



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PROVOSTIAL GUIDELINES ON ONLINE ASSESSMENT INVIGILATION

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This document is intended to provide academic administrators with guidelines and recommendations regarding the use of digital tools to invigilate online assessments. Online assessment does not necessarily include invigilation. These guidelines are specifically for instances where active invigilation (including but not limited to eProctoring and the use of video communication tools) is being considered as part of the assessment plan. Academic Deans or their designate are responsible for determining appropriate divisional administrative processes for the use and approval of these practices, and shared service units are available to support implementation, where appropriate.

U of T facilitates the use of a limited number of institutionally reviewed, assessed and approved third-party providers specializing in online invigilation (or ‘eProctoring’) and video communication tools (e.g., Zoom, Teams) to support U of T instructors and staff who require online assessment invigilation within their program(s) and/or course(s).

The University strongly encourages review and approval by appropriate division and/or unit academic administrators to confirm the necessity of online invigilation in each case as a condition for the use of such tools. It is strongly recommended that instructors wishing to use either an approved eProctoring service or video communication tool to invigilate online assessments in a specific course discuss their needs and objectives with their unit head or designate, who, if they approve the need for use of online invigilation would then consult and confirm the need and use with the Dean or Dean’s designate.

Decanal and unit representatives are encouraged to recommend and provide support for alternative types of assessment that do not require the use of online invigilation, so that this form of invigilation is only used where it is necessary.

Considerations for the use of online assessment invigilation

The following section provides decanal, unit and program administrators with a list of common considerations regarding the use of online invigilation practices. It is strongly encouraged that these be reviewed by academic administrators as part of a needs assessment for the use of such practices in the context of each specific request:

- **Student Mental Health:** Online learning presents a wide array of challenges for students and online invigilation can exacerbate this stress and anxiety, and for the specific reasons identified below.
- **Privacy:** Students have expressed concern about intrusion and the disclosure and exposure of their information, their behaviours, and their environment, which are inherent in eProctoring.
- **Accessibility:** Online invigilation requires a reliable internet connection and a computer with sufficient capacity to support live video invigilation and/or recording processes. Given that students may be working from their homes, in different time zones, with varying technology, and with varying degrees and quality of connectivity, consideration should be given to ensuring access.

- **Technical Risks:** Should a student experience a significant technical disruption (e.g., hardware failure, internet disconnection), stopgaps may not exist to ensure that the student will be able to complete the assessment as intended.
- **Unconscious and Racial Bias:** Concerns have been raised about eProctoring facial recognition software being vulnerable to or having racial bias, and the potential for unconscious bias to impact the fairness of the assessment process through online invigilation.
- **Administrative workload:** eProctoring may require substantial work to implement properly. Responsibility for overseeing the administration of this process and liaising with the online proctoring service provider, particularly when third-party services are used, generally resides with the course instructor(s) and/or division/unit/program administrator(s). This includes assessment timing, scripting of invigilator instructions, allowable supports, contact information, etc. Instructors and/or administrators are also tasked with follow-up and decisions related to any issues flagged by the proctoring process.

Given these factors, the University reiterates its strong recommendation to limit the use of online invigilation of assessments only to circumstances where it is required; that is, necessary to achieve a course, program, or pedagogical need. Ideally, these cases should be restricted to need for external certification requirements and established practice or longstanding use.

In lieu of attempting to emulate in-person exam formats and course weightings through eProctoring or online invigilation, instructors may wish to consider alternative forms of assessments in course design and planning processes. Best practices for instructors designing assessments in online environments can be found on the [Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation website](#). Instructors can also contact their campus- or division-specific teaching centre for additional support in considering assessment options.

If online invigilation is approved, all parties are expected to consult and follow the principles and practices outlined in existing policy documents such as: [Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#); [University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy](#); and [Appropriate use of Information and Communication Technology](#).

Guidelines on the use of eProctoring services

For courses seeking to use an approved eProctoring service, the University has developed a recommended implementation process that operates through the Information Technology Services [Digital Learning Innovation](#) (DLI) unit. This section provides an overview of the required and recommended implementation steps.

eProctoring services provide a specific form of online invigilation whereby a third-party vendor provides a service to the University. Currently, the University has agreements with two providers: [Examity](#), and [ProctorU](#). There is one division accessing ProctorU as a supplemental service extension agreement via [ExamSoft](#)'s ExamMonitor.

Prior to implementing any of the available eProctoring services in a program or course, the following steps should be followed:

- Needs Assessment:
 - Prior to the start of the course and the provision of the course syllabus to enrolled students, the individual initiating the request for online invigilation (e.g., course instructor, unit or program administrator) will explore all relevant options available for completing the specific assessment in consultation with divisional educational technology professionals and/or the University's DLI.
 - Timing of the request is critical; if approved, specific language will be required within the course syllabus so that students are aware of the selected practice in advance of the assessment (see *Implementation* section below).
 - If after the needs assessment the requesting individual would like to proceed with the request to use an eProctoring solution, acknowledging the challenges and limitations of the platforms and processes, then the Dean or Dean's designate should be engaged.
- Divisional Approval:
 - The Dean or Dean's designate is consulted regarding use of eProctoring within an academic program area/course to meet the assessment requirements.
 - The Dean or Dean's designate may confirm or deny approval for eProctoring for the specified program or course assessment.
 - It is recommended that the DLI be consulted regarding information on service level fees and work orders for available vendor products.
 - The head of the funding unit (Dean's Office or academic unit) approves funding for costs and identify a business office contact.
 - DLI acts as liaison to initiate onboarding following approval by Dean or Dean's designate.
- Implementation:
 - A notice for students, which includes a link to information on use of student data for ProctorU and Examity must be included in the syllabus. The following notices have been created by the FIPP Office regarding Privacy and Information security for both platforms:
 - [ProctorU: Privacy and Security Information Notice for Students](#)
 - [Examity: Privacy and Security Information Notice for Students](#)
 - In addition to the specific language related to privacy and data security noted above, information regarding technical requirements and support must be provided for inclusion in the syllabus. See [current student communication templates and FAQ documents](#) or contact DLI (online.learning@utoronto.ca).
 - Sufficient lead time is required for technical implementation and communication to students before or when the course begins.

Divisions, units and instructors should only use eProctoring services that have been approved institutionally. Invigilation services provided by other third-party platforms (e.g., another exam software tool or publisher) should only be used after a review and approval of the product by U

of T Information Security and Enterprise Architecture (ISEA) to evaluate the security and privacy of the product.

Guidelines on the use of video communication tools (e.g., Zoom, Teams) for invigilation

For courses seeking to undertake online invigilation of assessments through video communication tools (e.g., Zoom, Teams), this section outlines additional considerations for approval.

As with the use of eProctoring services, it is recommended that a needs assessment be completed by the requesting unit, program administrator and/or course instructor and presented to the Dean or Dean's Designate in order to assess the necessity of a proposed assessment plan that includes using video communication tools given the privacy and other concerns detailed above. This should be completed prior to the course offering and prior to the finalization of the course syllabus so that students can be made aware of the requirement through specific notices within the course syllabus.

Unlike eProctoring services, where implementation requires engagement with an institutional office, decisions and support for the use of video communication tools rest with divisions, units or programs.

FAQ

1. Q: Can I use Zoom or Teams webinar tools to invigilate exams instead of one of the products recommended by U of T?

A: While video-based synchronous meeting software has many uses in online teaching and providing support to student learning, it is not designed for the specific purpose of online invigilation in high stakes assessments. It may be considered more intrusive to have an instructor or TA observing a test-taker in their personal space, rather than a professionally trained online proctor. Synchronous learning platforms do not provide the workflow process, infrastructure for secure storage of video files and server access logs for review and/or reference in the case of an academic appeal. In addition, creative workarounds can be developed whereby a looped video of a test-taker is displayed to the invigilator while the test taker is off-screen, unsupervised. For these reasons, Zoom, Teams or other video tools are not intended to be used as a substitute for professional online proctoring platforms or in-person assessments.

2. Q: What if the instructor adopts an eProctoring service, with the approval of the Dean's office, after the syllabus has already been distributed?

A: The privacy, data security and technical requirements must be provided to students as soon as possible and all steps above must be followed. In cases with late notice, students should be permitted to request an alternative proctoring process.

3. Q: What if the instructor wants to adopt an eProctoring service other than ProctorU, ExamSoft or Examity?

A: ProctorU and Examity services have been assessed and approved by the U of T Information Security and Enterprise Architecture (ISEA), while other services have not. Other services should only be adopted after an assessment by ISEA and the mitigation of all identified risks.

4. Q: How can instructors verify identification if administering an assessment through an Academic Toolbox tool?

A: In a remote learning situation, instructors can do what is necessary to confirm a student's identity to meet assessment or participation requirements in support of a program achievement. Assessments or a participation/attendance grade fall into this category. When there is a program achievement/requirement for which identity authentication is necessary, instructors should use a technological solution that is least invasive of student privacy. If video is the only practical way to verify attendance/identity, then its use will generally be reasonable. Examples could include requiring students to hold up government ID in front of their camera during a video meeting.

Note: this does not apply for third party eProctoring services, which may have their own identity verification requirements and processes.

5. Q: Can instructors require verification when not in support of a programmatic requirement?

A: Instructors are advised to only require verification of identity if it is necessary for a programmatic requirement or purpose. For example, instructors should consider whether they would require verification if the course were being delivered in-person. If they would not, then there may likewise be no need to in remote learning situations. In any case, it is recommended that the rationale for identity verification be carefully assessed and that it be required only if it is based on tangible programmatic needs/requirements. For example, you may need to know who is in a session for assessment or a participation requirement.

Note: this does not apply for third party eProctoring services, which may have their own identity verification requirements and processes.

6. Q: Technological requirements - What should instructors do if a student doesn't have a camera to verify identity?

A: First, instructors should assess the programmatic rationale for and necessity of verification. If verification is necessary, what is the preferable method from a privacy perspective that would be effective and necessary to achieve the outcome? For example, voice only verification of identity might not suffice, and video may be necessary, but voice only might be adequate for attendance taking purposes, depending on the

circumstances. This should be assessed on a case-by-case basis based on the student's situation and the programmatic requirement.

Further resources:

- [CTSI's Online Proctoring Overview](#)
- [CTSI's Academic Integrity and the Role of the Instructor](#)
- [ProctorU Syllabus and FAQ Templates](#)