

SCS Guidelines for MID-TERM and FINAL EXAMS/ASSESSMENTS in the Spring/Summer and Fall 2020 Semesters

Dear Instructors, Coordinators, and Directors,

Courses offered by McGill during both the spring/summer and fall 2020 semesters will once again be delivered remotely. Courses that were designed to be delivered fully online will continue to be delivered in that mode. The closure of the McGill campus, and the move to remote teaching and completion of assignments, will therefore continue to impact both instructors' ability to administer exams/final assessments and students' ability to complete them.

Challenges under these conditions include increased childcare responsibilities and other family obligations, lack of private space in which to work without interruption for extended periods of time, different time zones, technological constraints and potential disruptions, and limitations to guaranteeing academic integrity remotely. We must therefore continue to take these challenges into account when planning mid-term and final exams/assessments for the duration of the remote delivery period.

The policies and guidelines below are intended to support instructors as they try to navigate these complex issues as best they can under remote delivery conditions.

Note that since *myCourses* is McGill's official learning management system, all SCS instructors are expected to use the system and the associated tools it provides, including those required for particular courses and programs. We recognize that some of you might not have used these tools before, so please be assured that ample support is available for those who need it through ISET, IT, and TLS. You are also encouraged to seek support from the relevant Program, Area, or Course Coordinator.

1. MCGILL POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- At this time, proctored, secured live online exams are not available ([see TLS for rationale](#)). However, the University continues to explore possible options.
- The University recommends that mid-term and final exams/assessments take the form of either open-book take-home exams distributed and submitted via *myCourses*, or online timed exams (open- or closed-book) using tools in *myCourses* ([see TLS for further details and rationale](#)).
- In courses where neither option is feasible, please see the **SCS Policies and Recommendations section below**.

A copy of your final exam(s) must be sent to instructors.conted@mcgill.ca prior to the examination.

- If you receive an email from the **Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)** indicating that there are students in your course who require accommodations for assessments, please consult this [OSD webpage](#) and follow the instructions under "*What do I need to do if students require accommodations for their exams in an online learning and assessment environment.*"

2. SCS POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- If you opt for a **take-home** mid-term or final exam/assignment, a start and end period of at least 48 to 72 hours **must** be allowed.
- **Timed Exam: If you cannot avoid a timed exam, we ask that you schedule a 12-hour window in which students can access the exam**, as this will accommodate the student constraints mentioned above.

With rare exceptions in some special programs, the exam should **be of no more than three (3) hours duration**: Students can start the exam at any time during the 12-hour window, but a time-limit of 3-hours should be set. Ensure that students understand that they have only three hours in which to complete the exam once they have accessed it.

For **mid-term exams**, the 12-hour window should be scheduled so as to encompass class time.

In order to avoid exam conflicts, timed **final exams** should be held on the day and time indicated in the official SCS Exam Schedule.

- **Invigilation of Exams:** The School recognizes that it is not possible for instructors to continuously invigilate exams that have an access and completion window of 12, 48, or 72 hours.

Instructors must therefore clearly communicate to students **the hours during which they will be available to answer questions in their capacity as exam invigilators in at least two of the following ways:**

- through the Announcements tool in *myCourses*
- via the email tool in *myCourses*
- via instructors' regular McGill email to students' McGill email addresses (McGill's official means of communication between instructors and students)
- for courses in Destiny/Athena, via instructors' regular McGill email to students' non-McGill email addresses

The examiner's availability must also be printed on the exam itself.

Invigilators must offer time-slots during which they will be available, scheduled so as to ensure that students in different time zones, or with other constraints, can reach them. This is similar to the established practice that examiners or associate examiners are available in person to answer questions during an on-site mid-term or final exam.

- **Communication with students:** To limit the amount of confusion created by distance, we ask that instructors inform students **in advance** how they can be reached (e.g., via the *myCourses* email tool) and what types of questions will (and will not) be answered.

If a student contacts you directly with a legitimate question, please send your response to all students.

Please also see the "Invigilation of Exams" directive in the **SCS Policies and Recommendations section above**.

- **Preparing students to write an exam.** Ask students in advance to ensure that they
 - have established a stable Internet connection
 - have access to required technology (e.g., any software necessary to complete the exam; access to a scanner to upload the exam)
 - are able to write the exam during the dedicated period of time

Students who anticipate difficulties in establishing any of these conditions should be encouraged to notify the instructor/examiner in advance.

Students should also be encouraged to start the exam as early as possible: just because the window is 12 or 48 or 72 hours does not mean that they should leave it until the last minute.

If students will need to download or upload the exam, or enter responses in a fillable document, encourage them to practice in advance of the exam.

- **File Formats for uploading are** best determined by individual instructors in consultation with their Program/Area/Course Coordinator and Director.

3. EXAM DESIGN AND TOOLS

- Assessments (exams or take-home assignments) should be administered via *myCourses*, McGill's official learning management system. **Required modes of delivery will be communicated to instructors by Program, Area, or Course Coordinators.** These modes may include:
 - Online assessment using the *myCourses* Quiz tool. Note that this tool also allows for randomized questions provided that instructors have created a sufficiently large bank of questions. In answering quiz questions, students can upload images or files containing scanned text.

Two new video tutorials about the Quiz tool have been added to the *Zoom and myCourses Essentials* workshop. Click on one of the following links to access the workshop depending on whether you are teaching [credit courses](#) or [non-credit courses](#).
 - Construction of assessments via Crowdmark, distributed via *myCourses*. Note that this is recommended by TLS *only* if instructors have previous experience with Crowdmark.
 - Distribution of the assessment via pdf download by each student, with student uploading completed work. The Assessments tool in *myCourses* allows students to upload work.
 - To manage student access times, use either the Assignments or Quiz tool in *myCourses*. Instructions for using these tools are available in a convenient [Guide](#) prepared by TLS.

4. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As a reminder to students that academic integrity remains paramount, SCS **requires** that the following statement and pledge be appended to all mid-term and final exams and other forms of final assessment:

McGill Policy Statements

English Version: McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the McGill Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures. (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).

French Version: L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/).

SCS Pledge

By submitting this work, I certify that the work represents solely my own efforts. I confirm that I understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism, and other academic offences under the [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#), and am aware of my responsibilities under the [Student Assessment Policy](#).

Lorsque je sou mets mon travail, je certifie qu'il représente mes efforts, et seulement les miens. Je confirme que je comprends ce que signifient la tricherie, le plagiat et autre infraction universitaire, et leurs conséquences, en vertu du [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#) (en anglais uniquement). En outre, je suis au courant de mes responsabilités en vertu de la [Student Assessment Policy](#) (en anglais uniquement).

How to handle allegations of academic offences: If an instructor suspects that a student may have committed an academic offence, **they must follow University guidelines**. Please consult these two webpages:

- <https://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/staff>
- <https://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/staff/student>

Note that academic offences cannot be dealt with “at the local level” by instructors, coordinators, or directors. Attempts to deal with academic offences at the local level violate students’ rights.

If an instructor wishes to follow-up on a suspicion that a student has committed an academic offence, they must contact the Disciplinary Officer (DO) of *the student's home Faculty*. The home Faculty of most students who take SCS courses is SCS. In these cases, reports should be sent to **Dr. Sue Laver, the DO for SCS** (sue.laver@mcgill.ca). If the home Faculty of the student in question is not SCS, the report must be sent to the DO of that Faculty. A list of Faculty/School DOs is provided here: <https://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/disciplinary/officers>.