

RYERSON UNIVERSITY
POLICY OF SENATE

EXAMINATION POLICY

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Preamble

This Policy deals with the infrastructure, invigilation responsibilities, student behaviour, and other aspects of the examination process for examinations held on campus. For purposes of this policy, “examination” is defined as a comprehensive form of testing for the purpose of assessing a student’s level of proficiency in some combination of the following domains: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. While the focus of this policy is final examinations, which are administered (or, in the case of take-home exams, due) outside the normal teaching term, the following basic principles should apply to all tests and examinations.

The framework of the Policy rests to a considerable extent on four principles.

1. The examination process, which is inherently stressful, should be managed in such a way as to minimize extraneous sources of confusion and uncertainty.
2. The examination environment in which examinations are conducted should be one in which students are able to concentrate, reflect, and generally demonstrate what they have learned, with a minimum of disruption and distraction.
3. The integrity of the examination process depends upon the willingness of everyone involved to respect some basic rules of conduct and to accept certain responsibilities, and to do so in a consistent manner.
4. Every effort must be made to ensure that the responsibilities, rules of conduct, and regulations governing the administration of examinations are well publicized so that the responsibilities of students, invigilators, schools, departments, graduate programs, and the University as a whole are clearly understood before the examination period begins.

This document is divided into distinct sections that outline responsibilities and roles of various stakeholders. Each section is divided into two subsets, the first entitled *General Policy*, outlines responsibilities and roles pertaining to all types of examinations, and the second, entitled *Final Exam Specific Responsibilities*, identifies additional responsibilities specific to the final exam process.

I. University Responsibilities

A. General Policy

The University has ultimate responsibility for the successful completion of the examination session, the maintenance of exam integrity, and for assisting students, departments, graduate programs and invigilators to carry out their respective roles.

The University will:

1. develop and communicate clear policies and procedures to deal with examinations;
2. take action under the Student Code of Conduct in cases where the examination policy is breached, whether by cheating, disruptive behaviour, or in any other way;
3. make every effort to ensure that examination rooms are supportive environments that:
 - a. are quiet and free from unnecessary and unreasonable disruption; and
 - b. are suitable in terms of temperature, work spaces, cleanliness, and configuration.
4. enforce the following policy as stated in the *Course Management Policy*¹: In the Fall and Winter semesters, the last week of classes and the subsequent Saturday and Sunday before the examination period are to be free of all tests and examinations. The same principle applies to Continuing Education courses and to courses taught in the Spring/Summer term; that is to say, there are to be no tests or exams during the week preceding a final examination⁴.

B. Final Exam Specific Responsibilities

In addition to the responsibilities outlined in section IA, the University will:

1. where possible, provide space that ensures respect for the academic integrity of the exam by avoiding overcrowding;
2. provide students well before the examination period with clear knowledge of exam locations, times, and length;
3. make every effort to:
 - a. schedule exams as fairly as possible for each student across the available time frame;
 - b. ensure that students will not be required to write more than two exams in one calendar day (subject to exceptional circumstances);
4. take all practical measures to prevent the disruption of examinations;
5. post “quiet zone” posters near exam rooms, make every effort to ensure that students who have completed an exam move away from the examination room, and that no construction or disruptive routine maintenance takes place in the vicinity of examination rooms during the examination period;
6. maintain, as much as possible, security of fire alarm pull stations during final examination weeks for both day program and continuing education.

II. Department/School/Graduate Program Responsibilities

A. General Policy

The teaching department/school/graduate program has direct authority for the integrity and proper conduct of examinations held under its auspices. It is specifically responsible for:

¹ For the purposes of this document, this refers to the Undergraduate Course Management Policy.

1. establishing examination guidelines specific to subject areas and communicating them to all faculty and students (e.g., by including this information in faculty orientation and in handbooks);
2. with the assistance of the Dean, if necessary, designating “rovers” to provide back-up and emergency assistance to invigilators. Rovers will be assigned to specific rooms or clusters of rooms across the campus, and will provide assistance to invigilators as required;
3. developing criteria and procedures for responding to petitions by students for make-up examination or other alternatives to the scheduled examination. The criteria and procedures are to be filed with the Dean of the Faculty². In general, when the student misses all or part of an examination through circumstances clearly beyond his/her control (e.g., verifiable health problems or personal emergencies), the department will arrange for an appropriate alternative. All alternatives must abide by this policy’s guiding four principles, and ensure that a designated invigilator supervises students and that the make-up test or examination is conducted in an appropriate location. When an examination is missed for other reasons (e.g., inattention to exam schedule), the response is at the discretion of the teaching department/school/graduate program. In the latter circumstance, supplemental privileges are not guaranteed;
4. disseminating and implementing best practice strategies for maintaining examination integrity in overcrowded situations;
5. ensuring that, in accordance with the current course management policy, no examinations or tests are scheduled during the last week of classes.

B. Final Exam Specific Responsibilities

In addition to the responsibilities outlined in section IB, departments/schools/graduate program will:

1. provide at least one invigilator per 50 students and, wherever possible, at least two invigilators for each exam room. It is inappropriate to designate OPSEU staff except under extraordinary (i.e., emergency) circumstances, and then only with their express approval. Where an academic unit cannot provide sufficient invigilators, this is to be drawn to the attention of the Dean well before the examination period commences. If the Dean is unable to resolve such a shortfall, it will be drawn to the attention of the University’s designated exam co-ordinator;
2. ensure that all invigilators are familiar with the University’s Examination Policy and Procedures, all relevant departmental/school/graduate program policies, and the Student Code of Conduct;
3. be responsible for all matters pertaining to examination papers: their accuracy; conformity with stated course management policies; ensuring that students know well before the exam its format, length, and permitted aids/resources; the printing of sufficient numbers; the security of exam papers until the exam time; and ensuring that exam papers are available and accessible on the day of exam;
4. ensure that a faculty or staff member is available to respond to emergencies at all times during which the department/school/graduate program’s exams are being held.

² For the purposes of this document, “Faculty” (e.g. Faculty of Community Services) shall include the School of Graduate Studies.

C. Electronic Examination Department/School Responsibilities:

The Department, School or Graduate Program must:

1. determine that an electronic exam has a very high probability of success before proceeding and must ensure that the examination is designed within the constraints of the electronic examination system;
2. make every effort, where electronic systems are used for examinations, to ensure that all aspects of the system will work correctly during the examination. Appropriate support staff (e.g., CCS or departmental technical staff) must be consulted to confirm and test that the systems resources required for the examination are available;
3. have support staff ensure, upon adequate notification from the Department, School or Graduate Program regarding a scheduled electronic examination, that any regularly available computer resources to be used in the examination are in good working order and available during the exam;
4. provide a plan in case a system failure should occur (e.g., a second online exam that can be scheduled for a later date or a paper-based alternative). A plan for individual computer failure must also be in place (e.g., an extra computer or a paper-based alternative);
5. ensure that invigilators are properly prepared to invigilate an electronic exam. This includes:
 - a. confirming that they are trained in the basic technical skills and have the account information required to be able to assist students to login and use the examination system;
 - b. providing them with a procedure for timely communication with technical support staff should system problems arise;
 - c. providing instructions regarding what applications and resources students are permitted to use on the workstations.
6. ensure that adequate technical support is available prior to and during any tests or examinations using computing resources, CCS or other technical support staff must be advised of any requirements with sufficient notice. For final exams, faculty must indicate the electronic requirement on the Ryerson final examination scheduling form;
7. ensure that course outlines contain necessary information concerning the computing resources which students must have in order to take an electronic exam;
8. ensure that faculty notify students, a minimum of two weeks prior to the examination date, of any computing resources (e.g., individual accounts on system, specific applications, file space, etc.) that will be required during the exam. Students should be provided with appropriate procedures for ensuring their access to the required resources;
9. where possible, enforce system restrictions on the computing resources available to students by an online examination, and not rely upon students' willingness to comply with written or verbal instructions (e.g., using a firewall to restrict website access or removing software not required for the examination);

10. where possible, physically separate workstations in such a way as to make it difficult for students to see what other students are doing;
11. ensure that faculty notify the library when licensed data will be used for examination purposes.

III. Invigilator Responsibilities

Invigilators are normally faculty members designated by the teaching Department/School/Graduate Program or Faculty. In some circumstances, other qualified individuals may be designated by departments/schools or Faculties to assist with invigilation duties.

A. General Policy

The role of an invigilator is to supervise students at an examination. To this end, an invigilator's general responsibilities are to:

1. see that an examination commences, is conducted, and concludes in an orderly and timely manner in accordance with the University's Examination Policy and Procedures, the Student Code of Conduct, and relevant departmental/school/graduate program policies;
2. make every effort to safeguard the integrity of the examination;
3. maintain vigilance at all times (e.g., not attending to other tasks during the exam).
4. ensure that students sign a section list during the examination;
5. create an environment that is, to the greatest extent possible, supportive of students undertaking the examination;
6. provide students with clarification of ambiguous aspects of the examination as appropriate and to help students in any way that does not impinge on the integrity of the examination;
7. respond to personal student emergencies according to the general procedural guidelines identified below; and
8. receive instructions from a course instructor or coordinator concerning the procedure to be followed in case of a fire alarm during the examination and make an announcement to the students about this procedure at the beginning of the exam.

B. Final Exam Specific Responsibilities

In addition to the responsibilities outlined in section IIC, Final Exam Specific Responsibilities are to:

1. be familiar with the exam policy and procedures;
2. start and end the exam on time and in an orderly manner;
3. not allow students to enter the exam after 30 minutes, or leave the exam within the first 30 minutes or the last 15 minutes. Students who arrive after 30 minutes should be referred to the department for alternate arrangements;
4. ensure that exams scheduled for the same time in a given room commence at the same time;
5. ensure that students identify themselves through presentation of a relevant photo-identification card which is to be displayed on the desk at all times. (In the case of Continuing Education students, a driver's license or other verifiable institutional form of identification may be substituted.).

6. monitor student conduct during examination, and to act upon all observed instances of cheating, contravention of the student responsibilities for exam conduct as set out above, and/or the Student Code of Conduct. (This includes, but is not restricted to, talking during the exam, the consumption of food, rummaging, noise, use of unauthorized aids, etc.).
7. summon a “rover” for assistance in case of personal emergencies (student illness, washroom needs, etc.) or in cases where a student and/or exam paper must be removed from the exam room. Only one student is permitted to use the washroom at a time;
8. assume primary responsibility for response to an external emergency, such as fire alarms, according to the guidelines outlined in this policy or, in the case of Continuing Education courses, as outlined in Continuing Education’s final exam procedures. (In such circumstances, safety and security **always** take priority over other considerations. When an alarm is sounded, the area is to be evacuated immediately.)
9. clarify aspects of the examination which are unclear, but not answer any question that is deemed to infringe on exam integrity;
10. take immediate steps, as appropriate, to prevent further cheating when cheating on a test or exam is suspected. In general, students should be allowed to complete the exam.
 - a. If a student is seen to have unauthorized materials, such materials should be quietly removed, the details noted in writing, and the names of nearby students recorded. The matter should be reported to the Chair/Director.
 - b. If it is suspected that students are copying material from other students, the names of those students should be noted, and the incident reported to the person grading the test or exam, as well as the Chair/Director.
 - c. If it is suspected that someone is impersonating a student, the photo identification of that person should be checked, and the person should be asked to sign the exam paper for further verification. If it is suspected that the identification is not valid, students may be asked to provide alternate photo identification. Security may be called, if circumstances warrant.
 - d. Allowing work to be copied during an examination or test shall constitute cheating.
 - e. Utilizing unauthorized material or consultation outside of the exam room during the period of the exam shall constitute cheating.
11. ensure that all students submit all required exam materials before leaving the exam room.

C. Gymnasium Invigilator

Invigilators assigned to the gymnasium in a particular time slot will decide which one of them shall be the primary invigilator for that time slot. This person will have overall responsibility for:

1. all routine exam announcements to students (when to begin, 15-minute warning, end of examination, etc.);
2. announcements and decisions related to fire alarms or other emergency situations;
3. enforcing polices regarding late arrivals and the prohibition against leaving in the last 15 minutes;
4. summoning “rovers” if required.

D. Electronic Examination Invigilator Responsibilities:

Invigilators must have the skills and information required to ensure that examinations are delivered in a secure manner and consistent with any requirements established by the course instructor, including:

1. explicit instructions on the use of the examination system;
2. accurate account information for each student taking the exam;
3. procedures specifying how to save student work and ensure examination security in the case that a student or students must leave the examination room; instructions regarding alternative plans in the case of system or individual computer failure;
4. a list of approved software applications and resources to be used during the exam;
5. contact information and procedures for timely communication with pre-arranged technical support during the examination.

IV. Student Responsibilities

A. General Policy

Students must consider and respect other students' sensibilities such as stress caused by noise, intense scents, etc. Students are also expected to familiarize themselves with all pertinent information regarding examinations and to adhere to the following rules of examination conduct. Students are expected to:

1. arrive at the examination site on time;
2. refrain from any form of communication with other students upon commencement of the examination, unless communication skills are being evaluated;
3. bring into the examination location only those aids/resources that have been specified by the course instructor;
4. refrain from bringing cellular phones, personal audio equipment, and other electronic devices into the examination room unless specifically permitted by the course instructor;
5. refrain from bringing food into the examination room, unless it is medically necessary in which case consumption of food and beverage must be done in a non-disruptive manner;
6. abide by the Student Code of Conduct and not cheat.

B. Final Exam Specific Responsibilities

In addition to the responsibilities outlined in section IVA, students are to respect the following guidelines:

1. No student will be admitted more than 30 minutes after the exam has commenced. No student may leave within the first 30 minutes after the exam has commenced.
2. Those arriving later will be directed to the teaching department to petition for alternative arrangements. Petitions are to be filed with the department no later than the following business day except when medical/emergency circumstances do not permit this deadline to be met. In such cases, the student is responsible to provide appropriate documentation. Such petitions will arise in cases where through emergency, illness, error, or oversight, students have arrived more than 30 minutes late for an examination or have missed the examination entirely.
3. No student is to leave the exam room during the last 15 minutes of an examination.
4. Each student must submit all required exam materials before leaving the exam room.

5. Students may bring into the exam room only those aids/resources that have been specified by the course instructor(s). (To be specified on course outline or by announcement in class at least two weeks before the end of classes.)
6. All coats and bags must be placed in such a manner as to be inaccessible to the student while the examination is in progress. Students should be cautioned in advance against bringing anything of value to the examination room, noting that the university accepts no liability for lost and stolen items. Students should also be reminded that in an emergency situation (e.g., fire alarm) they may not be able to pick up coats, bags, and other personal belongings.
7. All students must display a valid and relevant student photo-identification card during the course of an examination. In the case of Continuing Education students, a driver's license or other verifiable form of photo-identification must be provided.
8. In case of a personal emergency of any sort (e.g., illness) students are to inform an invigilator of their circumstance and request assistance or permission to leave the exam room, as circumstances warrant. Only one student will be allowed to use the washroom at a time.
9. Students have a right to ask an invigilator for clarification if aspects of the examination are unclear, but should be aware that invigilators will not answer any question that is deemed to infringe on exam integrity.
10. In the case of externally generated emergencies such as fire alarms, students will, in an orderly manner, follow the directions of the invigilator and evacuate the exam room, and return to the exam room when the emergency has been cleared. All exam materials must be left in the exam room during such emergency. In Continuing Education, examination papers will be collected by the instructor /invigilator. If the exam is to be continued in an alternate exam location, students will go immediately to the assigned alternate exam location.

C. Electronic Examination Student Responsibilities:

1. Upon notification from instructor, at least two-weeks prior to examination date, students must immediately ensure that any required resources (e.g., individual accounts on system, specific applications, file space, etc.) are valid and that they can be accessed.
2. Students will abide by any restrictions established by their School, Department or Graduate Program regarding the use of applications or resources normally available on networked computers such as e-mail, Internet access or data files.
3. Unless explicitly required by the examination instructions, electronic communication is not permitted during the examination or while in the examination room.
4. If a student is required to leave the examination room, the student must ensure that any work completed or in progress is saved before leaving the room in all but emergency situations.

V. Student Accommodations

1. The University acknowledges that some students may require alternative examination times/dates on religious grounds. A student who requires an alternative time/date on religious grounds must consult the policy on *Accommodation of Student Religious Observance Obligations* and submit the appropriate form by the deadline described.
2. Students with disabilities who are registered with the Access Centre must be accommodated in accordance with the arrangements provided by the Access Centre guidelines.
3. Requests for alternative examination times/dates on grounds other than religion will be granted in exceptional circumstances involving pre-existing health problems and/or other

mitigating circumstances beyond the student's control. (Work schedules and discretionary arrangements such as travel plans are not normally considered to be acceptable grounds.) Such a request must be made to the course instructor within one week of the announcement of the examination schedule. If the request is granted, it is for the instructor to determine an alternative time and date.

4. In the case of emergency situations beyond the student's control, requests for alternative examination times/dates may be granted on compassionate grounds, if the request is made in a timely fashion. If the request is granted, the student should consult with the instructor to determine an alternative time and date.

VI. Cancellation of an Exam Session or Exam Date

A. Disruption of an Exam that has commenced

(Examination session refers to a single time slot, such as Tuesday 8-11; exam date refers to an entire day of exams.) The University shall establish procedures and guidelines for the rescheduling of exams, which are cancelled, and for exams that are disrupted once they have begun. The Registrar shall establish these guidelines for all Undergraduate and Graduate courses and the Dean of Continuing Education shall establish them for Continuing Education courses.

B. Undergraduate and Graduate Classes

1. In the case of cancellation of a single exam session, the exam will be rescheduled for the following evening (or two evenings, if required) in the gymnasium. If new exam papers are required, the printing of these will be expedited by the Supervisor of Duplicating and Printing Services and the exam coordinator.
2. In the case of cancellation of a Fall term exam date, the exam will be rescheduled for registration week in January. In the case of cancellation of a Winter term exam date, the exam will be rescheduled for the week immediately following the normal exam period.
3. The University will provide students with the means to obtain timely information concerning rescheduled examinations. Students may confirm the revised time and date on the Registrar's Office website, www.ryerson.ca/registrar. This information will also be posted on the university's main phone line.
4. A fire alarm results in immediate evacuation of the building. The invigilator in consultation with the course instructor or coordinator is responsible to determine whether the exam can be re-started, or whether a make-up must be scheduled.
 - a. If an examination does not continue after an evacuation, the instructor should communicate to the Registrar's Office, if at all possible, within three (3) hours of the posted end time for the exam, outlining alternate examination arrangements or other changes to the grading scheme of the exam or course. The timing of the exam may mean that this information cannot be communicated until the next morning, or the morning of the next working day. This information will then be posted on the university's main phone line and on the Registrar's Office website, www.ryerson.ca/registrar so that students can obtain the necessary information in a timely manner.

- b. If a make-up examination is required, it will be written in the evening of the following day or, if necessary, the evening of the second following day, in the gym. If the space in the gym is not sufficient, alternate arrangements will be made. If the exam is on the last examination date, it may be necessary to reschedule the exam after the end of the semester. As noted above, when make-ups are scheduled, the revised time and date will be included on the university's main phone line and on the Registrar's Office website, www.ryerson.ca/registrar. If new exam papers are required, their printing will be expedited by notification of the Supervisor of Duplicating and Printing Services.

C. Continuing Education Classes

1. Alternate Locations and Dates

In the event of a disruption of a final exam, Continuing Education will have assigned each class either:

- a) An alternate exam **location** where students will complete the interrupted exam. However, if the instructor determines that a new exam must be written, students must be advised to return to the same classroom on the alternate exam date.

OR

- b) An alternate exam **date** when students will return to the same classroom to write a new exam. This alternate exam date is necessary because, in the event of a disruption, it is not possible to relocate all exams being written on that night.

2. Procedure for Disruption of an Exam that has commenced

Exams may be disrupted by one of the following events. Instructors/invigilators should refer to the appropriate evacuation procedures.

- a) **Fire Alarm:** A fire alarm results in immediate evacuation of the building. If Security determines that the alarm is false, students and instructors/invigilators may re-enter the building and complete the exam. This disruption may take approximately 10 to 15 minutes.

If Security advises that the building cannot be re-entered after a fire alarm, students will be advised to either go immediately to the assigned alternate exam location to complete the exam or return on the assigned alternate exam date to write a new exam.

- b) **Building Evacuation:** In the event it becomes necessary to evacuate a building, Security will go from room to room advising instructors/invigilators to evacuate. The instructor/invigilator will either advise students to go immediately to the assigned alternate exam location to complete the exam or to return on the assigned alternate exam date to write a new exam. This relocation may take approximately 30 to 45 minutes.

3. Cancellation of Examination(s)

In the case of cancellation of exam(s) for any reason (such as extreme weather conditions or building closure), students will write their final exam on the alternate exam date, according to the alternate exam schedule. Where possible, Continuing Education will make every effort to advise students and instructors of the cancellation.