Guiding Principles for Online Proctoring

Contents

Scope of Use: Remote Proctoring Software

At Mohawk College remote proctoring tools (i.e. Respondus Monitor, Examity) should only be used where they are absolutely required and after careful consideration of alternative assessment and delivery approaches. Remote proctoring tools should be used with the intent of ensuring that learning outcomes are met, and that academic quality and integrity are maintained. The following conditions apply for the use of remote proctoring tools in academic delivery at the college.

Remote proctoring software tools are authorized for use in courses or programs that:

1. require proctoring of assessments by accrediting or regulating bodies - examples include, but are not limited to:
    a. Technical Standards & Safety Authority (TSSA, 2017),
    b. Ontario Paralegal Association (n.d.),
2. are purpose-built for online or hybrid delivery, where students opt to learn remotely;
3. are pre-approved under these guidelines by the Associate Dean for your area; or

4. fall outside scenarios 1, 2, & 3, including where courses are being delivered virtually because of the pandemic, the faculty member should consult with their Associate Dean to make informed decisions for use.

When used, it is strongly recommended that:

- remote proctoring tools be used for final summative assessments only versus in all/multiple formative assessments throughout the term;

- faculty incorporate a practice test to ensure students are familiar with the remote proctored software/environment; and
- faculty import the "Online Proctoring with Respondus LockDown Browser & Monitor" or "Online Proctoring with Examity" module into their MyCanvas course shell (available for import from the MyCanvas Commons) and students are informed during the first week of the semester that remote proctoring software will be required in the course. These modules include the following items:
  - Online Proctoring Statement of Use,
  - Student Guide for Online Proctoring,
  - Software specific details (i.e. Respondus or Examity)
  - Faculty Guide for Online Proctoring,
  - Practice Quiz (for Respondus), and
  - Vendor Guides and Resources.
- students are informed and information is published in the MyCanvas course shell during the first week of the semester that remote proctoring software will be required in the course and are provided with a copy of the Student Guide for Online Proctoring.

Use and data collection associated with remote proctoring tools are in accordance with Mohawk College's Privacy and Legal Statements.

Considerations for using online proctoring

1. Take students' concerns about remote invigilation seriously and weigh them carefully in the decision of whether to use these tools or not, which tools to use, and how they are implemented (e.g., through instructor-controlled settings).

   ☐ Consider how remote invigilation tools may create additional barriers and introduce inequities for students in the context of online learning. Algorithmic remote proctoring software may disproportionately flag students with disabilities, those with invisible, physical, and mental health needs that may not have been discussed with the instructor, and students with dependents. In addition, there may be access issues for students in rural communities with limited internet access and/or connectivity, connecting from international locations, and students of ethnic backgrounds that differ from the data set the algorithm is based off may face difficulties entering exams. Refer to Principle 10.0 regarding supporting students who are not able to use the tool due to accessibility issues. Take students' concerns in good faith to ensure the equitable and accessible implementation of assessment methods.

   ☐ Having cameras (and sometimes microphones) on during an exam, while students are in their personal living spaces, also raises privacy concerns since instructors and other students wouldn't otherwise be able to see these spaces or hear what is happening in them. Furthermore, for religious and cultural beliefs, there is an added risk for other family members being seen in background without full religious attire.

   ☐ Remote invigilation tools can lead to added stress for students beyond what they might otherwise experience in an in-person exam, which can affect their performance. For example, with Respondus Monitor (or tools with similar functionality), worries about being 'flagged' for behaviour that may be acceptable in an in-person exam (e.g., looking away to think or use scratch paper, going to the washroom), or that aren't under one's control (e.g., students having to work in spaces where family

members are making noise in the background or technical problems during timed exams) can add significant additional stress during an exam.

☐ It is best for student concerns to be addressed at the course level (i.e. the instructor), so consider having a 'virtual open door' practice in which you encourage students to reach out early with concerns and be open to listening to them carefully so that students will not be afraid to raise them. Addressing and attempting to resolve issues early can help avoid further complications that could be more difficult to resolve later.

2. Take a balanced approach to maintaining academic integrity rather than only focusing on enforcement, including:

☐ Have meaningful conversations with students around the importance of academic integrity, recognizing that terms such as "academic integrity", "plagiarism" and "cheating" can be understood and learned differently across educational systems in the world.

☐ Always assume learning is the key goal rather than that students will make every attempt to engage in academic misconduct when they can.

☐ Learn about ways to re-design courses and assessments to promote integrity and reduce or eliminate the need for remote invigilation tools. One-on-one consultations with Curriculum & Program Quality Consultant in the CTLI are available by request, and they can provide suggestions and advice for redesigning assessments for specific courses. See also:

   i. The Centre for Teaching & Learning Innovation document - Teaching in Times of Disruption | Transitioning to Online Teaching and Learning (.docx)

  ii. Transforming the Experience of Students through Assessment (TESTA) Revised Assessment Patterns that Work (.docx)

 iii. E-CORE Guide to Academic Integrity in Remote, Unproctored Exams (Engineering Collaboration for Online

and Remote Education, Canadian Engineering Education Association)

3. Carefully consider whether any alternatives for promoting academic integrity can meet the needs of your course before deciding to use tools for remote invigilation. While remote invigilation may be required to fulfill accreditation requirements in some programs, where this is not the case, prioritize using alternatives to assessment where possible. Consider asking students for suggestions on how to promote academic integrity, and see 2(c) above for resources that discuss alternatives, such as:

☐ Redesigning assessments so that students must synthesize and apply information rather than only recall it; this may allow for exams to be "open book"

☐ Reducing reliance on high-stakes exams in favour of multiple smaller-stakes assessments

☐ Discussing with students why academic and scholarly integrity is important, how it works in your discipline, and how they are joining a scholarly community that is guided by integrity principles

☐ Sharing the Plagiarism Tutorial with your students in MyCanvas (available for import from the MyCanvas Commons), linking to the Library's Plagiarism Guide in your course or inviting a Librarian to speak to your class about how to avoid plagiarism.

4. The decision to use remote invigilation tools, as well as the responsibility to communicate the rationale for doing so and how they work, is the responsibility of the faculty/instructor(s), program coordinator(s), Associate Dean, Program Manager, or others responsible for the design and/or delivery of the course.

☐ These tools should be used judiciously and only after careful consideration of alternate assessment approaches which could

meet the course and program learning outcomes (see Principles 2 & 3 regarding your approach and considerations.)

☐ Consider the degree to which external College accreditation may or may not necessitate the use of remote proctoring tools.

Requirements for implementing online proctoring

5. If online proctoring tools are to be used in a course, the following Statement of Use should be included in the course outline.
Note: Effective in the Fall 2021 semester and onwards, this statement will be automatically populated into all course outlines.

Sample paragraph for Course Outline:
This course may use online proctoring software for one or more assessment(s) to uphold academic quality and maintain academic integrity where deemed required by the academic area. Additional information will be provided by your professor/instructor at the beginning of the term in your MyCanvas course if a remote proctoring tool is being used. Please refer to Mohawk College's Student Online Proctoring Guide to learn more at https://library.mohawkcollege.ca/tech-guides-proctoring/about.

6. Provide students with rationale for why the approach and tool was chosen. An explanation of pedagogical choices is always valuable, and this allows students who do not wish to use remote proctoring tools to drop the course if they can. Be sure to return to this rationale in communications to students throughout the term, particularly shortly before exams.

7. Schedule a practice test/quiz using the tool to allow students a chance to test whether they have the necessary equipment and network capability and to get familiar with the process.

  ☐ See the Respondus [Instructor Quick Start Guide on LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor](#) (Canvas Edition) for more suggestions on practice exams using Respondus.

  ☐ One-on-one consultations with an [Instructional Designer](#) (ID) in the CTLI are available by request, and they can help provide suggestions and advice for implementing Respondus products in your course(s).

8. Be sure to schedule enough time for setup and possible technical issues during an exam with remote invigilation tools. Let students know that you will add extra time to the "time limit" setting (the amount of time students will have to complete the exam once they start), and at least 30 minutes to the "available from/until" setting (the amount of time the exam will be open until it auto-submits).

  ☐ Include detailed explanations of how students can get support outside of Respondus Lockdown Browser or Monitor, such as if they have questions about interpretation of exam content or an impactful typo in a test question, for which students may need real-time support. Who do students contact and how quickly can they get the answers they need?

9. For remote proctoring through videoconference (e.g., Zoom or MS Teams), students must not be asked to show their ID card with their full student number in a session with other students present, although this could be done in a private breakout room with only an instructor present. Explain to students as clearly as possible what the tool does and what that means for them during and after an exam. Focus on providing information in order to reduce stress where possible. For example, for Respondus LockDown Browser:

☐ Share with students the [Respondus Student Guide](#) (Canvas Edition), and information and instructions in the Instructor template in the [Respondus Instructor Quick Start Guide](#) (which covers some of the suggestions below).

☐ Respondus offers a range of settings; choose the **least restrictive settings** that will fulfill the needs of the course. Be sure to follow the recommendations listed in the Respondus Instructor Guide for settings to disable, as enabling these settings can cause technical issues for students during exams. **NB:** Ensure "Re-entry" is allowed in settings. If technical or connectivity issues disrupt a student's ability to complete the exam (e.g., connection drops, computer shuts down, etc.), only the instructor (and only if "re-entry with agent" has been selected by the instructor) can reset the exam and allow a new attempt. Prepare to provide support if a student encounters difficulty re-entering the exam and be sure to let students know whom to contact and how to help them re-enter if needed.

☐ Explain to students:

    i. Mohawk College has reviewed Respondus' Higher Education Community Vendor Assessment Tool (HECVAT) assessment and deemed their privacy and security controls to meet our quality of standards. All recordings are stored in the United States, and the encrypted recordings will be deleted after 120 days.

    ii. "Only users with instructor credentials for the LMS course (e.g., instructors, teaching assistants, LMS administrators) are able to view video sessions in conjunction with student identifiable information" (Respondus, March 16, 2021).

    iii. What a "flag" on the video means, and that any flags must be reviewed by the instructor before any interpretation is made of the flagged behaviour. Remind your students that even if their file is flagged as suspicious, it doesn't mean suspicious in terms of cheating; it just means suspicious in terms of the enabled Respondus settings (e.g. unusual sound, movement etc.). Assure students that Respondus does not make determinations of academic misconduct. If

the course instructor suspects there is sufficient information that academic misconduct has been committed (e.g., using prohibited materials or discussing the exam with another person), the normal Mohawk policies apply, and an investigation is initiated before any determination is made.

iv. "Share your expectations with students about what usual behavioural activities you will anticipate and accept…, such as fidgeting, stretching, not looking directly at the exam the whole time, etc."; and "Clarify procedures around washroom breaks, using scratch paper, or any other needs specific to your course." Many students are understandably worried that they will be flagged for behaviours that appear suspicious but are actually incidental to writing the exam or without their conscious control. It is important that you explain to them how Respondus works and reassure them by explaining the post-exam review process.

v. Note that when students log into Respondus, they may get a message from the software that is not necessarily aligned with what the instructor has told them about what they can and cannot do during the exam. Explain to students that where there is conflicting guidance between the instructions provided by the instructor and Respondus, the instructor's instructions/requirements take precedence.

10. Import the "[Online Proctoring with Respondus LockDown Browser & Monitor](#)" or "[Online Proctoring with Examity](#)" module into your MyCanvas course shell and students are informed during the first week of the semester that remote proctoring software will be required in the course. These modules are available in MyCanvas Commons and include the following items:

☐ Online Proctoring Statement of Use,
☐ Student Guide for Online Proctoring,
☐ Faculty Guide for Online Proctoring,
☐ Practice Quiz (for Respondus), and

☐ Vendor Guides and Resources.

Providing Options for Students

11. Be sure students know what to do if they cannot use a remote invigilation tool because of technical, geographical, accessibility, or other reasons. Pay attention to the technical and other requirements for using these tools.

☐ When possible, student should only take online proctored exams in private settings or locations to make sure there is no risk of in advertent disclosure of their personal information or that of others in their immediate environment.

☐ Students should ensure they have a physical background that is appropriate for a classroom setting (virtual backgrounds are not permitted). They may wish to remove any personal belongings or items that may be in view while taking online proctored examinations.

☐ Students who are having trouble meeting the hardware (e.g. webcam, microphone) or network requirements for the proctoring tool should discuss possible alternative assessment options with their instructor(s)

☐ Students experiencing financial barriers, making it difficult to meet the requirements can explore available Awards, Scholarships and Bursaries, or apply for Mohawk's Emergency Help Fund. Contact Financial Assistance for support and to learn more

☐ Students with disabilities should contact Accessible Learning Services to find out if they are eligible for online exam accommodations or to review their current eligibility for accommodations

☐ Students needing some assistance or support in communicating with their instructors/college or in understanding college policies/procedures can contact the Student Rights and Responsibilities Office

☐ Tool-specific help resources:

    i. [Student Guide for Online Proctoring: Respondus & Examity](#)

    ii. Examity: Connect with Examity technical support directly at https://www.examity.com/instructors/

    iii. Zoom: [Mohawk's Zoom Web Portal](#) and [Zoom Tech Guide for Students](#); see also Mohawk's instructions for Using Zoom for Online Proctoring

Considerations for Reviewing proctor videos

12. Those who are going to be reviewing videos from Respondus Monitor should be aware of good practices for doing so, including recognizing that some students may be flagged more than others due to things such as their home situations (e.g., living with young children) or health considerations (e.g., needing to get up to use the washroom often). Support and arrangements for disseminating these good practices will vary but can include local expertise (faculty/staff who have used proctored assessments), faculty-based or central support, policies or resources, such as the [Student Rights and Responsibilities Office](#) and [Accessible Learning Services](#).

References

Law Society of Ontario (n.d.). Examination requirements. Retrieved from https://lso.ca/becoming-licensed/paralegal-licensing-process/paralegal-licensing-examinations/online-examination-requirements

Respondus (March 16, 2021). Terms of use - Respondus monitor (Student). Retrieved from https://web.respondus.com/tou-monitor-student/

TSSA (February 2017). TSSA certificate examination preparation guide. Retrieved from https://www.tssa.org/en/amusement-devices/resources/Documents/CE-Exam-Guide-1-Feb-2017.pdf

Acknowledgements

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