevance, significance and accuracy any item they submit to the bank and which subsequently is not used by any member of the Consortium for a five year period.
- B. Application for membership must:
 1. submit evidence of accreditation by the properly constituted authority in the country or region in which the medical school is located;

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2. submit a statement of the assessment process that is used in the medical school including the decision-making structure and process for generating test items, details of the review processes for assessing the quality of items before and after administration, details of the nature and size of existing test item banks or in the case of new medical schools, details of the procedures to be used in constructing an item bank, and an estimate of the nature and number of test items to be generated each year;
 3. submit a Memorandum of Agreement signed by the institution's responsible administrative head including a signed statement of sponsorship by one of the existing members of the Consortium; and
 4. be approved by a two-thirds majority vote by the CPC.
- C. Provisional membership normally will be accorded within 4 months of the initial application and upon approval of provisional membership by the chair of the CPC, the new member:
1. shall submit payment of its first annual fee; and
 2. will receive copies of the IDEAL support program, the Item Analysis support programs and related manuals.
- D. Full membership will be accorded to a medical school or institution upon submission of its existing item bank, or in the case of a new medical school the submission of 150 test items to the Consortium. Upon approval of full membership, the new member shall receive:
1. copies of the Consortium's banks, normally updated on an annual basis; and
 2. all updated versions of the IDEAL support programs and any revised manuals when applicable.
- E. Membership in the Consortium will be terminated under any of the following conditions, as certified by a two-thirds majority vote of the CPC:
1. notice in writing to the Consortium's chair from the institution's appropriate authority,
 2. non-payment of annual fee, and
 3. failure to meet membership criteria.
- F. Upon termination of membership or withdrawal from the Consortium:
1. the institution shall:
 - a. destroy all institutional and individual copies of Consortium banks with the exception of items submitted by the institution;
 - b. destroy all institutional and individual copies of the IDEAL programs and its supporting programs and templates;
 - c. destroy all documentation and manuals pertaining to the IDEAL system and Consortium banks;
 - d. submit written notice from the appropriate institutional authority to the chair of the CPC attesting to the destruction of all materials as noted in clauses F.1.a to F.1.c; and
 2. the Consortium shall, at its own discretion, determine the continued use of items submitted by the institution prior to the time of withdrawal or termination.

Article IV: ASSOCIATE AND SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP

- A. Associate membership is open to medical schools and institutions that wish to participate in the Consortium with reference to the development and use of only the non-restricted item bank. Application requirements, procedures for admission, obligation and benefits, and termination conditions for associate members are the same as for full members except:
1. the annual fee will be less (determined by the Consortium Policy Committee);
 2. the school's annual contribution to the non-restricted item bank is a minimum of 100 items; and
 3. the Consortium's contributions to the associate member will exclude the restricted item bank.
- B. Special membership is open for up to four medical schools from developing countries. Application requirements, procedures for admission, obligations and benefits, and termination conditions for special members are the same as full members except:
1. annual fee is US\$2,000;
 2. annual contributions are 50 items per year;
 3. registration fee for IDEAL sponsored workshops is waived;
 4. special membership is normally limited to 4 years after which the school must become a full member or withdraw from IDEAL.

Article V: COMMITTEES

- A. There shall be certain standing committees, whereas task groups may be established as necessary to carry out explicit and time limited objectives of the Consortium.
- B. Standing committees shall include a (an):
1. Consortium Policy Committee (CPC), whose
 - a. members are Deans, institutional heads or their designates from the schools or institutions that are members of the Consortium;
 - b. mandate is to:
 - i. develop, revise and endorse Bylaws, policies and procedures,
 - ii. approve additional Consortium members,
 - iii. resolve disputes,
 - iv. develop, review and approve business plans and fees,
 - v. organize and facilitate activities that address the purposes of the Consortium, and
 - vi. meet annually and provide minutes to Consortium members;
 - c. chair and vice-chair are elected by a two-thirds majority vote for at least a two-year term with duties to:
 - i. maintain effective communication within and among members,
 - ii. produce a financial statement of the Consortium at each annual meeting,

- iii. organize and manage annual meetings of the Consortium, and
 - iv. facilitate uploading and downloading of all Consortium banks;
 - 2. Item Bank Administrators' (IBA) Committee, whose
 - a. members are item bank administrators that have undergone training in the IDEAL system and who represent member institutions of the Consortium;
 - b. mandate is to:
 - i. administer copies of the Consortium's banks at their institutions,
 - ii. prepare and upload up-to-date institutional banks to the Consortium's banks, normally on an annual basis,
 - iii. review and recommend improvements to the IDEAL system, and
 - iv. implement approved changes to IDEAL;
 - 3. Advisory Board, whose
 - a. members are recommended by the CPC;
 - b. mandate is to:
 - i. advise the chair and vice chair in relation to managing the affairs of the Consortium, and
 - ii. advise the CPC on matters of policy and procedures, including business plans.
- C. The CPC may create, as needed, administrative positions to facilitate the operation of IDEAL.
 - 1. Associated duties will be delineated and approved by CPC;
 - 2. Appointees will report to the CPC Chair and/or Vice-Chair.

Article VI: ITEM BANKS

- A. The Consortium will maintain master item banks, namely:
 - 1. a restricted (secure) item bank in which
 - a. items are not displayed to examinees other than during test administration, with the exception of items or tests being formally challenged or reviewed in a supervised manner with examinees unable to record or make copies of the items;
 - b. use of the items remains restricted until such time the submitting institution agrees that their use can be changed to non-restricted;
 - 2. a non-restricted (non-secure) item bank in which items may be used for any purpose within the institution; and
 - 3. for each of the restricted and non-restricted Consortium banks, copies may exist at each member institution in the forms of:
 - a. one master and one institutional working copy of the Consortium's restricted item bank, but with the possible additional option as noted in VI.A.4. below.
 - b. one master and one or more institutional working copies of the Consortium's non-restricted item bank.
 - 4. In the event that an assessment or assessments using items from the secure bank are carried out by individual Departments rather than institutions, the individual Department shall be able to keep a single folder of questions, but not the master or the institutional copy of the secure item bank, within the Department, provided (a) all questions in the folder relate only to the individual Department's discipline, (b) the Department adheres to the necessary security issues that are in accordance with the institution's licensing authority and (c) only one folder of questions is kept in a secure location within the jurisdiction of the Department.
- B. The Consortium's item banks may include items with:
 - 1. formats that are:
 - a. best one of "n" options,
 - b. extended matching,
 - c. best "n" of "N" options,
 - d. key features,
 - e. short answer questions,
 - f. modified essay questions,
 - g. OSCE stations;
 - 2. components that include a (an):
 - a. clinical vignette,
 - b. embedded object(s), i.e., pictures, graphs, tables, drawings, videos and/or sound,
 - c. question(s),
 - d. options,
 - e. correct answer(s) or model answer(s),
 - f. feedback, and
 - g. objective(s).
- C. Items submitted to and held in the Consortium's banks must adhere to the following copyright policies:
 - 1. copyright of an item, and if applicable the item's embedded object(s), is retained by the institution and its employee(s) that authored and composed the item and its embedded object(s);
 - 2. the authoring institution and its employee(s) grant each member of the Consortium a license to use items and embedded object(s) to which they hold copyright;
 - 3. the institution and its employee(s) that composed an item and/or its embedded object(s) grant each Consortium member a licence to modify the item and/or its embedded object(s) under the following terms and conditions:

- a. the original institution and its employees shall retain sole authorship of a modified item, and if applicable the item's embedded object(s), provided the modification has not altered the essence of the item's question and/or answer
 - b. if the modification of an item and/or its embedded object(s) alters the essence of the item's question and/or answer, the modified item will be classified as authored by those making the modification in addition to the original authoring institution and its employees;
 - c. if more than one institution makes alterations to the same item and/or embedded object(s), CPC and/or the IBA committee may determine by a two-thirds majority vote to delete one or more of the modified versions in the relevant master Consortium bank;
 - d. a member may retain in its respective institutional bank any modified item that is deleted in the master Consortium banks, subject to conditions noted in Articles III.F and VI.A.
- D. The Consortium and each of its member institutions and all employees of these institutions
- 1. take no responsibility for the correctness of an item in any of the Consortium's banks; and
 - 2. will not be held accountable for, and will be held free from any indemnity that might result from, the use of any item in any of the Consortium's banks.
- E. The Consortium will review regularly the content of the restricted and non-restricted item banks and the total number of item types within these banks, the purpose of which includes:
- 1. maintaining the accuracy, relevance and usefulness of all items in the Consortium's banks;
 - 2. determining if
 - a. the two banks can be merged into a single non-restricted bank at such time when security issues become irrelevant given the size of the combined banks; or
 - b. specific item type or types can be placed in a single non-restricted bank given the large number of items of a particular type or types.

Article VII: IDEAL SOFTWARE

- A. No member of the Consortium shall sell to or share with non-members the IDEAL software or its supporting programs and templates.
- B. The Consortium, normally on an annual basis, will review the most appropriate data management and delivery platforms and mechanisms for achieving the goals of the Consortium.

Article VII: MEETINGS

- A. There shall be an annual meeting of the Consortium Policy Committee (CPC), adhering to the following procedures:
 - 1. meetings may be conducted in person or by telecommunication;
 - 2. quorum requires at least two-thirds of the members in attendance (either in-person or via telecommunication);
 - 3. items for agenda and proposed new policies and procedures are submitted to the chair at least eight weeks in advance of scheduled annual meetings;
 - 4. agenda and related documentation are distributed to all members at least four weeks in advance of scheduled annual meetings;
 - 5. absentees from annual meetings may appoint the chair to act as a proxy for purposes of submitting absentee ballots;
 - 6. chair normally will not vote, except to break ties and cast proxy votes;
 - 7. institution in which the chair of CPC is employed may have an additional representative attend CPC meetings for purposes of casting votes; and
 - 8. vote with two-thirds majority will be required to enact each new Bylaw.
- B. There shall also be additional meetings and workshops held in conjunction with international conferences.

Article IX: AMENDMENTS

- A. Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote by members of the CPC.
- B. Proposed amendments
 - 1. may be initiated in writing by the chair or any member of CPC; and
 - 2. can be considered at any time, with votes cast in person or by an electronic ballot.

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