

BCS Urges IT Professionals to Maintain Skills in Economic Downturn



12 December 2008: Keeping skills up to date has never been more important than during this economic downturn. As part of its professionalism initiative and to help IT professionals maintain a competitive edge in an increasingly tough employment market, the British Computer Society (BCS) has signed a three year agreement with Pearson VUE.

The agreement means that candidates for Foundation Certificates in Software Testing (FCSWT), Business Analysis (FCBA), Systems Design (FCSD) and ISO20k, can now take electronic tests via a professional network of over 5000 testing centres.

The innovative online registration system allows candidates greater flexibility when booking and paying for their tests. Candidates can book online, anytime, anywhere via Pearson VUE's web site, or by calling one of the company's three main contact centres and speaking to experienced multi-lingual staff.

The system also makes it extremely easy for candidates to change the time or day of their test at no charge and at short notice. Candidates also receive instant on-screen and follow-up email confirmations of appointment details.

Michiel van der Voort, BCS International Director, says: "This agreement is an important element in the BCS professionalism programme. IT is a demanding profession where skills need to be maintained and never more so during an economic downturn. We believe that the flexibility this system offers IT professionals will allow many professionals the opportunity to broaden their careers and further establish BCS as a major global IT qualifications provider."

Pearson VUE's network of Authorised Test Centres™ offers an extremely high level of exam security and control including an array of biometric technologies to ensure that candidates are identified correctly. The Authorised Test Centres™ all comply with stringent security

measures and the company is examining the possibility for the Authorised Test Centres to have digital signature pads and digital photography equipment to address the industry's demand for increased levels of security.

Suzana Lopes, Vice President EMEA Sales and Marketing for Pearson VUE, comments: "We are proud to be working with the BCS and to be contributing to its work to build IT professionalism. It is our strong network of secure testing centres and innovative technology which enables us to deliver this professional and customer-friendly service on such a large scale."

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The British Computer Society (BCS) is the Chartered industry body for IT professionals, the Chartered Engineering Institution for Information Technology and a Chartered Science Institution. With our rapidly growing membership, BCS is playing an increasingly pivotal role in leading the development and implementation of world class standards for the IT profession through innovative products, services and support.

Through our specific "Professionalism in IT" programme, BCS is leading and building IT professionalism to levels which are currently only seen in more traditional long standing professions such as law, medicine, and accountancy but which will increasingly become the de facto standards for IT professionals.

About Pearson VUE:

Pearson VUE (www.pearsonvue.com) is the global leader in computer-based testing for information technology, academic, government and professional testing programs around the world. Pearson VUE provides a full suite of services from test development to data management, and delivers exams through the world's largest and most secure network of test centers in 162 countries. Pearson VUE is a business of Pearson (NYSE: PSO; LSE: PSON), the international media company, whose businesses include the Financial Times Group, Pearson Education and the Penguin Group.

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