

International Exam Expansion Credentialing Basic Questions Checklist

When intending to implement an international credential, credentialing professionals will need to consider many variables in the interest of formulating the best strategy for implementation. The questions below provide simple considerations and represent different variables in place prior to, during, and post-implementation of an international credential, as well as available resources that may provide additional context and thought around a given question.

Simple Questions to Ask Prior to the Implementation of International Credentialing

1. How do you define “going global” for your organization as there are varied meanings and effects of globalization?
2. What are the reasons your organization wishes to expand globally? [Brand recognition/expansion, Mobility of professionals (Emigration or immigration), US or local credential (Content development / Competency definition)]
3. How do we communicate how essential the plan to take a test internationally is to the organization?
4. Has your organization gauged its readiness or made personal contact with the new market, armed with culture-specific information and courtesies, professionalism, and consistency? The goal should be to enter a different culture, adapt to it and make it your own.
5. Is there a strong market demand for your certification program in the desired international country?
6. Does the local community wish to share revenue and expenses?
7. Is localization key to your global program success?
8. What business aspects should be considered when analyzing the business case around translation /adaptation of exams?
9. Is your organization willing to forgo consistency, standardization, policies, rules and control in return for access and possible lower examination costs and revenue?
10. What are the basic components of eligibility, and are there different considerations for international populations?
 - For more context and information on this question, view the Test Adaptation interview with Joy Matthews-Lopez, PhD, President at JML Measurement and Testing Services.
11. What impacts can starting a test translation/localization have on the organization?
12. What factors would most likely drive an organization to consider translation / adaptation of their exams?

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- For more context and information on this question, access the Test Adaptation interview with Stephen G. Sireci, Ph.D., Distinguished Professor and Director, Center for Educational Assessment at the University of Massachusetts Amherst College of Education.
13. What is the difference between test translation, test localization, and test adaptation? And why do organizations need to understand the difference before they decide to take their test internationally?
 14. How can different expansion business models help (or hinder) with the use of translated / adapted exams?
 15. What are some useful data sources to support decision making?
 16. What is your ability to invest in international program needs to meet product revenue objectives?
 17. Can you employ your existing application processes and procedures (prerequisites)?
 - For more context and information on this question, view the Test Adaptation interview with Joy Matthews-Lopez, PhD, President at JML Measurement and Testing Services.
 18. Can you use existing forms or do you need to customize exam content?
 - For more context and information on this question, view the Test Adaptation interview with Joy Matthews-Lopez, PhD, President at JML Measurement and Testing Services.
 19. How can we be most proactive in communicating clear and concise messaging to candidates, test-users, and stakeholders?
 - For more context and information on this question, view the Test Adaptation interview with Joy Matthews-Lopez, PhD, President at JML Measurement and Testing Services.
 20. What are the cost considerations when taking your exams internationally? How do you recommend keeping the process affordable and efficient?
 21. Will you want to offer your North American credential in another country or offer a different exam that is customized to a domestic credential?
 22. What distance challenges might you encounter (e.g., international travel/expense, culture differences, local vs. US, officials, education, local regulatory group)?
 23. What extra costs can a program expect when supporting translated/adapted exams? (Translations Items, candidate handbook, score reports, publicly available information; Bilingual SMEs; Staff to handle phone calls, written responses, etc.; additional analyses; robust item banking tool)
 - For more context and information on this question, view the Test Adaptation interview with Joy Matthews-Lopez, PhD, President at JML Measurement and Testing Services.
 24. What resources (human/otherwise) are needed for successful test translation/adaptation?

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25. How do we offer templates that can support a variety of workflows?
26. What documents should be kept at test centers? Is a procedural manual developed to keep at test centers for proctors?
27. How often should organizations update their NDAs?
28. How do you structure relevant policies regarding eligibility without cultural bias?
29. What policies can be helpful here in International programs? What Item management policies are effective in controlling item drift and exposure effects?
30. What considerations have been made regarding: a) examination registration, scheduling, b) payment/currency, administration and test center networks, c) test security, IP and copyright protection, d) data flow, and e) stakeholder needs?
 - For more context and information on this question, access the Test Adaptation interview with Karen Sturges-Vera, M.A., Associate Director of Psychometric Services at Professional Testing Corporation.
31. What factors need to be in place before starting a translation/localization program?
32. What information is most important to message regarding test security?
33. How much information are we required to release with examinees? With stakeholders? With legal counsel?
34. Would you do "business," in American dollars or local currency?
35. How is fairness defined internationally?
 - For more context and information on this question, access the Test Adaptation interview with Karen Sturges-Vera, M.A., Associate Director of Psychometric Services at Professional Testing Corporation.
36. How can we ensure that IP rights are protected before performing a test adaptation?
37. How critical is copyright protection in enforcing exam security? How useful in international settings? Is enforcement cost prohibitive?
38. Does your organization have an unwavering commitment to maintaining IP protection consistent with US offering?
39. Who controls the organizational intellectual property in a foreign country?
40. What should be messaged regarding test adaptation?
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41. What key stakeholder groups should organizations be aware of when considering taking their exam internationally? How do you know what the standards are? How do you learn what the educational standards are?
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42. Are any scoring changes needed in the multilingual/multicultural testing?
43. How much does localization in other aspects of the testing program (applications, candidate notifications, customer support, marketing, web-based support, etc.) impact the fairness / outcome of the testing?
- For more context and information on this question, access the Test Adaptation interview with Sue Orchard, President & CEO at Comms Multilingual Ltd.
44. Is English proficiency necessary for international testing? If so, what is the most effective way to implement and/or are there alternatives?
45. What behaviors are prohibited or permitted??
46. Who needs to be involved in form assembly decisions and how much visibility to the form is required?
47. What documents are critical in communicating about test security? (e.g., NDAs, documents tagged Public, Private, Info on Program Staff, Candidates, Stakeholders)
48. What are the major threats associated with test adaptation?
49. Can exams be delivered in a secured environment?
50. How does the choice between brick & mortar facilities and on-line proctoring impact your security design?
51. What roles are critical in managing a test security plan?
52. How can test adaptation/translation technical requirements impact the test development process? (e.g., choice of tools involved in the review process, etc.)
53. What psychometric goals are most critical when comparing source and target languages?
Comparable, Interpretable, Reliable, Demonstrably Fair, Defensible
54. Can you deliver the exams in English?
- For more context and information on this question, view the Test Adaptation interview with Joy Matthews-Lopez, PhD, President at JML Measurement and Testing Services.
55. Will you use the same cut point/cut score across language forms?
56. Does a translated or adapted test go through a pilot stage before its operational use?

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57. Are you prepared for different exam performances/pass rates?
58. What are best practices or methods to best determine equivalencies/comparability?
59. What are good practices for developing translated exams? Cultural influencers? Systems & Tools?
60. What psychometric issues impact test adaptation?
61. What translation designs are most appropriate (common/good practice/etc.)?
- For more context and information on this question, view the Test Adaptation interview with Joy Matthews-Lopez, PhD, President at JML Measurement and Testing Services.
62. How do we decide on test translation, localization, or adaptation?
63. How important is training for test administrators? (Will there be a need for Language training, for example? Training may need to be localized and relevant.)
- For more context and information on this question, view the Test Adaptation interview with Joy Matthews-Lopez, PhD, President at JML Measurement and Testing Services.
64. Does the culture of the host organization allow for global growth?
65. Does the local culture accept multiple-choice questions?
- For more context and information on this question, access the Test Adaptation interview with Karen Sturges-Vera, M.A., Associate Director of Psychometric Services at Professional Testing Corporation.
66. Has your organization considered a Cultural Expert to advise on complex business and legal regulations in the chosen international country? (This individual can serve as an invaluable partner and be critical in guiding you through both the expansion anplanning-+++++++ the execution of your plan.)
67. Will seat time be the same for all examinees?
68. What are the key process steps in successful test translation/adaptation?
69. What guidelines around item bank size and makeup are effective in recovering from a security breach particular to the context of an international credential with the understanding that item bank size, makeup, and security breaches have added costs associated with each item versus a localized test?
- For more context and information on this question, access the Test Adaptation interview with Sue Orchard, President & CEO at Comms Multilingual Ltd.
70. How does a program ensure equivalence between adapted exams?

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Simple Questions to Ask During Implementation of International Credentialing

1. What policies can be helpful here in International programs? What retake and form management policies are effective in controlling test exposure?
2. What are some best practices for vetting eligibility requirements when working with applicants from different countries and different educational systems?
3. How do you best communicate eligibility requirements to candidates internationally?
4. How do we manage candidate correspondence? e.g. Score distribution/notices/other functions.
5. Standard practices for testing: What security measures are most effective at test centers?
6. Are exam security breaches covered under liability insurance policy?
7. Where are the best places to post important security information, and how do we ensure that information is consistent?
8. What is your responsibility to protect the security of your items and of confidential materials?
9. What are the common threats to security during both test development and test administration?
10. Whose responsibility is it to protect the security of test items and confidential materials?
11. What psychometric models are useful for detecting security issues during international administration?

Simple Questions to Ask Post-Implementation of International Credentialing

1. What document practices are most advisable when a program manages adapted versions of an exam?
2. Item analyses: Will IA be performed jointly or separately? Why?
3. What procedures are recommended for handling challenges or appeals of any sanction?
4. What data forensics techniques are effective in detecting security issues when dealing in an international context?
5. What level of evidence is required before taking action in an international context?