![PSI logo](Testing Excellence)

Tell me more about...

How to prepare test takers for online proctoring

psiexams.com

Contents

Introduction

Customer experience is key

"In a competitive environment, test taker experience is vital. Even though test centres might be open and onsite proctoring now possible, online proctoring remains more popular as an option. So being fully prepared – and preparing your test takers – for the online proctoring experience is still important."

Rory McCorkle, PhD
Senior Vice President, Certification and Admissions at PSI Services

Growing *market*

The growing certification market is projected to reach nearly **$1.2 billion by 2027.** With this increased choice comes the need for organizations to differentiate themselves – by delivering an outstanding experience before, during and after test day. To achieve this, organizations need to offer secure and accessible technology, clear communication and the smooth resolution of any issues at every stage of the process.

Widescale *adoption*

The rapid adoption of online proctoring in recent years has had an impact on the test taker experience. At the same time, it seems that online proctoring – as an online tool – creates more vocal online feedback than when test takers use a test centre. We have listened to feedback, collated the data, and are working with our clients to apply the lessons we have learned.

Refined processes and improved communications will ensure a high quality proctoring experience.

$1.2 billion

projected value of certification market
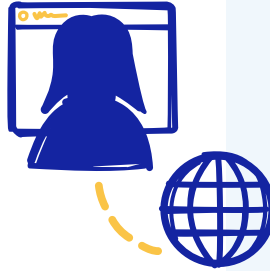
PSI research since *COVID-19*

Test location

93% of test takers test from home

5% of test takers test from work

2% of test takers test from other locations

* The figures displayed are percentages of online proctored tests taken.

The *rise* of online proctoring

Online proctoring is being adopted on an unprecedented scale. And with no proctor physically present, all communication with test takers must happen virtually. It's hard for organizations to imagine and anticipate the impact this will have on the volume of incoming questions, calls and emails. That's why it is important to be prepared.

"More than ever during this time of change and uncertainty we need to practice tolerance and perseverance. To take the time to listen, learn and respond to our test takers. In a way that addresses their anxieties, while communicating the steps that can be taken to improve the online proctoring experience."

Heather Richards
Vice President, Client Success

What *potential issues* should I prepare for?

Anyone who has ever organized or attended an event where technology is involved knows there can be unforeseen glitches. Internet connectivity, compatibility issues across different technologies or software, or user error.

However, when it comes to analyzing and understanding what impacts the customer experience of online proctoring events, we have the benefit of large amounts of data from the recent rapid adoption in response to COVID-19.

This data enables us to identify the most common issues that test takers might experience, which we explore in the following sections. We can then take steps in advance to improve communication, as well as constantly refining our technology, to ensure organizations are fully prepared for all online testing events.

Most *common issues* with online proctoring...

Below is a list of the most common issues that we might expect test takers to report during their online proctoring experience. Many of these issues are out of a testing organization's control. However, with improved communications and clear instructions that fully prepare test takers, most of these issues can be overcome.

1. **Unstable internet connectivity and lack of bandwidth:** Test takers are most impacted by poor connectivity. Passing the compatibility check does not guarantee constant connection throughout the test.

2. **Proof of identity:** Test takers need to come prepared with the required identity documents.

3. **Premature end of test:** Test takers sometimes inadvertently close the testing session before the test is complete.

4. **Out of date operating system or unsupported device:** Test takers should review the minimum system requirements to prevent issues launching their test.

5. **Webcam difficulties:** Test takers need to have a working webcam that will allow them to complete a full room scan.

▶ Top tip

Understand the kind of issues that might arise, and you will be better placed to develop a strategy and plan to prevent them.

How can I better *prepare test takers?*

Before test day

Many of the issues experienced by test takers could be prevented using online resources to improve communication. Taking steps to provide test takers with the best possible information prior to test day will not only help to prevent issues, but also go a long way to allay test taker anxiety.

Useful *online resources* for test takers include:

- A short **test taker experience video** to prepare test takers for their online proctoring experience. A PSI video is available on our website.

- A **step-by-step guide** explaining what will happen during key points of the online proctoring experience. Such as check-in at the beginning of a session and security checks during a test.

- Clear advice about the **ID documents required** to access a secure online test.

- Clear **remote testing rules** specific to a test, for example whether it is an open book test or rules around bathroom breaks.

- **PSI's online proctoring system check** *link* that allows test takers to check in advance that the device and internet they plan to use to take the test is compatible with PSI technology.

Top tip

Watch the test taker experience video so that you are familiar with the online proctoring process yourself.

psiexams.com/online-proctoring

On test day

Prevention is always better than cure. If your test takers know in advance what to do should they experience a problem, the process will be more streamlined and less stressful. Different people have different communication preferences so offer options, if you can.

> ▶ ## Top tip
>
> Develop a social media response plan in advance, and respond quickly to any issues shared by test takers on test day. A fast response will contain the situation.

Test taker communication within PSI Bridge™ online proctoring

Step 1: Check-in

Test takers are connected to technical support via chat during check in.

Step 2: Test launch

Test taker has access to chat function with online proctor and technical support. The proctor can loop in technical support at any time. The proctor can also send the technical support phone number.

What to do if an test disconnects

In the event that the test taker loses internet connection during their test:

▶ The test taker can restart the secure browser when their connection stabilizes. They will be assigned to the first available proctor

▶ If it is not possible to reconnect during the scheduled appointment, the test taker should reach out to PSI using the telephone number or email address specific to your program

▶ If the test taker reaches out to technical support and a reschedule is required, the technical support agent will transfer the test taker to a priority phone queue with PSI's scheduling team

▶ # Top tip

The check-in time takes 10-15 minutes on average. This includes ID checks and a room scan. The screen will display 'Waiting for Proctor' to a test taker while the proctor is behind the scenes validating the check-in information.

04

What and *how* should I communicate with test takers?

Communicate regularly and often with test takers in the lead up to test day. Don't assume that they will read everything. It's okay to repeat key messages – send the information and then send at least one reminder.

▶ **Top tip**

Remind test takers that they should always use the system Compatibility Check on the device and internet they plan to use to take the test. This can be done multiple times before the test.

Website resources

The provision of accessible website resources is the most important step you can take to ensure your test takers have a positive online proctoring experience. You need to have specific online proctoring information on your website that is easy for your test takers to find.

PSI has a wide range of useful resources for test takers on our website that you can link to from your own website. Offering resources for test takers on your own website is also good practice.

Emails

There is a better chance that important messages will get through to your test takers if you send multiple emails about online proctoring.

Don't include several messages in one email. Focus on one thing, for example stress the importance of running the system Compatibility Check before test day, or send a reminder about the ID that test takers will be required to provide on test day. Also include links in your emails for direct and easy access to resources. For example, the test taker experience video and frequently asked questions.

Top tip

Inform test takers that they should attempt to take the test outside of their company internet. There may be back end applications running that cannot launch the secure browser and start the test.
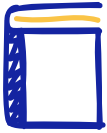
Test taker handbook

Ensure that online proctoring is listed in your test taker handbook, with clear guidelines and recommendations. Many organizations find it helpful to have a separate handbook for online proctoring.

Scheduling page

Sharing rules and guidelines with your test takers about rescheduling will prevent no shows. The rules vary from organization to organization, so make sure test takers are aware of your specific guidelines. For example, test takers can reschedule up to 24 hours in advance.

Top tip

To prevent no shows, test takers should be aware that they cannot login more than 30 minutes prior to an test and they will not be able to login if they are more than 30 minutes late.

psi BRIDGE

The PSI Bridge platform provides superior online proctoring – from customizable test security and identity authentication, to multi-modal delivery and custom reports and analytics.

PSI Bridge works seamlessly with any test delivery system and supports.

▶ Enterprise integration, with no remote access required

▶ Automated test security with options for Live Online Proctoring and Record and Review proctoring for different levels of security

▶ Multi-modal delivery

▶ Identity checks and authentication

▶ Custom reporting and analytics

What are the *technical requirements*

for online proctoring with PSI Bridge?

PSI Bridge is compatible with any modern Windows or macOS X computer that has a working webcam, microphone and internet connection.

For up to date system requirements check **here.**

A bit more about...

The PSI Secure Lockdown Browser

Our Secure Lockdown Browser provides a fair testing environment where test takers are prevented from copying, pasting, taking screen grabs, using Instant Messenger or other applications, and accessing other websites.

Because our Lockdown Browser does not require remote access to a test taker's device, concerns around data security and privacy are addressed. The Browser is downloadable in seconds and easy to delete from a test taker's system when a test is complete.

A test taker will need to close all other programs in order to launch the Lockdown Browser. It is a good idea to flag to your test takers that the Browser may not work on a corporate device or setting due to back end firewalls.

Top tip

Test takers may be concerned about changing their browser settings. However, they should be made aware that although their browser will need to accept third-party cookies, this is for the duration of the test only.

Are you *prepared* for online proctoring?

Your score

A score of 1-4

You aren't as prepared as you could be for online proctoring. The good news is that there are a lot things you can do. Use this guide as a starting point to identify the important steps that you need to take and make a plan to address them.

A score of 5-8

Not bad but there is room for improvement. Use the checklist to identify the gaps and draw up a plan to fill them using the advice from this guide.

A score of 9-12

Top of the class! You are well prepared for online proctoring. However, if if you didn't score full marks, go back to the points on the checklist that you you missed and develop a plan to address them.

**Use this list to check how prepared you are for online proctoring.
For each box you tick, give yourself one point. Scores are on the previous page.**

Checklist

- ☐ Resources easy to find on our website, including frequently asked questions about online proctoring.

- ☐ Frequent and regular communication with test takers in the lead up to test day.

Test takers emailed about the following important topics in the lead up to test day:

- ☐ The need to run a Compatibility Check before test day.

- ☐ The ID required in order to access a secure test.

- ☐ Where they can access frequently asked questions.

- ☐ Where they can access the test taker experience video.

- ☐ Where they can access further support if they have additional questions.

- ☐ At least one reminder email sent to test takers about the above topics.

- ☐ Online proctoring listed in Test Taker Handbook.

- ☐ A handbook available that is specific to online proctoring.

- ☐ Rules about scheduling and rescheduling clearly communicated to test takers.

- ☐ Test takers made aware of the technical requirements expected of their system before they can access their test.

In conclusion...
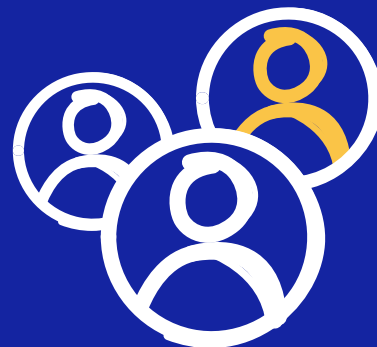
At PSI we know that effective communication with test takers makes an enormous difference to their online proctoring experience. It's hard to over engage but very easy to under communicate.

Test takers won't always receive or hear the messages you send them – not everyone will run the system Compatibility Check or have the correct ID documents ready on test day. However, by providing clear information in the lead up to test day, you will be able to minimize issues and reduce test anxiety. And with a plan in place, it is possible to efficiently deal with any problems that may arise on the day.

PSI has the experience needed to support you in these areas to deliver an outstanding test taker experience.

Your trusted *testing partner*

Every day our clients support millions of people to realize their dreams, reach their potential, and improve their life chances. They care about their test takers – and we share that responsibility.

Our unwavering focus is on delivering frictionless and fair test taker experiences, without compromising test integrity, through...

Secure test delivery

▶ Authorized global **test centre** network.

▶ Secure and scalable **remote testing** Live and Record & Review **online proctoring**.

▶ Flexible **multi-modal** test delivery.

▶ Testing **windows or continuous testing** on-demand.

Rigorous test development

▶ Legally defensible and **valid test content.**

▶ **Job analysis** and **test** content specification.

▶ **Subject Matter Expert** (SME) recruitment, training and management.

▶ Secure **item authoring, banking and test generation** software.

Expertise in testing science

▶ Experienced **psychometricians.**

▶ Specialist **test developers.**

▶ **Data forensics** and web crawling.

Our willingness to listen and adapt means clients can either benefit from a full testing service, or access solutions at any stage of their testing journey.

Dreams deserve

We understand every test is about more than the result. It's about a dream. A dream the test taker believes is worth striving for. And we believe that too. Their dreams deserve trusted science, technology and operational expertise. They deserve PSI.

Connect with an expert today.

psiexams.com ↗