A Call to Action Against the Usage of Proctorio

AMS VP Academic and University Affairs
Overview

- The Road So Far
- Principles for Remote Invigilation
- Why are we against Proctorio?
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Our Previous Letter’s Asks


- UBC must end its relationship with Proctorio and other invasive, algorithmic remote test proctoring software. As Proctorio has shown a disregard for student privacy by releasing student support logs, we call upon UBC to end its contract with Proctorio as the extent to which Proctorio is willing to infringe upon FIPPA is uncertain;
- Support and provide resources to faculty in identifying and incorporating alternate final assessment methods in order to avoid Proctorio and other algorithmic exam software;
- If choosing to utilize remote proctoring software, UBC instructors must provide low-barrier options to opt out of using remote proctoring software and offer alternate forms of assessment;
- Incorporating stronger language against the use of Proctorio and remote proctoring software, as well as explanations about concerns regarding Proctorio in the Guiding Principles for Fall 2020 Adaptations;
- If choosing to utilize remote proctoring software, UBC instructors must provide a clear rationale for their usage of the software (i.e. invigilation required for professional accreditation programs) and demonstrate their understanding of how it will affect students in a statement of academic integrity expectations within the course syllabi (p15, Guiding Principles for Fall 2020 Adaptations);
- If continuing with the usage of Proctorio, UBC must conduct an external technical audit of Proctorio’s privacy mechanisms in order to mitigate harm to students.
Principles for the Appropriate Use of Remote Invigilation Tools

Can be found at keepteaching.ubc.ca in further depth.

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).

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

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 such tools may be used to fulfill accreditation requirements in some programs, where this is not the case, prioritize using alternatives where possible. Consider asking students for suggestions on how to promote academic integrity.

4. The decision to use remote invigilation tools, as well as the responsibility to communicate the rationale for doing so and how they work, should not be left to TAs; this must be done by the instructor(s), course coordinator(s), department heads, or others responsible for the design and/or delivery of the course.

5. If remote invigilation tools are to be used in a course, this should be stated in the syllabus, with a rationale provided for why that approach and tool was chosen. An explanation of pedagogical choices is always valuable, and this allows students who do not wish to use tools like Proctorio 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.

6. Schedule a practice test using the tool before the drop deadline, 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 Proctorio Instructor Guide for more suggestions on practice exams using Proctorio.

7. Be sure to schedule enough time for setup and possible technical issues during an exam with remote invigilation tools. As noted on the UBC Proctorio Instructor Guide, 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).

8. For remote invigilation through videoconference (e.g., Zoom), students must not be asked to show their ID card with their full student number, since each student can see all others in the room. An alternative is to ask them to hold up their card to the camera with the first half of the number covered.

9. Explain to students as clearly as possible what the tool does and what that means for them during and after an exam.

10. 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 Assignments and Assessments page on the Keep Teaching website for details and updates on technical and other requirements for using these tools.

11. Those who are going to be reviewing videos from Proctorio 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 or resources. If TAs are reviewing the videos, instructors should ensure they have this information as well.
Why must we end the usage of Proctorio?

- Demonstrating Compassion for Students, Staff, and Faculty
- Unethical Behaviour
- False Sense of Academic Integrity
  - Capacity of UBC for Fair Assessment
- Equity Concerns and Discriminatory Programming
- Widespread Technology Difficulties
- Privacy Concerns
- Terms of Service
- Academic Freedom
- Student Evaluations of Teaching

This is a student privacy issue. This is an academic freedom issue. This is an equity issue.
Demonstrating Compassion for Students, Staff, and Faculty

Is this in line with the Guiding Principle 1 of Fall 2020 Adaptations?

> 1. Approach course adaptation decisions with a commitment to compassion and care for everyone involved.

Key insight: students hate Proctorio.
Demonstrating Compassion for Students, Staff, and Faculty

> 1. Approach course adaptation decisions with a commitment to compassion and care for everyone involved.

- Making students use Proctorio is coercive.
- Telling students that ‘if they don’t want to use Proctorio, drop this course’ is manipulative.

No student should have their grades or academic standing put at risk due to a discriminatory surveillance software they don’t feel comfortable with.

We are in a global pandemic - we must exercise compassion and flexibility by providing alternate forms of assessment.
Unethical Behaviour: Mike Olsen

- Attack against UBC student, releasing chat logs
- Long history of attacking students on Reddit
- Lawsuit Against Ian Linkletter
  - A Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation
False Sense of Academic Integrity

Are we outsourcing Academic Integrity?

There is absolutely no data that exists that states Proctorio prevents Academic Misconduct.
Capacity of UBC for Fair Assessment

Refer back to Remote Invigilation Principles.

Learn about ways to re-design courses and assessments to promote integrity and reduce or eliminate the need for remote invigilation. One-on-one consultations with learning designers at the CTLT are available through the Online Teaching Program, and they can help provide suggestions and advice for redesigning assessments for specific courses. See also:

- High-level principle 5 in the Guiding Principles for Fall 2020 courses document
- Alternatives to remotely proctored exams on the Keep Teaching website, including a longer guide to Alternatives to In-Person Exams.
- CTLT’s Online Teaching Program (OTP) module on assessment, and resources from a workshop on academic integrity during the OTP
- Video of workshop from UBC Skylight on academic integrity
- Suggestions from the Remote Assessment Guidebook (Peter Ostafichuk, UBC) - Academic Integrity Faculty Resources (multiple UBC authors, UBCV Learning Commons)
- E-CORE Guide to Academic Integrity in Remote, Un-proctored Exams (Engineering Collaboration for Online and Remote Education, Canadian Engineering Education Association)
With all these conversations around race and equity, do we want to condone casual microaggressions in our education through discriminatory programming and assessments?

In light of UBC’s commitments to equity, diversity, and inclusion and the Inclusion Action Plan’s Goal 4.B of “implement[ing] inclusive course design, teaching practice, and assessments,” UBC should not be subscribing to a pedagogy of punishment by investing in discriminatory surveillance practices.
Widespread Technology Difficulties

- Getting kicked out of the session
  - Connectivity Difficulties
- Difficulty entering the session/having their face recognized
- Being flagged arbitrarily
- Lack of access
  - Cannot download because of restricted access to Chrome in China
  - Computer cannot handle software.
Privacy Concerns

Students have A LOT of concerns about privacy with Proctorio.

This stands out particularly for young female-identifying students, non-binary students, students from lower income families, and students with young children.
Privacy Concerns… Proctorio:

Can READ and CHANGE all the data on a student's web browser,
Modifies students' keyboard functionality,
Monitors and stores KEYPRESS movements while using the computer,
Captures ALL SCREEN CONTENT on the student's computer,
Manages and CHANGES any downloads on the student's computer,
Identifies ALL devices connected to a student's computer,
Manages ALL apps, extensions, and even themes on a student's computer,
Changes ALL privacy-related settings on a student's computer,
Monitors EYE MOVEMENTS via webcam and saves all recordings,
Records and stores ALL sounds while in use,
Requires initial and periodic ROOM scans.
In Proctorio’s own terms of service...

4. Your Rights and Obligations.

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You may not mandate Authorized End Users use the Application Service.
If Academic Freedom is something that UBC values...

- “A unique value of the academy: a scholar’s freedom to express ideas through respectful discourse and the pursuit of open discussion, without risk of censure.”

I’d ask why we protect the “academic freedom” of alt right speakers on campus inciting hatred towards minorities but we do not act to protect the academic freedom of valued community members such as Ian Linkletter.

Therefore, we must act to protect the academic freedom of Ian Linkletter. Will UBC continue to fund a program that is suing one of our valued community members that has demonstrated care for students? What message does that send to students, staff, and faculty?

For more reading, read Dr. Emma Cunliffe’s article on the institutional responsibilities to academic freedom that UBC holds.

https://commons.allard.ubc.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1438&context=fac_pubs
Challenges and Barriers to Action

Accreditation Requirements

● Remote invigilation may be required for accreditation requirements for certain professional or otherwise accredited programs.
● Legally binding contracts with Proctorio.

Student Evaluations of Teaching and Midterm Course Feedback

● Students will utilize SEOT to let instructors know exactly what they thought of Proctorio.
Message from the Provost

As you know, for these and other legal and contractual reasons, CUNY ruled in April that online proctoring of exams would not, at least for the time being, be allowed in any CUNY courses.

On September 1, the central office updated that announcement to include the following: “Note: It is important to recognize that students may not be compelled to agree to the terms and conditions of proctoring solutions procured by the University, Colleges, Programs, and/or those which may be bundled in with specific textbooks. When in doubt, please refer to the following guidance from our Office of General Counsel regarding this matter: The Office of Legal Affairs (OGC) has reviewed the Terms and Conditions of several online testing application services and it is OGC’s position that faculty cannot compel students to accept the corresponding tools “Terms and Conditions” and that in the event students do not accept the terms, faculty must provide students reasonable assessment accommodations to demonstrate they meet the course learning requirements. In other words, the central office concluded that we may not compel students to participate in online proctoring. Given the scale of the courses most likely to be in need of online proctoring—large classes offered in multiple sections with common final exams—providing an alternative will be a challenge. To address this challenge, Associate Provost Slavin and I are in the process of assembling a group of Baruch faculty and students to explore the best approach to providing alternatives to online proctoring for students who are unwilling to participate in that approach.”

Banned all remote proctoring products.

“Thus, the EVCP’s executive order on March 27 prohibiting “outside proctoring products and Zoom proctoring” during the Spring 2020 semester remains in place.”
The Timeline

- UBC has a different contract than the regular Terms of Service available on the Proctorio website.
  - Someone has FOI’d the contract with Proctorio, so it will likely be available soon.
- The contract with Proctorio will be coming to an end in term 2. We will be pushing very hard for the complete termination of the contract with Proctorio, with a commitment not to renew it in the future.
- GOAL: The elimination of usage in Proctorio and a commitment to auditing future technologies for privacy.
What Can Students Do About It?

1. Keep writing to professors and administration
2. Use the open letter as a template towards faculty admin!
3. Sign petitions!

3. Student Evaluations of Teaching

What we need:

We need tenured faculty to speak up against Proctorio.

UBC Students Reject the Use of Proctorio's Invasive & Unethical Technology

We want UBC to stop using Proctorio for assessments. Proctorio is known to be an ineffective tool to enforce academic integrity. It is an invasive technology that violates student privacy. We don’t want our education driven by tools of mass surveillance.
Sign our open letter!

As of Oct 13, there are 146 signatories.

We are seeking to mobilize your constituencies and academic clubs.

Have these conversations with your department clubs.

We will be distributing this to undergraduate societies. Please sign on!
Conclusion and Call to Action

1. UBC must end its relationship with Proctorio through the termination of its contract or otherwise, discontinuation of its contract.

2. UBC must give the guidance that instructors may not compel students to participate in online proctoring.

3. UBC instructors must provide low barrier options to opt out of remote proctoring software. This must be universally implemented across all faculties. Behaviour such as telling students to drop the course if unwilling to use Proctorio or other remote invigilation software is unacceptable and manipulative. No student should have their grade or academic standing put at risk due to Proctorio.

4. UBC must act to support the academic freedom of students and staff members like Ian Linkletter. UBC has an institutional commitment towards academic freedom, a scholar’s freedom to express ideas through respectful discourse and the pursuit of open discussion, without risk of censure. Academic freedom must extend to staff members and students. If UBC does not heed the caution given, what message does it send to staff, faculty, and students?

UBC must end the usage of this discriminatory surveillance software that has caused students, staff, and faculty harm.