

# NIPISSING

## U N I V E R S I T Y

### Secure Online Testing FAQ for Instructors

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Q: What is Secure Online Testing?

A: Currently, we use two pieces of software from Respondus to assist us in providing a secured environment for delivering assessments online.

The first is called Lockdown Browser, and Respondus describes it as “a custom browser that locks down the testing environment in Blackboard Learn. When students use LockDown Browser to take a Blackboard test, they are unable to print, copy, go to other websites, access other applications, or close a test until it is submitted for grading. Tests created for use with LockDown Browser cannot be accessed with standard browsers, either.”

The second software is called Respondus Monitor. It is described as “webcam feature for LockDown Browser that records students during online, non-proctored exams. When this feature is enabled for a test, students are required to use a webcam and microphone with LockDown Browser. After the exam is complete, an instructor can review details of the assessment, even the recorded videos.”

Q: How can I utilize these tools in my course?

A: There is a two-part training that must be completed in order for these tools to be enabled in your course. The first part is a video which outlines the tools, features, and benefits. The second part is provided by the Learning Systems Technologists (LST's) and focuses on how the software works in your course shell and how to enable it on assessments as well as how to review the video footage once your students have completed their assessments.

Q: What resources are available to students and how do they download the software?

A: Within your course shell on Blackboard there is a menu item titled “Secure Online Testing”. In this folder you will find many helpful resources including instructional videos covering how the software works and what they will experience when using it. There is also a link to the [Student Quick Start Guide](#) provided by the Respondus.

**\*\*Very important** to note is that this is also the location of the download link that the students MUST use to download the software, as it is unique to our institution. \*\*

Q: How do I access the video footage once the assessment is complete?

**A:** In your course shell, search for Course Management > Course Tools > Respondus Lockdown Browser.

Click the drop-down menu next to the assessment you want to review, and then click on Class Results. The videos will be listed here, with the highest priority videos bunched near the top of the list.

Q: Who do I speak to if I'd like a second opinion on a recording? How do I deal with suspicious behaviors in a recording?

**A:** Generally speaking, you should raise your concerns to your program manager first. The LST can then provide them with access to the recordings to allow them to view them and provide their input. From here, the discussion could be escalated to the Dean for further review and discussion of next steps.

Q: What should I be looking for during the recordings?

**A:** Generally, what you'll notice first is the student looking in a direction other than at their computer screen. This happens quite often so it may trigger flags in the recording. You should also look and listen for them to be talking to anyone else who might be helping them find answers to questions. This can occur if someone is in the view of the camera or not, so it's important to view the recording as well as listen to it.

Best practice would suggest checking the high priority recordings as they will contain more flags. It is also worth quickly browsing the rest of the recordings as sometimes you might notice behaviors in the thumbnails which may trigger you to check some of the video footage as well. At this time, Respondus Monitor does not pick up on audio triggers, such as someone else's voice in the background. This is another reason it is worth reviewing even the lowest priority videos as you may notice behaviors such as these.

Q: What does the university define as actions indicative of cheating?

**A:** The University defines cheating in the Academic Calendar as follows:

“dishonest or attempted dishonest conduct such as speaking to other candidates or communicating with them under any circumstances whatsoever; bringing into the examination room any textbook, notebook, or memoranda not authorized by the examiner, or leaving answer papers exposed to view.”

Should you require further clarification on this, please contact your Dean.

Q: I noticed a password has been applied to a test when I enabled Lockdown Browser, why is this?

**A:** When a test is configured to use LockDown Browser, a random password is added under the Blackboard test settings. This password is used by LockDown Browser to prevent students from accessing the exam unless they are using LockDown Browser.

Important: Instructors should **\*\*NOT delete or modify\*\*** this password once the LockDown Browser setting has been required for the test. If the password is modified, students will receive a warning message and be prevented from accessing the test; the instructor will see a "Fix It" indicator in the Respondus LockDown Browser dashboard. Clicking "fix it" will restore the password in the Blackboard Learn quiz settings.

Q: I have students in my class who have accommodations for online testing (such as additional time). How do I manage this?

**A:** You would manage accommodations the same way you would without using Lockdown Browser. Please ask your LST for assistance with this process if needed.

Q: I have a student who is concerned about being recorded during their assessment as they feel this is in violation of their privacy?

**A:** A student who failed to complete a final examination because they felt their privacy would be invaded would not qualify for a deferred examination through the Office of the Registrar.

All students completing a final exam are observed continuously, per the policy on Final Examinations. This is true whether writing on-site, at an off-site proctored centre, or online.

The data collected through this technology falls under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, as well as our own internal Policies such as the Privacy Statement, the Policy on Notice of Disclosure, and the Policy on Student Records, as well as the Policy on Final Examinations when the technology is used for a Final Examination. Similar to all the other sensitive data we collect on students, such as their social insurance numbers, addresses, dates of birth, etc., we are required to take every reasonable step to ensure that data is secured, and appropriately destroyed after the specified time period.

Q: What are some things to remember when administering these tools?

**A:** Every course is different and the setup of a course will vary, so here's some ideas of things you can add to your syllabus depending on how your course is setup:

When taking an online exam, remember to follow these guidelines:

- Select a location where you won't be interrupted
- Before starting the test, know how much time is available for it, and that you've allotted sufficient time to complete it
- Turn off all mobile devices, phones, etc. and don't have them within reach
- Clear your area of all external materials — books, papers, other computers, or devices
- Remain at your desk or workstation for the duration of the test
- LockDown Browser will prevent you from accessing other websites or applications; you will be unable to exit the test until all questions are completed and submitted

Q: How does the practice test work?

**A:** Ensure your first exam using LockDown Browser runs smoothly! Have students take an ungraded practice quiz that requires the use of LockDown Browser, before the graded exam occurs. We will deploy a Practice Test in your shell so students can get comfortable with it early on. We leave the quiz available for the duration of the course, with unlimited attempts, so students can access it again if they use a different computer.

We highly encourage you to send an Announcement at the beginning of the semester letting them know that it is there and to try it out. Historically, this has shown to drastically reduce the number of issues students experience throughout the semester, when they are using the software for a graded assessment.

Q: I have students in my class who have accommodations for online testing (such as additional time and adaptive technology). How do I manage this?

**A:** You would manage accommodations the same way you would without using Lockdown Browser.

In addition, TextAid (By Read Speaker) is now available to support students who require Text-To-Speech accommodations. TextAid is a fully functional, Text-To-Speech tool that can be used in LockDown Browser environments. It is the **only adaptive function** that can provide this accommodation within LockDown Browser.

Faculty are responsible for making TextAid available to all courses using LockDown Browser. Full instructions on what to do can be found in the [Secure Testing Link](#) provided in the Teaching Hub YouTube channel.

While TextAid has been introduced for use by students with Text-To-Speech accommodations, it is available for **all** students to use.

All students have been given instructions about TextAid Under “Assessments” via the “Secure Testing Information” section, as well as within the course’s section for tests and quizzes.

Any concerns or questions can be made by emailing [sastesting@nipisisngu.ca](mailto:sastesting@nipisisngu.ca).

Additional Resources can be found below:

[Information and Privacy](#)

[Final Exam Policy](#)

[Respondus Monitor: Understanding Proctoring Results](#)

[NU Teaching Hub YouTube Channel](#)

[Secure Testing YouTube Playlist](#)

Procedure for escalating suspicious cases:

1. Course Instructor reviews videos after the assessments are completed by all students.
2. One or more students are noticed to be exhibiting behaviours in the recording which suggest cheating/academic dishonesty or might affect the integrity of the exam.
3. The Instructor would escalate the issue and ask the Program Manager to discuss further. This can include a request to review the footage in question to provide their opinion and assist with direction in the individual cases. The LST could then grant the Program Manager temporary access to the Blackboard course shell in question.
4. Should there be any additional concerns, the Dean would become involved and be granted access to course shell to review.
5. A decision would be made based on video recordings and opinions of those involved in the review.
6. A communication can be now initiated to the student.