

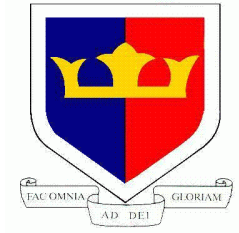
embracing **virtual exams**

How Mercer | Mettl
enabled London's Kingsdale
Foundation School to conduct
online entrance exams for
children in a secure and stress-
free virtual environment



welcome to brighter

About Kingsdale Foundation School



Kingsdale Foundation School is one of the most sought-after secondary schools in London. Founded in 1958, Kingsdale is celebrated for its commitment to innovative strategies that drive learning excellence. The school advocates a diverse and accepting community and teaches its students the same values.

It offers an innovative and creative curriculum and promotes a strong moral and spiritual culture. Dedicated to the betterment of students, the school constantly maintains a welcoming environment for young minds. A high-achieving school, it also offers scholarships in music, sports, mathematics and the arts. These outside-the-lessons opportunities ensure the all-around educational and personal growth of its pupils.

The school has produced notable athletes, writers, performers, and musicians such as James Heartfield, Alex Yee, Catherine Lyons, Andy McNab, Lino Facioli, etc.



Challenges and requirements

Kingsdale Foundation School receives over 3000 applications every year, and hundreds of students simultaneously appear for the entrance tests. However, COVID-19 created significant disruption in all admission-related activities for the school and applicants, leading to the suspension of processes.

There were serious concerns about the future of education, entwined with stakeholders' safety. The school administration understood that it had to commence the admission process based on its established academic schedules. Hence, it decided to pivot toward conducting its examinations in the virtual setting.

The school sought a trustworthy platform to move the entire entrance test process online.



It had precise requirements that the platform needed to fulfill, which included:



Data security

Kingsdale Foundation School narrowed its requirement to a viable online exam platform that would allow applicants to take the entrance test in an anxiety-free and safe environment. Besides, it had to guarantee the test's quality and meet the highest security and compliance standards concerning data privacy.



A child-friendly interface

The students appearing for the entrance exam were in the 10 to over-10-year-old age bracket. Therefore, the school mandated a child-friendly exam platform that was easy to use and augmented with resourceful elements like video tutorials and practice sections.

In addition, evaluating young kids online required additional efforts to convince parents about the platform's security, its uncomplicated use and other features. This meant that the school had to choose a platform that ticked all the right boxes.



Provision to replicate a standardized exam structure

Kingsdale's entrance tests are divided into several sections, a few of which are timed. Also, solving some questions need more detailed processes. Therefore, a solution that replicated those sections in the virtual mode was critical.



Reducing human intervention

It was equally critical to manage the faculty's workflow by relieving them of mundane and burdensome examination-related duties, enabling them to focus on more pressing and rewarding matters. Hence, the school mandated a dynamic and secure end-to-end online examination platform that allowed it to create, administer, supervise, deliver and evaluate its annual entrance exam with ease.



Discovering Mercer | Mettl's offerings



Kingsdale Foundation School scouted for various vendors for its specific requirements and approached Mercer | Mettl for an all-inclusive solution. After several demonstrations and discussions, the school found Mercer | Mettl's EXAMIN as an effective and accommodating option for conducting the exams. A successful pilot run further assured the school of the collaborative partnership, helping it transition toward delivering the online proctored exam.

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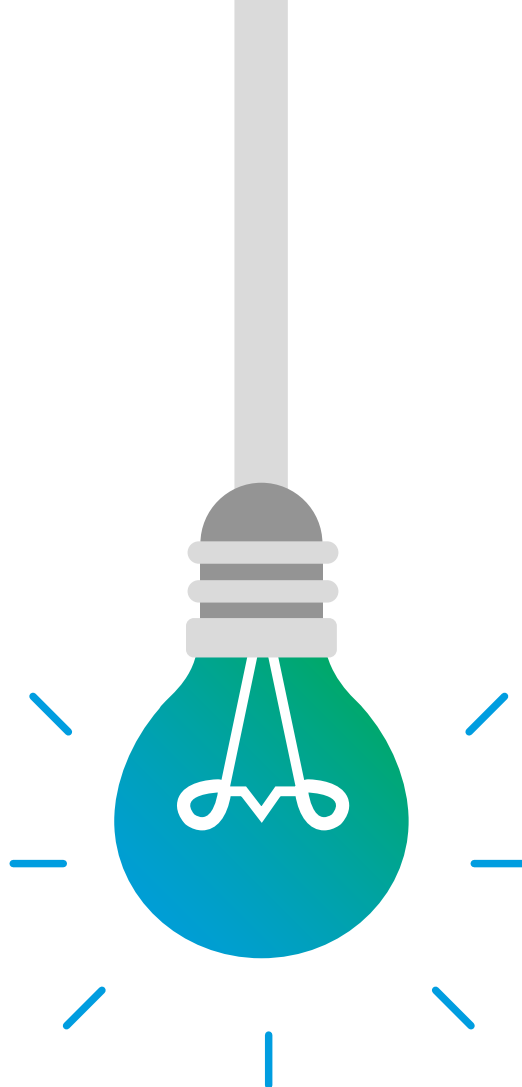
The solution

How Mercer | Mettl's EXAMIN fulfilled Kingsdale's requirements

Mercer | Mettl understood and appreciated Kingsdale's requirements and challenges in fulfilling them. Therefore, it advocated its most viable value proposition- a futuristic online proctoring and examination solution- EXAMIN.

Mercer | Mettl's EXAMIN caters to the entire examination cycle, enabling faculty and administrators to create question papers, schedule exams, invigilate using a mix of AI and human-led proctoring, assign answer sheets to evaluators and reviewers, and finally declare the results. The digital solution does all this without compromising students' exam-taking experience.

Let's take a closer look at all the solutions that Mercer | Mettl's EXAMIN provided:



EU-GDPR compliance

As a public body, Kingsdale Foundation School had to follow EU-GDPR compliance while conducting online exams. Mercer | Mettl's focus on stringent cybersecurity protocols addressed the school's concern regarding data breaches, unauthorized access and privacy at every stage of the examination process. Mercer | Mettl's online exam platform was hosted on EU servers with full GDPR compliance. The platform's validation also included ISO 27001:2013 certification.

Therefore, Kingsdale could assure parents of optimum security at every level. Also, only a few staff members had access to necessary data like recordings, answer sheets and reports.



AI proctoring

Mercer | Mettl enabled Kingsdale to switch to a fully AI-based proctoring during the entrance exams. On the one hand, the innovative technology helped prevent cheating, and on the other hand, it expedited the process, saving significant time. The efficiency of the AI ensured that hundreds of students could take the exam simultaneously, without undue intervention from faculty. Additionally, it helped reduce human errors and prevented administrative hassles.



Robust IT infrastructure

Mercer | Mettl's online exam platform can accommodate a vast range of customizations to match clients' specific requirements. That is how Kingsdale could replicate its standard exam structure digitally.

Moreover, Mercer | Mettl upgraded EXAMIN with:

- A video to explain to students what needed to be done and how to proceed with the test
- A section for students to practice and try out what they were taught
- A timed exam segment to prevent the need to restart the entire test in case of any problems
- Multiple question formats that allowed multiple problem-solving methods
- The provision of a highly intuitive QR scan that allowed students to solve mathematical problems on paper and upload pictures of their answers



Mobile readiness

Mercer | Mettl's EXAMIN is a mobile-friendly platform that works across devices. Therefore, students without access to laptops or desktops could also take their exams without hassles. This feature accentuated the platform's ability to serve Kingsdale's requirement of a child-friendly interface. The overall structure of the exam and the platform was curated in a way that the process was not taxing for children in the specific age group.



Reporting metrics

The platform's instantaneous report generation feature was incredibly efficient at saving significant staff hours, spent otherwise undertaking answer sheet evaluation. Aside from precise evaluation, the reporting tool gave the faculty access to detailed, relevant and accurate data, helping determine applicants' full potential.



24x7 support

Mercer | Mettl's technical backend and customer support teams ensured round-the-clock client and candidate support. The teams hand-held, trained and actively assuaged every online examination-related concern while working round the clock to keep the software up-to-date, compatible and error-free. They also mitigated candidates' concerns throughout the assessment drive.

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Impact

Mercer | Mettl's top-of-the-line offerings addressed numerous bottlenecks in conducting online entrance exams with integrity and ease.

The following pointers sum up the impact of this collaboration:

- 700- 800 students took the test simultaneously, with evaluations taking only a few hours.
- There was a significant reduction in human intervention and a massive improvement in the time saved. Instead of involving multiple staff members at different stages of the entrance exam, one Kingsdale professional could manage the entire process.
- The school could seamlessly transition to the digital mode and maintain continuity in its admissions process amid the COVID-19 disruption.
- Taking the exam from the comfort of their homes helped reduce the anxiety and stress that children usually undergo during regular entrance exams.
- Extensive feedback and reporting for children helped all stakeholders get a broader overview of their aptitudes and make decisions based on detailed insights.



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The way forward

Kingsdale Foundation School has chosen to continue using Mercer | Mettl's online exam platform for annual and mid-year entrance exams. The uncertainty about returning to 'normal' and the ease with which faculty and students could undertake the tests have shaped its decision to continue with the association.



We saved significant time because of the nature of the test. Even the results were immediate, and we wouldn't have been able to share such extensive feedback with test-takers before. We also appreciated that we didn't need to have human proctoring. Overall, we found the platform highly intuitive and extremely easy to use. So, I would really recommend working with Mercer | Mettl.

Oritseetemi Maria Otubu

Admissions and Attendance Officer
Kingsdale Foundation School



About us

At Mercer | Mettl, our mission is to enable organizations to make better people decisions across two key areas: acquisition and development. Since our inception in 2010, we have partnered with more than 4,000 corporates, 31 sector skills councils/government departments and 15+ educational institutions across more than 90 countries.

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