Mitigating students’ anxiety when using online exam proctoring in HEI

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Problem Description

For exam, HEI need to consider and put in place measures to mitigate as much as possible so-called test anxiety. Students’ levels of anxiety for taking an exam include worrying about the test itself, but also about exam procedures, possible technical issues, what could be regarded as considered suspicious fraudulent behavior etc. Case and Calabu (2009) reported that in particular for students running an online remote proctored test for the first time can have high levels of anxiety, but subsequent runs cause less anxiety. Measures put in place by the exam provider, could and should mitigate any further anxiety.

For that reason, an HEI needs to make sure to be as transparent as possible by having explicit, timely and clear information communicated to students regarding:
- Procedures for signing up for exams;
- Not students by careful Provide computer if the
- How can an HEI provide all the necessary info to students in a timely manner?
- Students WhatsApp process submit room of the
- of elaborateness tongue of maybe if needed technical to the
- Make how finishing exam. communicated management:
- have communication start successful
to clickable strange single run of the
time exam.
- Do Provide sufficient feedback via the user proctoring system
- Students recording the environment
- Admissable and inadmissable behaviors, tools and resources during exams;
- Flow diagrams, infographics and pictograms regarding procedures
- Check out for that purpose, the proctoring provider. For
- Remote login to the proctoring for
- Students receive the assessment
- The time at
- Students can behave without the examination performed
- Students have limited control over the successful communication to remote students;
- Remote students need to take care of their own technical environment and devices for a procedural and technical flawless run of an exam;
- Students have to cope with all the above procedures for maybe single run of an exam;
- In case of proctoring without a live present human proctor during an exam (either via a chat window or a video connection), this process is even harder. However, for matters of cost, doing proctoring via Record (and later) Review option might be needed.

Challenges

An HEI needs to pay careful attention to reduce level of anxiety for online proctoring as much as possible. 
- How can an HEI provide all the necessary info to students in a timely manner?
- How can an HEI answer to different computer skills, differences in language, difference in information processing preferences?

Instructional materials

Not much is known about optimal ways to communicate with remote students if they enter an online learning course or exam for the first time (St. Claire, 2015). However, the OP4RE project identifies and proposes five general methods and sources of communication to use as a framework for proctoring providers and HEIs based on current material of online proctoring providers, HEIs and literature:
- Written information must be presented in clear ways, must be easily findable, language and style must be adapted to the intended audience
- Flow diagrams, infographics and pictograms may help navigation and understanding.
- Video’s and animations explaining processes in detail
- Check-in queries to make sure students understand procedures (St. Claire, 2015)
- On screen guidance and direct feedback

Solutions for mitigating anxiety and improving phase of exam

- Proctoring system is made and can be the foundation of the system
- The student clicks the exam process from the start up to the actual presentation of the exam questions. This process includes:
  1. Students need to complete an online onboarding and will receive a link with a 25% or using period.
  2. Starting window, proctoring and possibly upload multiple photo sides.
  3. Make a photo of self
  4. Make a picture of an ID document
  5. Reading the environment to show that there is nothing blocking the view of the proctor.
  6. Start the exam, when the exam is online
  7. Take the exam.

- Students no take actual window with a user interface software provided by the exam provider.
- Students can be in problems with lagging into the exam and cannot see everything on the screen itself.
- Students have pop-up blockers, students do not allow their web browser to access the external site.
- If the OP4RE project is not sure that the responsible is responsible of the exam, students provide feedback on the proctoring provider and for the exam for the exam.
- Students are not sure if their exam is really proctored and someone is watching.
- Students call for assistance on a chat window but the student does not have contact with exam. Students call for assistance on a chat window but the student expect someone in different is available to the student.
- Students student final answers.
- Students are not sure if they have actually submitted the exam.
- Students do not allow the exam via the correct button and do not fully complete the proctoring window.
- Students execute an assessment process.
- Students are not sure if they stop behaving suspiciously if the exam.
- Students are not sure if they have done something else. Students are not sure if they have done something else.
- Students receive a feedback on possible suspicion of fraud.
- Students execute an assessment process.
- Students are not sure if they stop behaving suspiciously if the exam.
- Students are not sure if they have done something else. Students are not sure if they have done something else.

Different guidelines for fraud inspection

The OP4RE project found the following differences that could cause uncertainty amongst students if they encounter different exams, proctor or systems:
- Differences in details of installing and checking software
- Differences in specificity regarding required:
  - lighting conditions;
  - type of room (living room, study room);
  - extent of declaring the table and room;
  - elaborateness of filming the room of the student;
  - elaborateness of filming hands, cars, behind and under computer.

Contribution to practice

In this practice poster, anxiety and problems when taking an online proctored exam for the first time are described and problematised. For general acceptance and fair test practices, ample care should be given to mitigate anxiety and possible problems.

For that purpose, the OP4RE project will describe in more detail the framework for successful communication in online proctoring:
- The OP4RE project will produce guidelines and rulebooks to take into account the challenges and proposed mitigations presented on this paper.
- The OP4RE project proposes to vendors of software and systems for online proctoring to also take into account the challenges and proposed mitigations.
- The OP4RE project proposes that all online proctoring providers converge to the same set of guidelines for fraud inspection

References

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