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11 Questions To Ask When Considering Online Proctoring

For Your High-stakes Testing Program

When considering online proctoring for your testing program, it is essential to choose a partner that actively protects the value of hard-earned certifications and credentials. When you partner with ProctorU and Yardstick, you have access to industry-leading online proctoring, test development and test delivery services. Together, we utilize proven processes and procedures with the most comprehensive data and reporting in the industry in order to uphold your program's privacy, security and value. We have gathered some of the most important questions to ask any vendor when considering the move to online testing. See for yourself through the responses below:

01 How do you define quality proctoring?

Why is this important: It is critical to have confidence that your online proctoring vendor is preventing and detecting cheating behaviors to protect the integrity of your program. But how do you measure proctoring quality? What data proves each proctor is doing a good job and that your online proctoring solution is effective and consistent?

Our Response: We define quality proctoring as delivering positive, measurable results for our partners and better outcomes for test-takers. Our new reporting tool, Performance Insights, provides full access to data, **reporting** and analytics that are relevant to the test-taker experience and satisfaction including technical issues, wait times and exam integrity from a holistic program view, all the way down to a single exam session. Transparent reporting provides the data you need to monitor proctoring effectiveness and provide an optimal experience for your test-takers. Sharing the data we collect allows us to work as partners to improve your program.

02 How are your proctors trained and evaluated?

Why is this important: Training separates good proctors from those who are great. Anyone can sit in a room and watch someone take an exam. A great proctor knows how to deal with potential issues and the laws surrounding the proctoring industry. Furthermore, proctors must also understand testing accommodations and how to properly communicate with and support test-takers.

Our Response: All ProctorU proctors go through 80 hours of training, including compliance and privacy education. After initial on-boarding, they must complete a minimum of 40 hours of supervised proctoring under the direct observation of a certified proctor manager. Successful candidates are invited to apply for initial certification which includes a performance review, an online exam testing their knowledge of the proctoring system, policies and processes; an English-language certification exam; and an exam to test their knowledge and understanding of processes and privacy. After certification, all proctors receive monthly group training, constant one-on-one coaching, and regular refresher training. Furthermore, our Compliance Team has 24/7 observation coverage of all proctors in order to perform blind-audits. If a proctor fails an observation, managers are required to acknowledge the issue and provide additional training or remediation when needed.

We currently operate 16 proctoring locations, across 7 countries, totaling more than

900 proctoring staff.

03 Who and where are your proctors?

Why is this important: Proctors are the face of your program for test-takers. It is important that they are knowledgeable, tech-savvy, and customer service-focused. Employing skilled and service-oriented proctors ensures your test-takers feel comfortable during an already stressful time. For security reasons, a proctor should only work in a secure proctoring facility monitored and controlled by the vendor.

Our Response: All of our proctors work in one of 16 secure locations, conveniently located across the world to ensure 24/7 availability. With an average age of 28, many of our proctors hold, or are working toward, college degrees. For many of them, proctoring is a full-time career. Most of our proctors speak a second language, but we also have translation technology available for all of our products, so test-takers never have to worry about a language barrier. Each proctor goes through rigorous training that includes technology and customer service certification and they are blind audited weekly to ensure they meet our high proctoring standards.

Note: During the 2020 pandemic, it became necessary to transition many proctors to a virtual proctoring environment allowing them to securely proctor from home. This was a necessary step to provide business continuity for our partners. However, all proctors returned to proctoring facilities as stay-at-home orders were lifted.

04 What is your business continuity and scalability plan?

Why is this important: It is important to partner with a vendor that is prepared for potential threats to operations such as cyber attacks, natural disasters and pandemics. In addition to threat prevention, can your vendor seamlessly continue operating during these business challenges and even scale their services when necessary? A solid business continuity plan and proven execution provides peace of mind knowing your testing program will be minimally affected, if at all.

Our Response: Our business continuity plan began in 2015, when ProctorU built an operational infrastructure to distribute proctors around the world and create redundancies to mitigate various types of threats. Today, we have 16 strategically placed global proctoring locations in seven different countries. Our proctoring operations can be routed seamlessly, withstanding operational challenges, to provide our high level of service. This plan was recently put to the test with the COVID-19 pandemic, where we increased our capacity by more than 400% in order to better serve new and existing partners.

05 How will my exam perform in an online environment compared to a test center?

Why is this important: You have invested extensive time, resources and budget into creating a high-stakes exam that accurately determines a test-taker's knowledge and skills. It is important to ensure that your test items perform consistently, regardless of testing modality and environment.

Our Response: Based on research, we can confidently say that no statistical difference can be found for performance on exams administered in a test center versus a remote proctoring environment.There is no distinct advantage to test-takers who are proctored online compared to any other type of proctoring. You can be confident your exam will perform consistently regardless of delivery modality.

06 Do you measure test-taker satisfaction?

Why is this important: Measuring and tracking customer satisfaction reflects a company that is continually striving to become better, listen to their audience, and reasonably deliver the services that audience needs. This can also be an indicator of training needs or issues that may need to be resolved.

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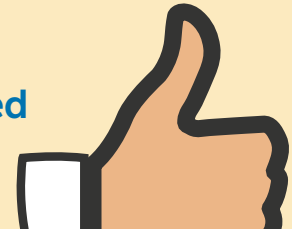
Our Response: We ask every test-taker to complete a quick survey at the end of their exam to rate ProctorU's service and their experience with the proctor. This data helps us monitor positive trends and identify areas where there is room for improvement. We also track those key performance indicators (KPIs) over time and report them to you. Currently, 92% of test-takers are satisfied or very satisfied with their proctor. With **Performance Insights**, you can see your program's satisfaction metrics and compare it to our global average at any time.

07 How are technical issues resolved?

Why is this important: Taking an exam can be a stressful situation, especially when the stakes are high. When technology is used to facilitate an exam, it is important that a high level of technical support be provided in the event that issues arise during the process. Online exam delivery and proctoring are meant to add convenience to test-takers, not add to their stress.

Our Response: We provide test-takers and administrators with free 24/7 technical support via live chat, email and phone. On average, it takes less than 15 minutes to connect with live tech support. We make every effort to resolve technical issues that arise before or during an exam session. If we cannot resolve an issue for any reason, our advocates reach out to exam facilitators on behalf of test-takers in order to explain the situation and work toward a resolution. Currently, less than 8% of all exams experience any technical issues.

08 How do you know your IP is secure?

Why is this important: Anyone can put a test online, but a secure testing platform and environment is vital to ensuring that your exam content cannot be redistributed, manipulated or copied.

Our Response: Since this is often one of the highest priorities for our partners, we have created a proctoring platform paired with processes and security measures to ensure the highest level of content and identity protection. These measures include securing the test-taker's physical environment by removing any cell phones and unpermitted materials, confirming that the test-taker is alone, and not allowing speaking during an exam. The proctor also secures the virtual environment by removing copy, paste and screenshot capabilities and closing out all unnecessary programs. If a test-taker tries to perform any of these actions, they are automatically flagged and reported on the administrator's dashboard. It is also important to consider the security risks in a physical test center. Pinhole cameras, for example, are difficult to detect during online proctoring but equally as difficult to detect in person.

09 Do you utilize artificial intelligence (AI)? If so, what does it track or prevent?

Why is this important: While many companies claim to use AI, it is not always clear how it is being used or for what purposes. In some cases, what is being deemed "artificial intelligence" is actually just a series of algorithms that have no element of intelligence or learning and does not actually meet the definition of AI. In other cases, AI is being used in an attempt to automate a process that still needs human oversight.

Our Response: We believe in a multi-layered approach to proctoring in which live humans are augmented, not replaced, by AI and other technologies. Even for clients using our automated platform, we insist that all sessions with flagged incidents be reviewed by a human to determine what actions, if any, should be taken. We employ a range of adaptive and machine learning technologies in order to assist proctors and act as a second set of eyes for things that humans may not be able to notice such as minor facial differences, low sounds or whispers, and reflections. However, we believe that, in order to truly prevent a breach of integrity, a human must be involved to intervene.

10 Can you provide support for ANSI and NCCA accreditations?

Why is this important: ANSI and/or NCCA accreditation may be an important stamp of quality approval for your program and stakeholders. Whether working toward a new accreditation or retaining your accreditation status, it is important to partner with a vendor that is able to support the data and process required to attain and maintain accreditation.

Our Response: We have worked with numerous ANSI-accredited programs, such as National Restaurant Association, **StateFoodSafety**, Global Information Assurance Certification, and Crossfit. We take on a consultative approach to educate, support, and guide our partners who are seeking or maintaining their accreditation utilizing remote proctoring. Our support includes guidance and documentation on security, privacy, policy and procedures for exam development, administration, and delivery.

We also provide significant data and reporting to demonstrate the effectiveness of online proctoring to validate exam content integrity. These efforts have been critical in the NCCA pilot program to assess the effectiveness of online proctoring, compared to test centers, against the compliance to NCCA standards.

11 What percentage of your exams include a potential integrity violation before or during an exam?

Why is this important: When a proctoring company is doing a good job of securing the testing environment prior to the start of an exam, there will always be a portion of test-takers who will be required to remove materials from their exam space. And there will always be some test-takers who, either knowingly or unknowingly, break the rules during an exam. A proctoring company should have a record of those "touchpoints" and be ready to share that data with you. If they are not capturing, documenting, and reporting prevention metrics, you should have a clear understanding of how they are preventing and detecting cheating.

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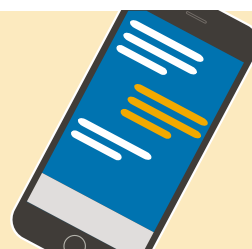
Our Response: As your online proctoring vendor, ProctorU is charged with maintaining exam integrity, protecting exam content, and preserving the value of your testing program. Our experience has shown that, on average, 54% of exams will need to have unpermitted materials removed, 11% of exams will require an active intervention from a live proctor, and 0.4% of exams report a breach of integrity. This data is available for all of our partners, as well as detailed reports that are available within 48 hours of each exam session. Exam session reports include flagged events, end-to-end recordings, and timestamps.