

The IPPT is a collaborative partnership involving graduate and undergraduate education programs in the health sciences for the purposes of test administration and psychometric research related to *progress testing*.

## Current IPPT members

- School of Medicine, [University of Algarve](#), Faro, Portugal
- Undergraduate Medical Program [University of Botswana](#), Gaborone, Botswana
- Graduate Medical Education Program, [University of Limerick](#), Limerick, Ireland
- Undergraduate Medical Program, [McMaster University](#), Hamilton, Canada
- Physician Assistant Education Program, [McMaster University](#), Hamilton, Canada
- School of Medicine, [University of Western Sydney](#), Penrith, NSW, Australia

**Progress testing** is a method for assessing students' acquisition and retention of knowledge over time.

Using the IPPT's online (web-based) test administration tool, an educational program administers two, three or more tests to its students during each academic year. Each test consists of a large number of A-type (five option) multiple-choice-type questions (items). All examinees, regardless of their level (academic year) in the curriculum see the same items. Examinees are instructed, however, to attempt only those items for which they have some knowledge and thus would not be guessing.

Formal post-test feedback consists of several performance measures that demonstrate..

- a. what the examinee thought he or she knew (the number of attempted items)
- b. what the examinee did know (the number of correct items)
- c. how well the examinee can self-assess (correct items relative to the number attempted)

An examinee's results are displayed along with group means for each level (academic year) in the curriculum. (Students at the same level constitute a peer group. Programs refer to these peer groups as Cohorts or Classes.) The group means enable examinees to see how far they have progressed since entering the program, their current position relative to their peers, and how much further they and their peers may be expected to progress before completing the curriculum.

Additional feedback is provided to illustrate the examinee's progress across all tests completed to date. Here the examinee's score on a single measure (the number of correct items as a percentage of all items on the test) is standardized, making it relative to the examinee's peer group mean). The resultant z-scores can be compared across multiple test administrations. This approach removes, in effect, variation in results due to differences across administrations in test difficulty.

Each program determines how it will define and respond to poor performance on any single test or across several tests. The weight formally assigned to PPI results varies widely across IPPT partners. Some provide advice that the student is free to ignore. Others require a student who is failing to progress satisfactorily to commit to a formal remediation effort, the results of which are subject to review.

Each program decides who, in addition to the student, will be informed of the student's performance on any one test or the student's progress across multiple tests. Some programs forward the student's PPI results to that student's faculty advisor. Some programs ignore PPI results when formally assessing a student for promotion to the next level in the curriculum. Other programs take formal notice of poor performance on the PPI.

Each program decides whether to include PPI results on the student's official transcript and the program's Dean's letter or its equivalent.

**If you are an educator interested in learning more about progress testing or the IPPT, please contact one of the following:**

- Dr. Geoff Norman, IPPT Director, Former Assistant Dean PERD, at [norman@mcmaster.ca](mailto:norman@mcmaster.ca)
- Molly Pottruff, IPPT Administrator, at [IPPT\\_Admin@mcmaster.ca](mailto:IPPT_Admin@mcmaster.ca)

**If you are a Test Manager for an IPPT partner..**

- you will find FAQs and resources on the [Help for Test Managers](#) page.

**If you are responsible for supervising a sitting of an IPPT-administered test (a test Session Supervisor)..**

- you will find FAQs and resources on the [Help for Test-Session Supervisors](#) page.

**If you are a student in an IPPT-member program and..**

- you have a question about progress testing generally or about your Performance or Zone Report..
  - you will find explanations, FAQs and sample reports on the [Help for Students](#) page.
- you are looking for a link to your Program's PPI testing website..

- use the link to your educational program (above) to return to your program's home page; from there follow the links to your program's IPPT (or PPI) site; or..
- ask your program's PPI Test Manager or Program Administrator for the link to your program's IPPT (or PPI) site.

**Administrative support and online testing facilities for the IPPT are provided by..**

- [The Program for Educational Research and Development](http://www.fhs.mcmaster.ca/perd) (PERD), Faculty of Health Sciences, McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada (<http://www.fhs.mcmaster.ca/perd>)  
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