Resources for Remote Proctoring Tools

Guidelines for the use of Remote Proctoring Tools

Background

Remote proctoring allows students to take an assessment at a remote location while ensuring the integrity of the exam. The objectives of remote proctoring tools are first, to verify the identities of the students being assessed, and second, to protect the academic integrity of the assessments.

The University is developing guidelines and processes to support instructors in conducting assessments in the remote teaching environment. When instructors are considering the use of remote-proctored exams in their classes, they should pay attention to the following before making this decision:

- Remote proctoring technology is complex for both instructors and students;
- Careful preparation is required by instructors in the set-up of the exams; and
- Considerable oversight of the remote proctoring tool by instructors is required while the exam is being written.

Therefore it is strongly recommended that instructors limit the number of assessments that will require remote proctoring in their classes this Fall in order to reduce the administrative burden and technical resources required to support remote proctoring. In many cases the use of take-home or alternative assignments may be a better approach to assessment and instructors are encouraged to consult their Faculty/School for resources to support remote assessment of students.

However, remote proctoring may be the best approach to reliably evaluate student learning in the following situations:

- Large classes with a prescribed set of knowledge requirements that must be demonstrated individually;
- Classes in which it is important to protect confidentiality of exam content, e.g. where it is not possible to use open-ended questions or scenario questions, a randomized set of questions, or other alternative approaches to assessment; and
- Classes in which the ability for students to collaborate, or to use outside resources, must be limited in order to fairly evaluate knowledge.

Queen's has completed a privacy and security assessment of two commercial tools and entered into legally binding agreements to provide remote proctoring, Examity and Proctortrack. These are third-party, cloud-based services that enable the completion of

a proctored exam or test from an off-campus location, through onQ or Elentra, using a computer that meets the technical requirements listed on the Exams Office website.

These services provide three types of remote proctoring designed to monitor student behaviour during the writing of exams, to both promote a commitment to academic integrity on the part of the student and also to protect the integrity of the exam by flagging/recording suspicious behaviour that may indicate a departure from academic integrity.

- Live proctoring involves a live proctor who observes and communicates with students through a webcam while they complete their exams. The proctor leads students through an authentication process to verify their identities and view their exam space, and observes and records the students throughout the writing of the exam, including noting any breaks taken.
- Live authentication combined with automated proctoring involves a live proctor who communicates with students through a webcam only during the authentication process to verify their identities and view their exam space. The proctor then exits the exam session and the rest of the session is recorded. The recording is then reviewed by trained auditors.
- Automated proctoring does not involve a live proctor. Students go through the authentication process themselves by enabling screen-sharing and webcam access for the exam, using their webcam to take pictures of themselves and their student card ID to confirm their identity, and scanning their exam space before beginning the exam. The session is recorded and reviewed by trained auditors.

In all cases, the recordings of the students during the exam are reviewed by the proctoring service to flag any behaviours that should be noted and are made available to the instructor after the exam session for investigation.

The following guidelines are provided for instructors who decide to make use of a remote proctoring tool.

Access

1. All remote proctoring of tests and exams must be conducted with tools that are authorized and supported by the University.

2. The Faculty/School will determine if an authorized remote proctoring tool will be made available for a class.

3. If a remote proctoring tool is made available, the instructor will make the final decision whether to use the specific tool.

4. Instructors may not install or use remote proctoring tools on their own. Use of remote proctoring tools must be supervised by the technical support service in the instructor's Faculty or School.

Academic Integrity

5. Remote proctoring tools assist in detecting departures from academic integrity. They do not determine if a departure has occurred. Therefore, instructors must exercise their independent professional judgment in, and assume responsibility for, determining whether a departure from academic integrity has taken place. This will involve a review of both the recording that is flagged by the proctoring service and the student's exam itself, determining whether there is evidence of a gain of advantage within the exam. The decision to begin an investigation should be based on the wholistic evaluation of all evidence in the exam environment and associated materials.

6. Instructors are encouraged to provide clear communication to students regarding departures from academic integrity and the related consequences. The following statement should be included at the beginning of each remote-proctored exam:

   Departures from academic integrity include plagiarism, use of unauthorized materials or services, facilitation, forgery, falsification, unauthorized use of intellectual property, and collaboration, and are antithetical to the development of an academic community at Queen's. Given the seriousness of these matters, actions which contravene the regulation on academic integrity carry sanctions that can range from a warning or the loss of grades on an assignment to the failure of a course to a requirement to withdraw from the University. In the case of online exams, impersonating another student, copying from another student, making information available to another student about the exam questions or possible answers, communicating with another person during an exam or about an exam during the exam window, or accessing unauthorized materials, including smart devices, are actions in contravention of academic integrity.

Communication and Privacy

7. All students must be informed at the start of the course that the instructor will be using a remote proctoring tool. In addition, it is recommended that instructors also address the use of the chosen remote proctoring tool at the outset of the course, whether the proctoring will be live or recorded, and the importance of academic integrity with students.

8. The course syllabus must therefore contain the following statement for students:

   The final exam and some tests/quizzes in this course will use remote proctoring provided by a third-party, cloud-based service that enables the completion of a proctored exam or test from an off-campus location, through onQ or Elentra. This online proctoring solution was chosen as part of the approach to maintaining academic integrity in online assessment. Precise details about how remote proctoring will be used in this course can be found in the "Getting Started with Remote Proctoring" content module in onQ or will be provided by the instructor.

   When writing tests/exams using remote proctoring, you are connecting to the third-party service. Queen's has conducted a privacy and security review of the services in accordance with Ontario's privacy legislation.

   You should also take measures yourself to protect your information by keeping your NetID password and challenge questions private, closing all applications prior to starting an exam/test, and ensuring your device is updated and safeguarded against malware.

   For more information about remote proctoring, see the Student FAQs on the OUR Exams resource page for remote proctoring:
   http://www.queensu.ca/registrar/students/examinations/exams-office-services/remote-proctoring

Academic Accommodations

9. The University recognizes its responsibility to implement academic accommodations for students with disabilities as authorized in their *Letter of Accommodation* issued by Queen's Student Accessibility Services (QSAS). Students must provide their *Letter of Accommodation* to the instructor at the start of the term. Instructors will ensure that accommodations related to the writing of tests and exams are communicated to the Exams Office by the specified

deadline each term. Exams Office staff will ensure that the accommodations are incorporated into the Examity/Proctortrack exam session.

The course syllabus must contain the following statement for students who require academic accommodations in their exams as authorized by QSAS:

To have your accommodations applied to a remote-proctored exam please follow the instructions for the course, as outlined on the QSAS website. Your exam accommodations, as authorized by your Letter of Accommodation, will be incorporated into your Examity/ Proctortrack exam session. Please note that exam accommodations that are uploaded for a specific exam are only visible to students once they begin their exam in the Exam Portal.

Academic Consideration

10. The University is committed to providing academic consideration to students experiencing extenuating circumstances that are beyond their control and are interfering with their ability to complete academic requirements related to a course **for a short period of time**. Each Faculty or School has developed a protocol to provide a consistent and equitable approach in dealing with requests for academic consideration for students facing extenuating circumstances.

    Unforeseen technological and workspace disruptions that occur while students are attempting to write a remote proctored exam are situations that should be administered under the Faculty protocols for academic consideration. However, academic consideration is not provided for **chronic** technological difficulties or workspace disruptions, such as long-term hardware/ software failure, prolonged poor internet coverage, lack of planning or knowledge of program software/onQ, missing notifications/reminders, use of unsupported/out-of-date software, or other persistent technological challenges.