Guidelines for Monitored Online Examinations

(For Postgraduate Examinations)

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Table of Contents

Introduction

Universities are higher education institutions where students study and share experiences in close proximity to each other. They are also active cultural hubs where students are brought together from different provinces of a country or from nations around the world. This unique system has been interrupted significantly by the rapid spread of the Coronavirus (Covid – 19) pandemic, creating uncertainty in the teaching, learning and assessment process in the higher education system.

Over the past year, our universities were closed to students in response to the Coronavirus outbreak. Most of the universities switched classes to online learning. Certain universities made assessments online as well. Further, it is hard to foresee whether the novel Coronavirus will result in long-term disruptions to the higher education system. Therefore, conducting online examinations on a monitored basis protects the validity and the integrity of the assessment process of higher education. Monitored online assessment methods ensure that the examinations are conducted free of dishonesty and students obtain an accurate grade based on her/his level of knowledge.

Given the above context, based on the experiences of the past monitored online examinations conducted by the Master of Business Administration (MBA) and Master of Business in Accounting/Finance (MBus) of the University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, we propose the below guidelines for a successful monitored online examination by any higher education institution or professional institution.

Minimum requirements

For the Institute

Before the examination, the faculty / postgraduate office should assign the main supervisor and a Technical supervisor to the examination.

- Students should be divided into manageable groups (10-20 students per group) and at least two invigilators should be assigned per group.
- As a precaution to sudden power failures and technical issues in the university/ institute premises, one invigilator can be requested to join outside the university premises.
- Student groups and assigned invigilators to each group with their contact numbers should be displayed in the respective examination Moodle pages. Students should only contact these assigned invigilators for their issues during the examination and vice versa.

- For each examination, a technical support team should be allocated (Technical officers). Their main responsibility should be to provide IT infrastructure facilities and technical support whenever necessary.
- All the student groups should be provided with ZOOM (or any other video conferencing tool) links and requested to join the meeting at least one hour before the examination.
- Before the examination, respective invigilators assigned to each student group should check student ID and the examination admission document via ZOOM (or any other video conferencing tool).
- After checking student IDs and admissions, the technical supervisor should compare the registered students for the examination with the students joined on live ZOOM (or any other video conferencing tool) meeting.

The examination hall should at least be comprised of the following.
- Sufficient number of laptops with web cameras (depending on the exam groups).
- Sufficient number of screens (depending on the exam groups) to monitor the students in live meetings.
- Adequate Internet Upload/Download Speed availability (Connect to the internet using Wi-Fi router or, as recommended, computer with a dedicated wired connection).

For student/examinee
- A computer / laptop or at least a smartphone (fully charged) with a camera.
- An additional camera should be fixed and focused the screen of the computer / laptop / smartphone
- Adequate room to attempt the online examination.
- Adequate Internet Upload/Download Speed capacity (Connect to the internet using Wi-Fi router or, as recommended, computer with a dedicated wired connection).
- Basic software should be installed in the device. Ex: MS Office package, a Web browser, video conferencing tool (ZOOM is the recommended tool) etc.

General Examination Guidelines

Student Consent

- o Student consent should be obtained prior to the online examination.

Pre-Mock Technical Session

- o A technical session will be conducted to instruct the students on the regulations and procedures of online examination. A written guide will be provided to students and all the necessary guidelines will be elaborated for the students followed by a Q & A session for further clarifications.

Mock Examination

- o After the technical session, a mock examination will be conducted to familiarize students with the online examination system. Thus, students will be confident to face the examination without any hesitation.

Post-Mock Technical Session

- o Another technical session will be conducted after the completion of the mock examination. Non-compliance with guidelines during the mock examination will be explained to the students. Further, student concerns will be discussed. Finally, the session will wind down agreeing to face the real online examination.

Conduct of the Examination

- o Before the exam begins, the examinee must thoroughly read and comply with the online examination guidelines which comprise of examination rules and procedures.
- o If there are any concerns that the examination rules and procedures cannot be adhered to, the examination shall not take place until the supervisor/invigilator confirms that all rules are being followed.
- o The examinee must have a computer (PC/Laptop) equipped with relevant software (e.g., MS Office) and must be able to access LMS and video conferencing tool (ZOOM) throughout the examination.
- o The examinee must ensure the computer (PC/Laptop) camera and microphone are in working condition, if not should find alternatives such as external camera, headset/

microphone etc. Examinee is not allowed to use multiple devices to participate in examination.

- o Examinee must ensure a stable and uninterrupted power supply (electricity) during the examination. Also, an alternative solution in case of contingency must be arranged.
- o Examinee must ensure a stable, uninterrupted internet connection during the examination. Also, an alternative solution in case of contingency must be arranged.
- o Examinee must possess examination admission (printed) and university ID during the examination. Examinee will be admitted after verifying both admission and university ID.
- o Examinee must login to the LMS and ZOOM at least 01 hour prior to the commencement of examination.

Remote Invigilation

The examinee will be remotely monitored by the panel of invigilators throughout the examination period via ZOOM and LMS.

- o Examinee must switch-on the video on ZOOM and must present in front of the camera during the examination.
- o Examinee must share his/her computer screen when asked by the invigilators.
- o Examinee must unmute/speak when asked by the invigilators.
- o The examination cannot be recorded under any circumstances.
- o Examinee should inform the technical disruption or any other exam related matter to the examiner as soon as he/she faces the issue. Issues which are not communicated properly will not be considered for excuses or another attempt.

Examination Room / Environment

The examinee must confirm that:

- o No other person/s is/are in the room while the examinee is participating in the examination.
- o The lighting in the room must be bright enough to be considered "daylight" quality and must enable to clearly see the examinee while at the examination.
- o The room must be as quiet as possible. Sounds such as music or television are not permitted.

- o The background of the examinee should be clearly visible to the examiner. Virtual backgrounds are not permitted.
- o The examinee must be clearly captured through the webcam, such that entire frontal view of the face is clearly visible.

Reports

Before the exam
- o General Supervisor / Technical supervisor must take a login report in Moodle 10 minutes before the examination in order to check any unauthorized action to the exam page.

During the exam
- o General Supervisor / Technical supervisor must take the quiz attempt / view report in Moodle during the first 10 minutes of the examination and ensure all the students are in the zoom meeting and vise versa.
- o General Supervisor / Technical supervisor must take the quiz attempt report in Moodle just after the first one hour of the exam (if the exam duration is two hours or more, otherwise just after the first 30 minutes). Students who were registered with the examination but not in this report should be unenrolled immediately from Moodle by the technical supervisor.

After the exam
- o General Supervisor / Technical supervisor must take the completed quiz report in Moodle just after the exam.

Interruptions during Examination

o   In case of any interruptions during the examination, the examinee will be allowed to continue the examination only if s/he re-joins the examination within 15 minutes from the start of the interruption. However, if s/he is unable to access the system (LMS and ZOOM) within 15 minutes, he/she has to face a make-up examination. The date of such a make-up exam will be notified later.

o   If the examinee disappears from the screen (ZOOM) without informing the supervisors/invigilators, the attempt will be cancelled.

o   Any difficulties/emergencies experienced by the examinee should be informed to the supervisor/invigilators immediately.

Supervisor/ Invigilator Responsibilities

Invigilator Responsibilities

o   Be familiar with the "Online Examination Guidelines" issued to the students.

o   Timely arrival to examination monitoring premises - i.e., 1 and 1/2 hours before scheduled examination time.

o   Record the entire ZOOM session and handover the recorded file to the supervisor at the end of the examination.

o   Admit candidates from ZOOM waiting rooms after verifying the student ID card and admission. Further, mark attendance in the sheet given.

o   Disable the chat functionality in ZOOM.

o   Get the LMS attempt report (log report) from supervisor and mark in the sheet given.

o   Compare each candidate's attendance with the LMS attempt report (log report) to check any discrepancies.

o   Continuously monitor the assigned candidates and immediately take action against malpractices.

o   Immediately contact candidates if he/she disappear from ZOOM or disconnect from the LMS and inform the supervisor.

o   Get the completion report from supervisor and mark in the sheet given. Further, check for discrepancies.

Supervisor Responsibility
- Be familiar with the "Online Examination Guidelines" issued to the students.
- Officially announce the start of the examination.
- Download / view the attempt report (log report) in LMS 1 hour after starting the examination. The downloaded file should be saved for future official references.
- Suspend unattempted candidates from the LMS 1 hour after starting the examination.
- Officially remind the examinees of the time remaining to complete the examination, 10 minutes prior to the end of the examination.
- Officially announce the end of the examination.
- Download / view completion report (log report) in LMS immediately after ending the examination.
- Hide the submission link immediately after verifying the submissions of the candidates.

Examinee Responsibilities

During the examination, the examinee must NOT:
- Communicate with any other person by any means.
- Use a mobile phone for any reason (except for contacting supervisor/invigilator or in an emergency).
- Share any information with any other person.
- Copy, screenshot, or in any way record the exam screens or exam questions/answers.
- Leave the room during the exam for any reason, other than to use the washroom, if necessary. If using the washroom, the examinee must inform supervisor/invigilators before leaving the room and once he/she returns.

Confidentiality
- The examination is confidential. It cannot be copied, printed, saved, recorded, or reproduced in any manner, at any time. The exam questions and answers cannot be disclosed or disseminated to anyone before, during, or after the examination.

Participation

- o The examinee must access LMS and ZOOM 01 hour prior to the scheduled starting time of the examination. Any difficulties with login or accessing LMS and ZOOM should be informed to supervisor/invigilators immediately.
- o ZOOM name of the examinee must be renamed with student number immediately after his/her first log-in (e.g., MAA/2020/XXX).
- o The examination portal will be locked after 01 hour of the start of the examination. Thereafter, late attendees will not be able to attempt the examination.
- o If the examinee has not accessed/viewed the examination in LMS and is not present in ZOOM, it will be treated as absent.
- o If the examinee accessed/viewed the examination and did not submit answers in LMS within the given time period, he/she will be considered as a repeat student for the next attempt.
- o 30 extra minutes are added to the total duration of the question paper. This is given to review and submit the answers. If not, answers will be automatically submitted. The examinee must wisely use this additional time provided.
- o Examinee's LMS access and ZOOM access will be considered as attendance for examination.
- o Until the supervisor informs at the end of the examination, examinees are not allowed to leave ZOOM and the LMS.
- o Only typed answers will be accepted. Any other format will be not accepted.

Violation of Examination Guidelines

- o Any violation of examination guidelines or dishonesty in an examination is a serious examination offence and subject to disciplinary action under the Examination Guidelines/Rules of the University.

Communication During the Examination

- o The examinee must provide a contactable and a working contact number to contact in an emergency situation.
- o If any interruption/any issue occurs during the examination, examinee can immediately inform via;

  077 391xxx, 0112 903vvv

  xxx@kln.ac.lk, aaaaa2020@gmail.com
- o In addition, before starting the examination the examinee will be given contact numbers/emails to communicate examination matters, if any.

After Finishing the Examination

- o General Supervisor / Technical Supervisor must take the completed quiz report in Moodle just after the examination.
- o This report should be compared with the report generated after the first one hour (or 30 minutes, based on the time duration of the exam).
- o The examination link and the grade book in Moodle should be hidden.
- o The technical supervisor should perform the course backup of Moodle examination page after taking all the reports.

The general supervisor of the exam should handover all the reports generated during the examination to the Faculty / Postgraduate office after finishing all the above examination procedures.