

RAISING THE BAR IN ONLINE TESTING

Many students and professionals worldwide are asking why they should travel to traditional brick-and-mortar testing centers for their exams. “I study online, why can’t I test online?”

THE GLOBAL SHIFT TOWARD ONLINE learning is increasing demand for online testing solutions that can evaluate learners effectively while maintaining academic integrity. The shift to online learning and testing is being fueled by:

- Corporate learning and development groups using online education to stretch budgets and increase efficiency
- Higher education institutions looking for new ways to provide technology-driven programs to students and professors through online learning platforms

The growth of distance education and remote testing options has created the need for the online proctoring of test takers.

Proctoring – having a person physically present to authenticate test takers’ identities and monitor them during the test

process – has long been an important part of maintaining academic integrity, deterring cheating, and protecting against test content piracy. Historically, students gathered in a testing center, often a school, where a proctor – usually a part-time employee, volunteer, or teacher that administered course studies – watched them take the test.

Using proctors to monitor a student from a distance via webcams has become a logical solution. The challenge, however, is how to duplicate the proctoring process online. On the surface, online proctoring appears to be straightforward. Yet for global organizations operating across multiple industry platforms, providing a secure and efficient online proctoring service is no simple task. The execution of this service is complicated by many variables including:

- Accommodating differing times zones of test takers
- Adjusting for the length and types of tests
- Providing for various types of cameras and microphones
- Allowing client-specific test aids, such as calculators or books
- Accommodating inconsistent Internet connection, quality, and speed
- Eliminating scheduling conflicts
- Removing the possibility of collusion between test taker and proctor

To address these challenges, Kryterion, Inc., a member of the Drake International Group of Companies, developed one of the most comprehensive online testing solutions available. Kryterion understands that the key to successful and secure online proctoring is a blend of innovative technology and human interaction.

The technology side includes hardware and software. Kryterion's online proctoring solutions accommodate onboard cameras commonly found on today's laptops and more advanced USB cameras that offer a wider view of the test taker and surrounding environment. Audio monitoring can also be accommodated via an onboard or attached microphone.

Kryterion's flexible software solutions meet the varied needs of their clients from simple remote monitoring of the tester to browser lockdowns, software connectivity with learning management systems, or test delivery systems.

Along with technology, trained and experienced proctors fulfill a critical role in ensuring secure testing. Kryterion has professionalized the role of a proctor by pioneering the Certified Professional Proctor™ (CPP) role, a vital step in helping the industry move away from regarding proctors as part-time or volunteer workers.

CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL PROCTOR

Kryterion CPPs have one job – to monitor test takers. Their proctors undergo rigid background checks, personality evaluation, three reference evaluations, 100 hours of training, and a certification exam. This extensive hiring process gives Kryterion's clients the confidence that the proctors will maintain high levels of academic integrity. This is critical as more students enroll in online courses, and demands for quality control and assessment become regulation.

"We see the proctors as valuable members of our proctoring solutions and processes," says Kryterion's Director of Online Proctoring Services, Jennifer McGlashon. "Our employees are trained in a study of behaviors that Kryterion has come to understand from our long experience in the testing industry. We have years of recorded data that we use for training."

ONLINE PROCTORING CENTER

In 2009, Kryterion opened a centralized online proctor center in Phoenix, Arizona, US. They recently moved into a new facility. In recognition of the importance of proctors in the new online learning shift, this purpose-built facility was designed around the needs of the proctors. The center ensures that clients receive the highest quality online proctoring as well as the most advanced security measures in the industry.

SECURITY AND AUTHENTICATION METHODS

Exam security needs are met by a variety of technologies. These include Kryterion's hardware technology and proprietary software solutions that lock down the browser.

"We have non-negotiable technology requirements," said McGlashon. "Chief among them is dependable connectivity and security."

With students taking important exams – many with significant implications for their future – organizations cannot afford to have connectivity issues that affect their testing experience. Furthermore, security on many levels is important – physical security at Kryterion's online proctoring center, data security that protects the confidentiality of the test takers, and exam content security that protects the institution offering the exam. Kryterion incorporates these measures in several ways.

Physical building security measures include:

- Electronic entrance
- Video surveillance
- Proctors continuously monitored by supervisors
- Supervisors monitored by management
- Photo ID badges for visitors



Kryterion celebrates opening of new online proctor center



Kryterion proctors at work

“Technology enables people across the world to participate in high-level education,” says Kryterion CEO William Dorman. “As the number of students in distance education continues to grow across the globe, the pressure for quality online proctoring or invigilation solutions also increases.”

Test security measures include:

- Certified Professional Proctors™
- Biometric authentication
- Video documentation of test session
- Real-time or review monitoring
- Test item encryption

CONCLUSION

Kryterion has been on the forefront of providing test development and delivery solutions, including online proctoring, since 2001. They serve the corporate training, certification, and higher education markets.

As online proctoring transitions to become a necessity in distance education programs, Kryterion will continue to be an innovative leader, revolutionizing the online testing industry with solutions that meet the demands of multiple industry platforms.

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For more information on Kryterion and the world's first centralized online proctor operations center, visit www.kryteriononline.com or contact marketing@kryteriononline.com



Kryterion management in conference center