THE GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES ARE CURRENTLY UNDER REVISION.
A NEW VERSION WILL BE UPLOADED SHORTLY.

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GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR EXAMS – WINTER 2020

APRIL 2020

Background

In the context of the extraordinary measures taken to fight the novel COVID-19 virus, including the closing of the campus, Concordia University has taken measures to ensure that the final assessment period will proceed, thereby allowing students to finish their semester. Faculty and students were informed on March 18, 2020 that all in-person examinations were cancelled due to the emerging situation. Faculty members were encouraged to consider alternative forms of final assessments. Following an extensive survey, approximately 13% of faculty affirmed that they required a final exam in their course. A committee was formed to evaluate the available options to support running exams online, while maintaining academic integrity, for those faculty who determined an exam was needed.

Key factors in assessing the range of available services to support online examinations were academic integrity, student privacy, security of data, and ease of use. Following broad consultation, Concordia selected the following two solutions to support delivery of online examinations: 1. an enhanced Moodle quiz tool developed by Catalyst. Catalyst is our Moodle support provider and has developed this tool in collaboration with Monash University in Australia.[1] The Concordia instance of this tool will be known as the Concordia Online Exams (COLE) platform; and 2. Proctorio for online proctoring.

COLE

The tool has been used since the 2018 academic year and has been tested across 8 faculties which map closely to Concordia's, with the exception of the Faculty of Fine Arts. Last year Monash used the tool to run 90,000 exams. It was designed to enhance the ability of Monash University to offer exams online for on-campus students, as well as international students who were not on campus.

User Interface

The tool has enhanced the user interface and increased the functionality of the integrated Moodle quiz tool. It supports many of the core quiz question types and is thus adaptable to a wide range of questions. Considerable design effort was put into enhancing the student experience, by focusing on many common student success strategies for taking exams. Some of these features include:

[1]Monash is a member of the [Group of Eight](#), a network of Australia'sleadingresearch-intensive universities.

- a note pad – equivalent to the scratch pads many professors allow students to bring with them into an in-person exam. The note pad can be saved or not, as per professor preferences;
- the option for students to highlight key words;
- a Summary page that allows students to see the types of questions and facilitates easy navigation to different sections of the exam;
- a mechanism for marking questions that students wish to review before submitting the exam and an easy way to get to them from the Summary page;
- a timer that is visible throughout the exam to know how much time is left;
- a split screen function that permits the student to keep the question in view while answering it.
- If a student accidentally deletes part of an answer, the autosave function permits a "Go Back" feature that will recover the lost answers. The tool autosaves every 15 seconds which provides security for a student writing.

Faculty Use

On the faculty side, the Catalyst tool also offers a host of benefits including blind reviewing of the exams; an option to divide up grading work across TAs and the professor; and an auto-grade function for multiple choice questions.

Given the exceptional circumstances of the Winter and Summer semesters, Catalyst will be inputting the exams on behalf of the faculty members. When questions arise about the most appropriate format for an exam question, Catalyst staff will work with CTL staff and the faculty member to determine how best to set up the question(s).

For courses with students requiring accommodation, the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities (ACSD) will work directly with Catalyst to ensure that the exam set-up is appropriate for those students. This is especially important as some question types are known to not behave correctly with screen readers. Early intervention by the ACSD will ensure the establishment of an equitable exam structure.

Importantly, though the Catalyst tool was designed with some auto-proctoring features included, the tool was never used in circumstances without live exam invigilation. If there were any technical issues, new computers were simply provided to the students. For this reason, we have opted to use the two tools together in order to ensure, as much as reasonably possible, the academic integrity of the test-taking conditions.[2]

[2]While some quizzes or take home exams will take place in the regular Concordia instance of Moodle, none of these will proceed with online proctoring. Given the safeguards that have been created to ensure academic integrity through online proctoring, including privacy and data security, only exams that require Proctorio will be placed on COLE, for this

Proctorio

Proctorio is an online proctoring service that mimics the live proctoring (invigilation) that takes place during an in-person exam. Its software records students through video, audio and/or screen activity while they write. It is automated, meaning that no live human is watching the student write the exam. Concordia has not selected live authentication. The software integrates fully into Moodle and requires a Chrome plug-in. Similar to how authentication of students takes place in a regular exam, authentication of students online requires that the student hold up their Concordia Identification card. 24/7 support is provided in order to assist students if any issues occur throughout this process.

Once the exam has been completed, the Proctorio software flags potential violations of academic conduct and a faculty member will review the ensuing report that is produced. The full integration of Proctorio with Moodle means that all data pertaining to students using the proctoring service and software rests with Concordia University, not Proctorio. Faculty members can customize settings governing what behaviours are monitored, allowing faculty to design exams in the manner they see most appropriate to meet their objectives for the exam. Note: the Access Centre for Student with Disabilities (ACSD) will review all reports of students that are registered with the ACSD.

Data

During the examination, a student's image, voice and/or screen activity, their identification number, exam identification, and IP address may be collected. Full encryption of the recording occurs before the data is sent to Proctorio and before it is stored. Proctorio does not have access to the data or the ability to decrypt the data. Only authorized Concordia personnel will have access. The encrypted data is stored on the Microsoft Azure cloud environment.

Procedures Regarding Exams

In adopting these new softwares, it was recognized that both students and faculty would have an exceptionally steep learning curve in adjusting to a completely different set of procedures for the Winter 2020 exam period.

Notwithstanding the additional guidelines recommended below which address exam conditions, we recommend that all students using these new softwares be allowed additional time to write

exam season and into the Summer sessions. Other assessment types will be run by faculty individually, following a set of guidelines communicated to Department Chairs on March 27, 2020.

their exams, given that they will be writing exams on computers, using relatively unfamiliar software.

The following has been adopted and will be communicated to faculty:

"Online exam conditions are not like regular in-person, proctored exams. As such the nature of the exams should be adjusted to reflect this reality. Given the exceptional conditions under which students will be writing the exam, we are automatically granting 25% additional time to all exams.

To avoid asking students to sit for an abnormally long period of time, we strongly encourage you to limit your exam to the most important material that needs to be tested in order to ensure your students have met the learning objectives for the course. The number of questions should be reduced so that students can complete their exam in no longer than 3 hours. This will require, therefore, a 25% reduction in your questions."

Guidelines for Exam-Writing Conditions

Recognizing the uneven conditions within which students will be writing their exams in Winter 2020, three sets of guidelines for exam-writing conditions have been created: 1. Before the Exam takes place; 2. Technical Difficulties during the Exam; 3. After the Exam has been written. These have been summarized in an infographic at the end of this document. These Guidelines apply to all timed exams[3], whether proctored or not, whether on COLE or another platform.

These guidelines aim to balance the need for academic integrity, the academic freedom of faculty to determine the most appropriate method of assessment and variations in students' ability to write exams at this moment in time. They are valid for the Winter 2020 term only.

Before the Exam Takes Place

A website containing a Frequently Asked Questions, a video introducing the COLE platform, and practice quizzes will be established so that students will be informed of the terms of use of the software. Students who are scheduled to write an online exam will be informed that they must review the terms and conditions of the COLE platform by no later than April 15.

Students will be clearly informed of the following conditions and requirements:

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[3] A "timed online exam" refers to a final exam, taking place during the exam period (April 16 to May 3), that must be written in one sitting over no more than a three-hour time period, proctored or not. Other final assignments including take-home exams – even if these have a specific time duration – projects or quizzes, do not fall under these guidelines and are subject to the normal deferral and incomplete options available to students.

- That the exam will take place during the exam period at the designated date and time set by the Exams office. All exam times will be set to Eastern Standard Time.
- That their image, voice and screen activity will be recorded throughout the duration of the examination
- That they must show their Concordia University Identification card to validate their identity. Alternative government-issued identification will be accepted, though it is not recommended.
- That the video is encrypted and will only be viewed by authorized university personnel (no external entities has access to or authorization to review the recording)
- That they will be responsible for ensuring appropriate, properly functioning technology (webcam, a microphone, Chrome and an ability to download the Proctorio extension, a reliable internet connection with minimum 3G)
- That they should enter the test site and become familiar with the software that will be used for their exam before starting the exam
- They will need a relatively quiet place within which to take the exam. Earplugs or noise-cancelling headphones that are not connected to a device may also be used to allow students to focus for the duration of the exam.
- That they will be required to sign an Attestation of Academic Honesty, whereby they swear that they will adhere to all the conditions of academic honesty as laid out in the Academic Code of Conduct, Article 18.

Students who are unable to write an exam because they are unable to meet the above conditions and requirements (where they apply) may choose between the following:

1. They may inform their professor by no later than April 15 (using the prescribed form) that they are unable to write the exam. If no communication is received by the deadline, students will be presumed to be writing the exam or requesting a deferral.

The option to re-weight the exam against already completed work may not be possible and an exam may be the most appropriate method to demonstrate learned competencies. In such cases, students may request a deferral of the exam or may DISC the course. The instructor will calculate the final grade, following the normal procedures when a student does not write an exam - e.g. "D/DNW," or enter an IP in the case of a graduate student. If an undergraduate student requests a deferral, this grade will be converted to a DEF, as in previous years.

2. They may request a Deferral through the Exams office. Deferred examinations will take place during the supplemental and deferred exam period (August 18-24). If social distancing requires that an in-person exam is not possible, this exam period may need to be conducted online, with or without proctoring.

All students, regardless of whether they have a timed online exam or not, have the option to DISC the course until April 15, or to select a pass/fail notation after grades are released if they are not satisfied with their letter grade.

Note: Deferred exams are not available to graduate students. Graduates students should refer to the School of Graduate Studies FAQs.

During the Exam

In the event of a catastrophic failure of equipment, a sudden illness, or another extraordinary event during the examination, a student will have several options.

1. Inform their professor of the difficulties they faced while writing the exam and request the exam be re-weighted against already completed work, if possible. Upon verification with the platform (if available), the professor will calculate the final grade. In doing so, the professor *may* re-assign the weight of the exam against completed work.

    Upon the release of the final grades, students in this situation may, by the deadline which will be set by the University, request that their grade be converted to a Pass/Fail. Otherwise, Letter Grades will be issued as usual.

2. Request to write a deferred examination. This may be the case, particularly if the student wishes to potentially receive a letter grade, or where their term performance was such that the grade from the final exam may be important for improving their final grade, or leading them to pass the course

    Deferred examinations will take place during the supplemental and deferred exam period (August 18-24). If social distancing requires that an in-person exam is not possible, this exam period may need to be conducted online, with or without proctoring.

    In the case of a deferred exam, once students receive their final grade, students may, by the deadline which will be set by the University, request that their grade be converted to a Pass/Fail in a course for which this option is eligible. Otherwise, Letter Grades will be issued as usual.

Note: Deferred exams are not available to graduate students. Graduates students should refer to the School of Graduate Studies FAQs.

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After the Exam

Once an exam has been written, the final grades will be calculated by the faculty member and submitted as per the determined schedule.

Upon the release of the final grades, students may by the deadline which will be set by the University, request that their grade be converted to a Pass/Fail in a course for which this option is eligible. Otherwise, Letter Grades will be issued as usual.

Behaviours Leading to an Incident Report

Suspicious behavior will be flagged by Proctorio and generated as a report. Faculty will be responsible for reviewing the reports and submitting an Incident Report, as they would otherwise to the Academic Code Administrator in their Faculty, except in the case of students with disabilities. Academic Code Administrators will require training in reading the reports and discerning suspicious behaviours in this context.

Since students with disabilities may have specific writing conditions with which faculty may not be familiar, the reports for these students will be reviewed by the professionals who will be able to recognize typical behaviours associated with their conditions. This will avoid the unnecessary stress of a false accusation of cheating made by a professor who may not fully understand a student's disability.

Given that the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities normally provides invigilation services for all exams for students with disabilities, this is an extension of their normal on-site proctoring conditions. If legitimate concerns with respect to academic integrity exist, the Access Centre staff member will forward the report to the faculty member so that they may submit a report of academic misconduct in accordance with the usual policy and procedures.

Evidence of other behaviours which run contrary to the Academic Code of Conduct may also be brought forward to the Academic Code Administrators in the Faculties.

Faculty Awareness of Proctorio and Catalyst Tool Use

The following explains certain terms and conditions of use for Proctorio and Catalyst. Due to the nature of how the Proctorio software works, the University must allow Proctorio to record a faculty member's questions which, when written by the faculty member, are the intellectual property of the faculty member. In order to grant Proctorio permission to record an exam, the University will

seek a limited license from the faculty member to use their exam questions for the sole purpose of carrying out the exam online, and the exam questions will then be sub-licensed to Proctorio. This licensing is not permanent, but rather limited to use for this examination instance. The ownership of the intellectual property of the faculty member does not transfer to Concordia, Proctorio or Catalyst.

If a faculty member opts not to provide a limited license to the University with respect to their exam questions, the option to run a final exam, using Proctorio and the COLE platform, will not be possible.

If a faculty member does not own the intellectual property with respect to the exam questions that they use (e.g., in the case of the use of publisher's exam questions), the agreement between Concordia and COPIBEC as well as the specific exceptions for exams set forth in the Copyright Act will apply.
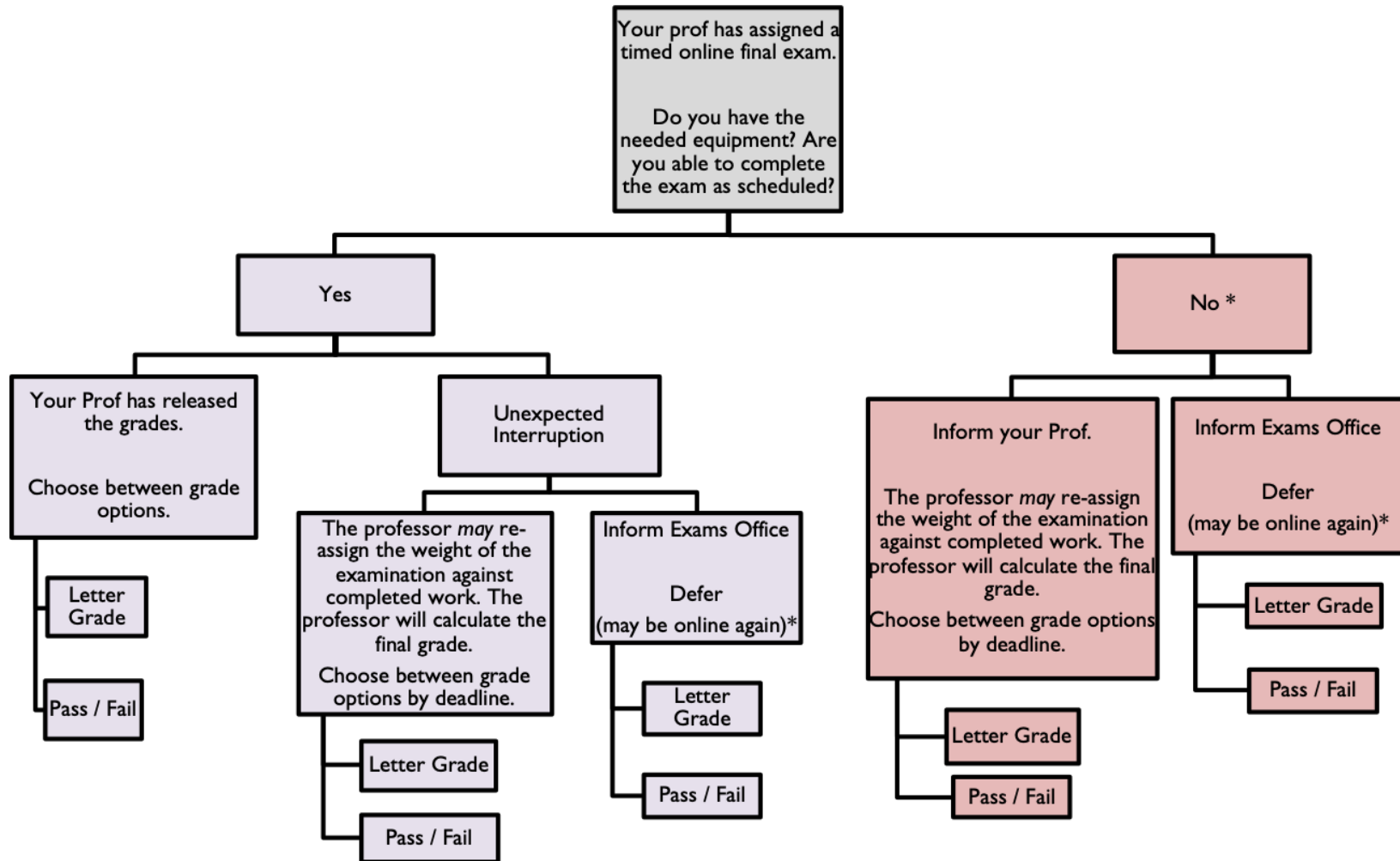
Data Retention

The exam answers provided by students will be stored for one year as of the end of the semester and then will be destroyed as per Concordia's usual retention policies, in accordance with Article 3 of the Academic Re-Evaluation Procedures[4] and the University's Record Retention Schedule.[5] Students' answers will be stored by Catalyst on AWS servers located in Canada. The encrypted data from Proctorio will also be stored on Microsoft Azure servers.

[4]http://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/common/docs/policies/official-policies/Academic_Re-eval_Procedures.pdf
[5]See Rule 31.007: http://archives.concordia.ca/sites/default/files/uploaded-documents/pages/2009/08/07/Retention%20Schedule%20-June%202012.pdf

Exceptional Policies Governing Winter 2020 Timed Online Exams

Your prof has assigned a timed online final exam.

Do you have the needed equipment? Are you able to complete the exam as scheduled?

Yes

Your Prof has released the grades.

Choose between grade options.

- Letter Grade
- Pass / Fail

Unexpected Interruption

The professor *may* re-assign the weight of the examination against completed work. The professor will calculate the final grade.

Choose between grade options by deadline.

- Letter Grade
- Pass / Fail

Inform Exams Office

Defer (may be online again)*

- Letter Grade
- Pass / Fail

No *

Inform your Prof.

The professor *may* re-assign the weight of the examination against completed work. The professor will calculate the final grade.

Choose between grade options by deadline.

- Letter Grade
- Pass / Fail

Inform Exams Office

Defer (may be online again)*

- Letter Grade
- Pass / Fail

* Notes: Depending on when the Deferred Exam is scheduled, the exam may take place online, using online proctoring. Where possible, the University will endeavour to run an in-person examination.

Deadline for submission of the form indicating to a professor that a student cannot write the exam because they do not meet the Conditions and Requirements is April 15, 2020.

Note: Graduates students should refer to the School of Graduate Studies FAQs instead.