

ST. CLAIR COLLEGE



Test Protocols, Proctoring & Best Practices

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Preliminary Matters: Preparing the Test

Test, like other assessments, must be in line with the requirements set out in the course outline. There are two important reasons to check the course outline prior to preparing tests: test format & alignment to course learning outcomes.

Test Format

Check the course outline to determine whether there are criteria regarding the test: does the course outline refer to specific requirements to the format of the test? These may include criteria such as whether it must be in-class or take-home, whether it is open-book or closed-book, or the type of test questions (multiple-choice vs. short answer - or combination), etc.

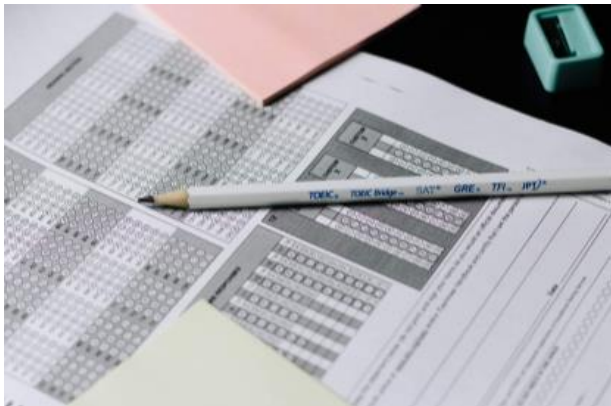
There may be more flexibility in test format in some courses or specific requirements in others. Follow the parameters of the course outline. Either way, students should know the format of a scheduled test well in advance.

Align to Course Learning Outcomes

Check the course outline to ensure that you are assessing based on course learning outcomes. For example, if a learning outcome states that a student should be able to “explain” something, multiple-choice/true-false format is not appropriate for that outcome. For a written test, short-answer or essay format should be used instead.

Guidelines: number of marks/points on tests

When giving a multiple-choice/true-false quiz or test, the general rule is that there should be at minimum two questions for every percentage point in the weight of the assessment.



Examples:

- A quiz worth 10% of total grade in the course should have at least 20 questions.
- A test worth 25% of the total grade in the course should have at least 50 questions.

Guidelines: Allotted Time

These are general guidelines and may need to be adjusted for factors like the length of the question.



- 30 seconds per true-false question
- 60 seconds per multiple choice question
- 90 seconds per fill-in-the blank item
- 120 seconds per matching question
- 5 minutes per short-answer question
- 10-15 minutes per essay question
- 5 to 10 minutes to review the work

Or, allow triple the amount of time it takes you to complete the test

Preparing the Test: Safeguarding Integrity

Although we must address academic misconduct when it occurs, disciplinary measures after the fact should not be the prevailing strategy upon which our academic integrity standards are upheld. Rather, academic integrity is best approached by using best practices to minimize opportunity to commit academic misconduct.

Minimizing Risk of Breaches to Security of Test

- Avoid publisher test banks. Questions from test banks should comprise less than 20% of a test.
- Do not use the same test in multiple sections of the same course unless the students in multiple sections are writing the test at the same time.
- Do not use the same test semester after semester. If you need to recycle questions or create a similar test, doing so no sooner than every 3 years is a good guideline. Note: search "homework" sites to ensure the test has not been compromised/uploaded.
- Create different versions (preferably 4 versions) of the same test each time you are giving it.
 - Versions of test means it contains the same questions in a different order of questions/options or it contains similar questions with minor variations in the question such that a student looking at a neighbouring test will not be able to identify it to a question on their own version.

- Use manner to readily identify different versions to prevent/detect tests being switched by students (i.e. large font on front cover or different colour front cover per version).
- If printing test double sided, use two staples along side instead of one at top corner.
- Use a front cover on each test that sets out all the requirements and instructs students not to open test until instructed to do so ([see template](#)).

Examination Regulations: Test Protocols

This section refers to [College Policy 1.3.13, Examination Regulations](#). Suggested practices help ensure compliance with College policy.

The Examination Regulations Policy applies to any test worth 20% or more of a student's final grade. Therefore, the recommendations in this guide should be considered mandatory when planning a test of that grade weight. You should read and be familiar with the more complete Examination Policy, especially when invigilating final exams for large classes and/or for classes that are not your own.

It is expected that where it makes sense, this guide will also be followed for tests/exams worth 6% to 20% of a student's final grade in order to ensure academic integrity is respected.

For tests/exams less than 20%, however, the recommendations made here may require adjustments to suit the specific needs of a test or exam. For example, class size, allotted test time, percentage of final grade, allowed use of resources, and the physical environment are some of the circumstances that may require modifications to the recommendations.

The terms "test" and "exam" will be used interchangeably in this section.

In the sections that follow, numbers in [brackets] indicate the specific section of the Examination Policy where further information can be found.

Before the Test

- Ensure you have printed enough tests for the class. Refer to the number of registered students on the class roster (do not base print copies on how many students regularly attend class. [26]
- Ensure the value of each question/answer is indicated on the exam/test paper. [26]
- Ensure tests are typed and assembled prior to the test beginning. Do not have students assemble tests prior to writing. [26]
- In cases where there are multiple sections writing exams/tests at different times, ensure there are different tests for each section of students. [25]

- In rooms where the integrity of the exam/test may be compromised, usually due to space restrictions, ensure there are different versions of the exam/test for distribution. [28]
- Advise students of test format (at least) one week prior to the event; ensure students have knowledge of the format of the test; allotted time to write it; permissible aids/resources; any particular requirements/restrictions deemed necessary by the instructor responsible for the test. Indicate these particulars on a covering page included with the test materials. [29]
 - See [Test Cover Page Template](#)
 - See [Student Handout: Test Readiness & Protocols](#)
- Remind students to bring their Student ID.
- Preselect a time, i.e. 3 days after the test, when you will be available to collect and verify student IDs for those students who forget to bring their Student ID to the test. [57/58]
- Remind students of the materials and resources they will need to bring for the test/exam (e.g. pencils, calculators, etc.).
- Prepare students that they must place their coats and jackets in a designated area of the testing room; advise them to wear warm clothing, if appropriate.
- Remind students that only materials and tools specifically authorized are permissible in the test area: all other items, including cell phones and smart watches, must be left at the designated area of the room (usually front of the room).
- Print out multiple copies of the class roster in alphabetical order of student last name to the test and extra pens.
- Create a checklist of announcements you will make to students before the test starts.

Safeguarding Test During Distribution

- Tip: Count the number of tests you distribute and count the number of tests that are submitted to ensure that no test has gone missing.
- Method 1 advantage is that a test is distributed directly to the student. The disadvantage of this method may be ability to monitor while you are distributing.

Entry to test: Method 1 - Test Handed Out After Students Seated

This is the preferred method for students who are not disciplined/experienced test-takers and where instructor needs to ensure that all rules are clearly established before students come into contact with test.

This method ensures a test does not go missing before instructor can be assured that all items such as backpacks and coats have been left in the front of the room and there are no prohibited items in the test area.

This method will allow instructor to make announcements before the test is distributed, including:

- Remind students to place their student ID on their desk.
- Remind students of the only authorized materials permitted during the test.
- Remind students that cell phones, and other electronic devices (including watches) are not permissible on their person or in the test area. Last call: bring all items to front of room.

Entry to Test: Method 2 - Tests Placed on Desks Before Students Enter

If distributing tests before students enter test area, take extra precautions by individually numbering each test. Students entering test area must leave all items at the front of the room before taking their seat.

Consider an orderly method of entry to the exam (if it is suitable to your time limit and number of students).

This method requires students not to talk from the moment they enter the test room.

1. Tell students ahead of time not to enter the examination room until directed to do so.
2. Direct the students to their seats as they enter the room.
3. Instruct students not to open the test until they are directed to do so.

Other protocols & best practices:

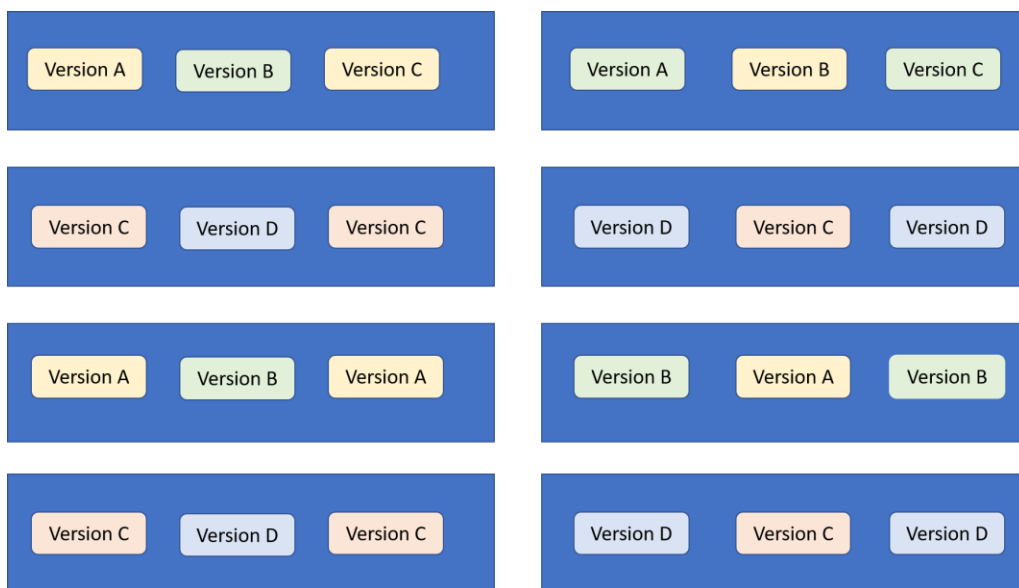
- If possible, leave empty seats by the door for late arrivals.
- Students should place their belongings in a place that is inaccessible to them (in the classroom) after entering the room, but prior to the test beginning. [46]
- Students must place any outdoor wear (coats/jackets/vests) in a designated area. Students are not permitted to have these items on their person during the testing period.
- Ensure cellphones are turned off during the test period and placed so as to be inaccessible to the student. [46]
- Direct students to remove their cellphones from their persons, to turn them off, and to place them in one identified location in the testing room. [64/65]
- You have the authority to determine seating within the room as you see fit. [63]

- Move students during the test/exam if you feel it is necessary.
- Be sure to make all announcements while students are seated and attentive (i.e. not while students are entering or leaving the room).
- Do not permit any items on the top of desk during the exam/test period, except those items needed to complete the exam/test. [47/53]
- Do not allow students to share aids/resources; for example, erasers or pencils. [50]
- Do not allow food or drink into the test room, with the exception of water in a clear bottle, with no labels [51]; consider other exceptions for medical reasons, as you deem appropriate [52].

Announcements: Before Test Starts

- If using Method 1 to distribute the test, make all announcements before test distribution.
- Remind students that bathroom breaks are not permitted once test starts.
- Use the checklist of announcements you have made.
- Remind all students that once distribution of test starts, all talking must cease.
- Make any announcements related to the test protocol, as needed.
- Remind students wearing baseball caps to turn the visor to the back.

Test Distribution: 4 versions



Checking Student IDs

Students must present their Student ID card during tests when asked to do so. [56]

The manner in which student IDs are checked will vary depending on the number of students, number of proctors, and amount of time. Regardless of which method is used, students are expected to have their ID on their desk during the test.

Method 1: Check ID upon entrance

- Check IDs as students enter the room (this is usually not best option for larger classes).

Method 2: Check IDs during the test

- This method should be used if there are sufficient proctors or if the number of students is small enough that instructor can maintain monitoring the room.
- This method allows for maximum security against impersonation if coupled with a first signing of the class roster as the ID is checked.
- Note: having students sign the class roster at this point does not eliminate requirement of student signing out after submitting the test.

Method 3: Check ID at time of submission

- Student IDs can be checked at time of submission.
- Note that this method may create bottleneck at end of exam.
- Checking IDs should not compromise ability to continue monitoring test.

Student without ID

A student card is the best form of identification because it allows instructor/proctor to compare the student number on the card with the student number on the front of the test paper. However, other forms of ID are permitted at the discretion of the instructor.

A notation should be made on the front of the student's test if they are unable to produce identification. Student should be required to follow up with the production of ID within a few days and, at any event, before release of test grade.

Late Students

- Students who arrive late may be allowed to write the test as long as no other student has left the test area: see the one-third rule.
- Late students do not receive additional time.

- Tip: to reduce disruption for other students, leave a few seats near the door free for late students. Check to ensure appropriate version of test is provided to late student.

The "one-third rule"

To both allow for late arrivals and safeguard the integrity of the test, college policy refers to the one-third rule:

- Students must remain in the test room for the first 1/3 of the test.
- Students who arrive late may sit the test as long as no student has left the test. In other words, by not permitting a student to leave in the first 1/3, late students have some opportunity to sit the test.
- Do not allow students entry if 1/3 of the test time has lapsed/student has left the test [37] Allow entry until that point unless doing so is impractical or overly disruptive to the test environment.
- You are not required to give a time extension to late arriving students. [38] The test is over when the test is over.

One-third rule example: If the allotted time for the test is 60 minutes, students are not permitted to leave the test room for the first 20 minutes of the test.

Announcing "Time" During Test

Where a functioning clock is not visible to all students taking the test, let students know that you will be making periodic announcements about time remaining.

Do not write on the blackboard/whiteboard during the test unless this is in relation to correcting a test question. Writing on the board is distracting to students who must look up to see what has been written. Additionally, writing "30 minutes left" on the board is only accurate for one minute.

- Announce the start of the test and the end of the test
- Announce the time every 1/3 interval period. [64]
- For shorter tests, a 10 or 15-minute end-warning is sufficient.

Other Announcements During Test: Corrections

If an error is discovered on the test paper while students are writing, announce the error to the class if no students have left the room. If students have left, instruct the students to answer the question in the best possible way, and to document on the test paper that they feel an error is present. (see section [70/71]).

Invigilation of Test

- Immediately take action against any students who are communicating during the test by warning and/or moving students.
- Communication includes talking, whispering, looking, signaling, smiling, winking, etc.
- Make a notation directly on the front of a student test if a warning has been issued or student has been moved.
- Students who continue to communicate should be asked to leave the test if this can be done without major disruption of the classroom. [44]
- Permission to leave the testing room is at your discretion. [42] Advise students of your policy on this prior to the test date. Generally, leaving the test area and returning should not be permitted unless there are good reasons and integrity of test can be safeguarded.
- The high-risk points are near the end of the test, particularly when instructor may be busy receiving test submissions from students who have completed the test.
- For classes with 50 or more student, always request a proctor.

Suspected Misconduct During the Test

- If a student is found to have a cellphone (or smart watch) on them during the test, you can confiscate it until the end of the test and the student may be subject to an academic misconduct penalty. Make a notation on the front of the student's test that the cellphone was confiscated. Have the student sign that the cellphone was returned to them when cellphone returned upon submission of test. [48]
- Preserving the integrity of the test, for the whole testing room, is of utmost importance; disrupting those around the student suspected of cheating should be avoided, if at all possible. [72a/c]
- Approach the student suspected of violating academic integrity and address the issue.
- Depending on the individual circumstance, you may address the issue in a number of different ways. Section 72 of the examination policy lists different scenarios and provides actions you should take.
- You may choose to ask students to leave the testing room in egregious circumstances; in some cases, Campus Security can be called in. [72h]
- You may choose to allow students to finish the test; this does not mean the student is free of academic misconduct penalties; the penalty will be assessed at a different time.

This may be an appropriate response to ensure minimal disruption to other students writing the exam/test.

- Ensure that you place your initials on the student's test paper, as indication there was a problem during the exam/test.
- Keep notes detailing the problem: what you observed and what action was taken, what was said to the student, other students who may be potentially involved, the student's response, any details deemed relevant to the situation.
- Follow the Academic Misconduct Policy when assessing a penalty [Policy 7.1.6]. Refer to the Faculty Guide on Addressing Academic Misconduct.

Submission of Test

- Ensure that all exam / test materials are submitted to instructor/proctor. [54]
- Ensure that students who approach front to submit test are not blocking your view of the students taking test.
- If more than 3 students are finishing test to submit at the same time, direct students to remain seated and limit number of students that may leave desks (this may be adjusted depending on number of proctors).
- Ensure all students sign-out before exiting the room.

Sign-Out Sheets

- To prevent a student claiming that they wrote a "missing" test, students should be required to sign out of the test before leaving.
- Students should sign after submitting the test and before leaving the test room. [55]. Do not allow a student to sign out unless the test (all portions) has been personally collected by instructor/proctor.
- Place sign-out sheets in strategic location: generally, between where the test needs to be submitted and the exit is best. However, sign-out sheets should be close enough for instructor/proctor to monitor so that a student does sign more than one line.
- Bring extra pens to place with sign-out sheets.
- Students should not talk while any students are writing the test, this includes during submission and exit.

Exiting from Test

- Do not allow students to exit the testing room during the first 1/3 of the test time. If a student finishes before then, ask them to wait patiently and quietly until 1/3 of the test time has elapsed. [36]
- Remind students to exit the room as quietly as possible, so as to not disturb those still writing their test. [40]
- Do not allow students to exit the testing room during the final 15-minutes allotted for completing the exam/test. This causes chaos and makes it difficult to collect test materials properly. [41]
- Do not allow your tests to go right to the hour if you are delivering the test in a room that is scheduled for another class after your test. Instead, ensure that the length of your test allows for 5-10 minutes at the end of the period to collect materials in an orderly fashion.

Invigilation Assistance: College Proctors

The College can provide a proctor when faculty need assistance to invigilate a test.

Request for Proctors should be considered by all instructors for tests in classes of more than 50 students.

It is expected that faculty will help one another with invigilation, where possible, especially if a proctor has not been secured and help is needed.

Proctors are trained invigilators. Their purpose of their presence at tests is to maintain the integrity of the test environment.

Role of Proctors

The focus of invigilation is:

1. to monitor for behaviour that would constitute a violation in academic integrity, and to take appropriate action on such a violation.
2. to ensure all students can complete their assessment in an environment conducive to test writing: quiet and free from disruption.

The Faculty Member has the lead role in managing the testing environment; proctors aid and support in this endeavour.

- Faculty Members and Proctors should communicate before the test/exam begins, to discuss expectations.
- Faculty members are responsible for bringing all testing materials to the test.
- It is not the role of a Proctor to determine a penalty for academic misconduct, nor is it their role to inform students of a potential penalty.

If academic integrity rules are breached during a test, the instructor will decide about a potential penalty at another time.

- The Proctor's role is to support the Faculty Member administering the test/exam. Faculty members will organize the testing environment – prepare tests/exams, prepare a testing management strategy, prepare the attendance sheet, etc. – and will share their plan with the Proctor(s), prior to the beginning of the test.
- The Proctor does have the authority to require that a student move to another location during the test. This should be done with as minimal disruption as possible.
- The Proctor does have the authority to remove a student from the testing room. This should be done with as minimal disruption to other students as possible.
- The Proctor does not have the authority to determine a penalty for academic misconduct.
- All invigilators – Faculty and Proctor(s) – must move around the testing room (quietly); standing at the teacher's workstation does not constitute effective proctoring.
- No invigilator should be using their phone, using the computer, grading assignments, or completing any activity that disengages them from observing students in the testing environment.
- Invigilators should not be chatting with one another during the testing period – this could be distracting to students and could result in disengagement from the act of proctoring.
- All efforts will be made to make announcements at the beginning of the testing period, to minimize disruptions after testing has begun.
- When an invigilator observes cheating behaviour (for example, wandering eyes), s/he can give the student a warning and make a mark on the test to indicate its integrity may be compromised.
- For any incidents, invigilators should take notes right away, while they are fresh in their minds; this will assist when recording the incident in the Academic Integrity Database and if an appeal of a penalty is filed.

Proctor Requests: Number of Students

- Proctors will be provided for classes of 40 or more registered students
- Faculty may be assigned more than one proctor for large class sizes
- Classes with under 40 students require Chair approval: if you have fewer than 40 registered students, c.c. you Chair when submitting your request.

Requesting a Proctor

As soon as your syllabus is completed, you will know the schedule for your in-class assessments. You should arrange for proctoring assistance within the first few weeks of the semester for the entire semester so as to ensure proctors can be scheduled. Late requests will be subject to availability.

If you need a Proctor Request form, please email proctors@stclaircollege.ca

The Proctor Request form will require you to complete the following information.

- Course Name and Course Code/Section
- Number of students (base this on the number of registered students in the course)
- Campus/Location
- Room number
- Date
- Start and end times the proctor is needed (proctors arrive 10 minutes before the start time and are scheduled to finish 10 minutes before end time – this is consistent with entry/exit from classrooms)

Requests for Deferred Test

The Examination Regulations set out the policy for make-up test requests by students.

A deferred test is a test which is re-scheduled on a case-by-case basis. Generally, except for a request made because of an institutional conflict, whether to provide a deferred test is at the discretion of the instructor.

There are 2 types of institutional conflicts:

- More than two exams scheduled on the same day: this is not a common issue and will likely apply only to students who have a special course schedule. College policy requires rescheduling where a student is scheduled for 3 exams on the same day.

- Student has conflicting College obligations: this applies when a student is involved in college-related extra-curricular activities. Examples may be that student is participating in a case competition or is a varsity athlete travelling to a competition. Note: regular practice for varsity athletes are not sufficient cause for a deferred test.

Besides institutional conflicts, there are 3 general categories for consideration of deferral requests:

Religious Grounds: every effort must be made to accommodate students who, through religious obligations, are unable to write tests at the time scheduled. Note that a conflict with the test schedule on this basis will be known to the student well in advance (possibly on the first day of class when the syllabus is distributed). Students who request a deferral on religious grounds should make this request (with supporting documentation, if appropriate) at least two weeks in advance of scheduled test.

Medical Grounds: Faculty *may* grant a make-up test on medical grounds where sufficient documentation exists. Where instructor requests medical documentation, these must be original doctor notes (not copies) and be dated within 72 hours of the scheduled test. Notes received days/weeks later will not be accepted. Note that the request for deferral on medical grounds must be made to the instructor **as soon as the issue becomes known to the student** and, in any event, no more than 3 working days after the scheduled test. Generally, a student who is sick on the day of test is able to notify the instructor by email immediately. **Failure to notify the instructor of an issue pertaining to a deferral in a timely manner constitutes grounds to reject the request.**

Compassionate Grounds or Extenuating Circumstances: faculty have the discretion to grant deferred tests and should exercise their discretion equitably and fairly to students. Circumstances that fall into this category may include bereavement or required court appearances. Instructors may ask/require supporting documentation in support of the request. Students are required to make such request in a timely manner: the request should be made as soon as the issue becomes known to the student. Failure to notify faculty in a timely manner constitutes grounds to reject the request.

Integrity of Make-Up Test: Ensure the integrity of the make-up test by providing all proctoring requirements in the form completed and submitted to the Testing Centre. The student should write a different version of the test than the one written by the class.

Student Services: Accommodated & Make-Up Tests

To arrange for accommodated or make-up tests in Student Services, email:

- southproctor@stclaircollege.ca (main campus)
- downtownproctor@stclaircollege.ca (downtown locations)
- chathamstudentservices@stclaircollege.ca (Chatham)