Case Study

Transforming healthcare assessment with Surpass and the next-generation Assessment Center

This case study explores how PAEA selected Surpass Assessment to deliver assessments for their physician assistant candidates with a new Assessment Center designed to enhance the exam experience for students and faculty.

Discover how Surpass is the perfect choice for medical schools looking to deliver tests securely anywhere in the world.

About PAEA

PAEA is the only national organization representing PA educational programs in the United States. Currently, all accredited programs in the country are members of the Association. PAEA provides services for faculty at its member programs, as well as to applicants, students, and other stakeholders.

48 US STATES REACHED

~17,000 STUDENTS per year

~100,000 EXAMS DELIVERED per year

Organisation type	Educational program / healthcare
Number of US states reached	48
Number of students per year	Approximately 17,000
Number of examinations delivered each year	Approximately 100,000

Aims and challenges

PAEA works to ensure quality PA education through the development and distribution of educational services and products specifically geared toward meeting the emerging needs of PA programs, the PA profession, and the healthcare industry.

In order to enhance the exam experience for students and faculty, PAEA needed to create a new online Assessment Center, and Surpass were well-placed to provide this.

"We needed to provide a simple and intuitive user experience for educators and students, so that exams could be securely administered within educational institutions, and on a diverse set of student devices without technical complexity."

Emily Yunker, Director, Assessment and Security Officer, PAEA

The method

Surpass worked with PAEA to deliver technology for the creation, delivery, marking and administration of exams, developing a dedicated hub to support PAEA exams.

In addition to End of Rotation and End of Curriculum exams, Surpass worked with PAEA to deliver the PACKRAT (Physician Assistant Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Tool) - an objective, comprehensive self-assessment tool for student and curricular evaluation.

Surpass had the flexibility to securely deliver high-stakes exams like the In Training Exams (ITEs) in uncontrolled environments such as educational institutions, homes or hospitals – perfect for PAEA's requirements.

PAEA's new online Assessment Center comprised three elements:

- Assessment Shop – to order exams, generate a quote and view order history
- Assessment Hub – To add / update student information, schedule exams, review score reports and download data
- Exam Delivery Platform – a modernized exam admin platform, to deliver the assessments

The solution

Surpass provided PAEA with their market-leading technology for the creation, delivery, marking and administration of exams, developing a dedicated hub to support the scheduling of PAEA exams, integrated with third-party software for exam ordering.

Exam Delivery Platform
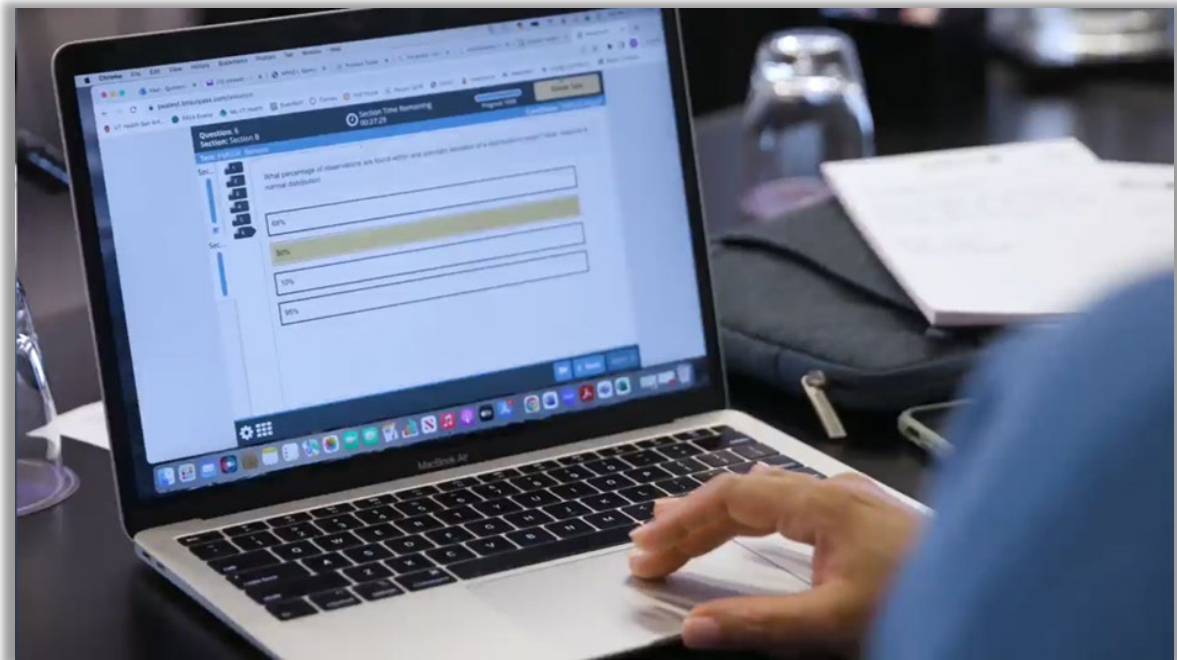
PAEA's system integrated with the standard Surpass Exam Delivery Platform by providing an intuitive interface to transform the exam experience for students and faculty and offer modernized assessment features, allowing for flexibility whilst preserving the validity and security of exams. It also allowed for ease of test publication when updates are needed.

> *"It's user-friendly, there's a lot of features that you're comfortable with… What I noticed was the ease of scheduling and the ease of setting time accommodations for all the different diverse students that we have."*
>
> **Michelle McWeeney, PhD, PA-C, Seton Hall University**

The next-generation Assessment Hub
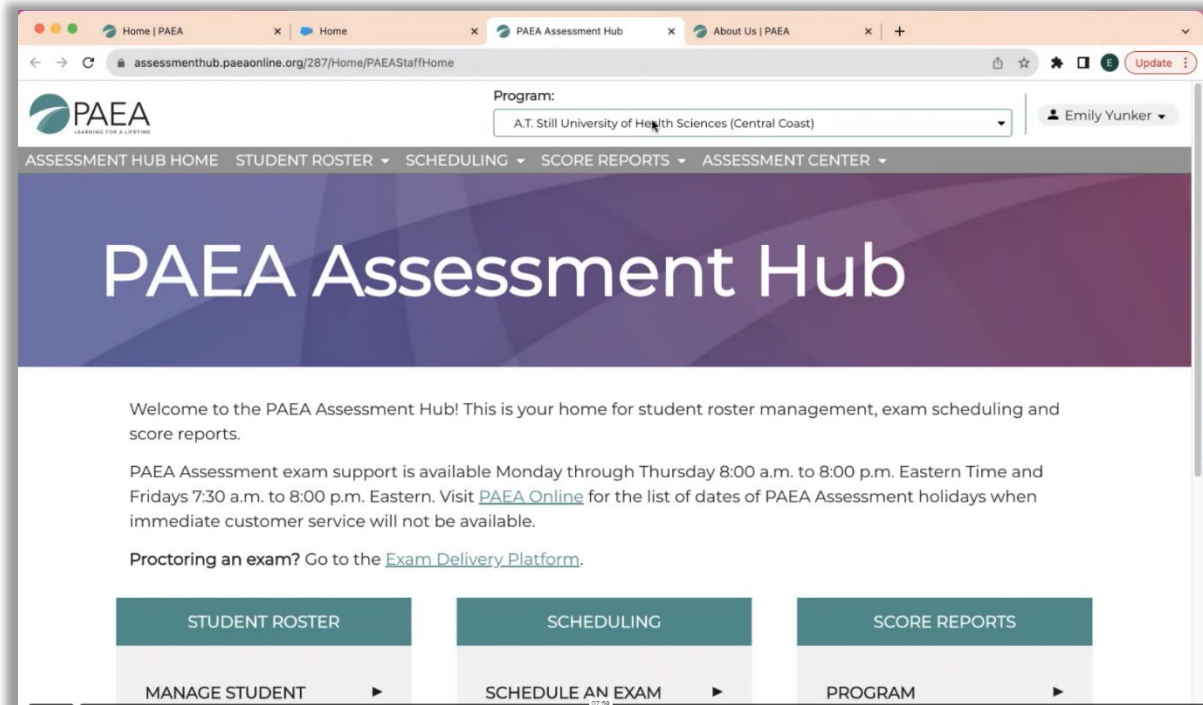
The Assessment Hub provided a centralized location for managing candidate information, scheduling exams, and easy-to-use score reports that best served PAEA's members. It integrated seamlessly with PAEA's e-commerce and membership database and the Surpass Exam Delivery Platform through a single sign-on process.

The hub also provided candidate results and reporting, alongside statistical data and score reports.

The exam scheduling screen

The exam scheduling functionality allowed PAEA member programs to schedule exam events on behalf of their students, allowing for the selection of a variety of delivery types, time-based accommodations, and flexibility in time zones while students were on clinical rotation across the country.

The program performance reports interface

PAEA's exams are part of programs' curricula, and the objectives of each exam program differed. Thus, they created a report-based scoring system that provided programs with the aggregate and comparative data needed to make informed decisions on the progression of their students and meet institutional and national standards, to complement individual results.

Results

As a result of this project, PAEA were able to deliver a Next-Generation assessment center and transformed the exam experience for students and faculty by offering modernized assessments.

To see glimpses of the Assessment Center for yourself, visit the PAEA website Assessment Center Resources | PAEA (paeaonline.org)

Learn more and get in touch at www.surpass.com