

Safeguarding the Integrity of In-Person Evaluations

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PURPOSE

To support instructors, staff, and academic leaders in safeguarding the integrity of in-person evaluations that require proctoring.

BACKGROUND

Proctoring is the active monitoring of students during an evaluation. This includes supervising students and ensuring students follow the rules and procedures for the evaluation. Proctors also intervene during suspected academic misconduct in order to safeguard the integrity of the evaluation process. Other proctoring tasks may include, but are not limited to:

- Preparing the room for evaluation (e.g., setting up desks and chairs, removing materials from the room)
- Welcoming students to the evaluation environment
- Checking that only permitted items are brought into evaluation environment
- Confirming identity (typically only for large classes, certification, or licensing body evaluations)
- Guiding students to their location or spot (if assigned)
- Explaining the rules and procedures for evaluation
- Starting the evaluation on time
- Supervising the evaluation
- Addressing student questions or clarifications
- Responding to suspected academic misconduct
- Addressing conduct or behaviour issues
- Ensuring students only leave the evaluation environment at the permitted time, and with only the permitted materials
- Collecting and securing completed evaluations
- Closing the evaluation environment by resetting the room (if furniture was moved) and taking all materials

The proctoring of an evaluation is typically handled by the instructor, but there may be times that staff are involved or the test is invigilated by the Test Centre.

This information is available in alternate formats upon request. Please contact cli@assiniboine.net.

For example, a student may be proctored by the Test Centre in order to ensure their accommodations are provided in accordance with Assiniboine Policy A03 Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities. Faculty and students looking for additional information on testing accommodations should consult with their Student Success Advisor and/or the Student Accessibility Coordinator. This job aide is not intended to act as guidance on testing accommodations.

Whoever is proctoring at Assiniboine, as outlined in Assiniboine Policy A08-3 Evaluation of Student Learning “the College aims to safeguard the integrity of the evaluation process, and to ensure fair and equitable treatment of students.” There are guidelines and tips that can support instructors, staff, and academic leaders in achieving this. What the proctoring looks in practice will be influenced by situational (contextual) factors such as the learning environment, subject matter, method of evaluation, and characteristics of the instructor and students. This job aid outlines tips and ideas for instructors on safeguarding the integrity of the evaluation process specific to in-person evaluations. However, much of this job aid can be adapted for other contexts.

HOW TO

Proctoring is a proactive approach to ensuring that in-class evaluations such as tests, quizzes, or exams are completed with integrity. Efforts prior to and during the evaluation can prevent issues and academic misconduct helping to ensure a smooth process for the evaluation. While the time during an evaluation can easily be seen as a great time to read some of those e-mails that have been piling up or to prepare for your next class, it is important to be vigilant and active during the test to prevent misconduct as well as to identify any potential misconduct. While none of the following are fail-safe, the following factors can help uphold integrity in the evaluation process and ensure fair and equitable treatment:

- Include explicit instructions for students about the policies and procedures for the students about what they can expect from the test
- Proactively set up the physical space of the evaluation to reduce the avenues of misconduct for student
- Be an active invigilator by moving throughout the room, being aware of the students, and making eye contact when necessary
- Share evaluation protocols and practices with students before the evaluation date
- Provide student education on study skills and testing strategies
- Provide instructor or peer facilitated review sessions to prepare for the evaluation

The next section will explore in more depth how you can apply the following factors.

Evaluation Design

The way you design and develop the evaluation can help uphold integrity and support a smooth implementation. Consider the following questions:

- What do you want to achieve with this evaluation? What learning outcome are you evaluating?
- Is the purpose of and rationale for the evaluation made clear to students?

- Are students provided with explicit and transparent guidelines and protocols for the evaluation?
- Are students introduced to stress and anxiety reduction strategies? Are there reminders about how these strategies can be utilized during an evaluation?
- How many versions of the evaluation are there? Can multiple versions be used to deter academic misconduct? Or if it is an online test, randomization of questions in Moodle be used?
- Are students told what they should do during the evaluation, rather than what not to do?
- Are any academic integrity guidelines explained? For example, “open book” can be further contextualized by explaining what specific materials students can access, and what is unauthorized.

Preparing Students

Success in proctoring starts well before the evaluation day! Consider the following questions:

- Have students experienced this type of evaluation before? What were they able to do?
- Or not do? How does this compare with that is expected at Assiniboine and within this course?
- Have you discussed with students what helps us be successful in evaluation environments (e.g., studying, getting a good sleep)? Share tips with students or invite in the Student Success Advisor or Learning Curve to provide a workshop.
- Is there an opportunity to do a practice (low stakes) evaluation that mimics the evaluation environment?
- Have you explained to students how the evaluation is structured (e.g., short answer, case study, multiple choice)? How many questions are there?
- Have you explained what is permitted and what must not enter the room (e.g., cell phone, notes)?

Physical Space

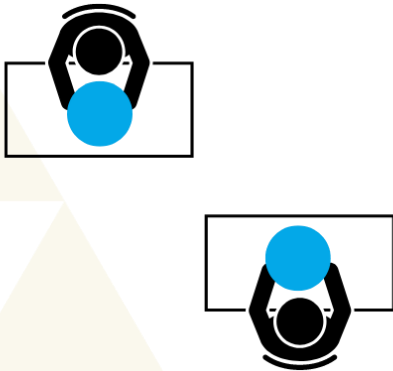
The way the evaluation space is set up can help prevent academic misconduct. Consider the following questions:

- Where will students be sitting? Will they be side by side? Are you able to space students out to allow space between them?
- Is there anything you will need to remove from the room? For example, are there posters that address the content being evaluated?
- Is the furniture movable? Could you change the setup of the room?
- Do you have access to dividers that provide a partition between students? If not, can you request them?
- Where is the nearest washroom? How do students take a washroom break (e.g., raise hand, etc.)?
- Are you able to set up the room so that you can walk and see all the students?
- What items are permitted in the evaluation environment? What is not (e.g., cell phones, smart watches, calculators)?

- Where do you post any instructions, guidelines, or protocols for the evaluation? Is there a whiteboard visible to all students you can use?

If you have a room with moveable furniture, you can create space between students during the evaluation.

Figure 1. *Evaluation set up where furniture has been moved to create space between students*



However, moving furniture is not always an option. Fortunately, there are other ways you can mitigate the risk of academic misconduct even when you can move the furniture.

Figure 2. *Evaluation set up where students are given different versions of the evaluation*

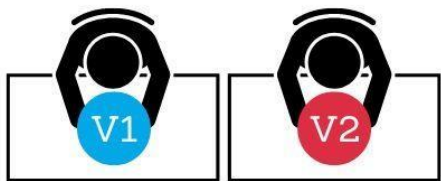
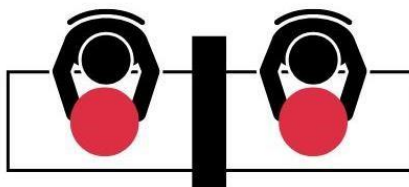


Figure 3. *Evaluation set up where dividers are placed between the students who have the same version of the test*



When setting up the evaluation environment, keep in mind any accessibility or safety needs. For example, is there enough space for wheelchairs or assistive devices to move around? Are you able to circulate around the room to monitor test takers? Can students flow easily in and out of the room?

Evaluation Set Up

Ideally before students arrive you set up the evaluation environment. This is not always possible, so you can take a few minutes as students arrive to the following:

Remove distractions or things that can't be in the room (e.g., answers on a poster)

- Set up the furniture as needed
- Add a note or sign on the door if there should not be interruptions
- Review expectations, including what is permitted or not; give students time to return any unauthorized materials to their locker or car
- List any important reminders or times where students can see it
- Get a paper pad and writing device (or a device you can carry with you) in case you need to take notes during the evaluation

During the Evaluation

Active proctoring can look like:

- Circulating throughout the room, making eye contact with students
- Monitoring for questions and clarifications
- Addressing misconduct or misbehaviour
- Responding to “suspected misconduct” by collecting evidence, and then documenting in the incident form in Policy A25: Academic Integrity
- Collecting evaluations when students are complete, and securing them
- Ensuring student leave the room when completed
- Monitoring the time and giving reminders of when the evaluation is complete

After the Evaluation

Once the evaluation is done, take some time to reflect on the following:

- What worked?
- What didn't?
- What would make the evaluation go better next time?
- How can I debrief the evaluation with students (e.g., Exam wrapper)?
- What trends in misconduct or irregularities did I notice?

Challenging Situations

Depending on the situational (contextual) factors, some evaluation implementations can present specific challenges. This section outlines ideas and tips for these issues. Please connect with your Faculty Development Coach to discuss further.

Please see the table on the next page for tips and ideas for handling challenging situations.

Issue	Ideas and tips	Example in practice
<p>Dealing with questions in the moment, which can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple students asking questions at once • Managing incoming requests and keeping track of who asked questions in what order • Students getting impatient with hand up or waiting for response 	<p>Create a system for tracking and monitoring questions and share this with students so they know how to behave during the evaluation.</p>	<p>Instructor keeps a note pad with them. When a student raises their hand, the instructor acknowledges the student has a question (nod, thumbs up) and writes the name or initials on the note pad. Instructor continues to create the list as questions arise. Learners are able to keep working on the evaluation.</p> <p>Note – must discuss and practice this with students in advance so they know what is expected.</p>
<p>Students talking during the evaluation when not permitted.</p>	<p>Co-construct evaluation expectations and protocols with students, in advance. Clarify what students can do, and what they cannot do. Explain how questions are asked and answered during the evaluation.</p>	<p>Instructor sets up the “three dots” strategy to progressively address unauthorized talking. Each student is given two warnings, and on the third the evaluation for that student is ended. The instructor has sticker dots. First warning, they place one dot on the student’s desk. Second warning, a second dot is placed. Third warning, the evaluation is ended. This must be discussed in advance with students, so they understand the method.</p>

Using an unapproved resource during the test (calculators, notes, books)	Create a list of authorized resources for the evaluation. Review with students in advance and post somewhere visible. Before the evaluation begins, review the list and give students the opportunity to return any unapproved resources. Monitor the room, paying close attention to the resources the students have.	Before the evaluation, the instructor and class create a list of items permitted in the evaluation (e.g., water bottle with no label or writing on it, pen, blank scrap paper).
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Depending on the situation or issues that arise, proctoring can seem overwhelming or like a lot to manage, especially when “issues” pop up in the moment. Rest assured your proctoring practice can grow through experience, professional development, and mentorship with others. As you go, you’ll pick up strategies that work well, as well as identify some things that didn’t work. It can often be helpful to talk through challenging situations with your Academic Leader or a Faculty Development Coach as they can help you find positive, proactive, and supportive solutions.

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