



POLICY 9.02

POSITION POLICY

Exam Invigilation Fees

POLICY INTENT

To outline the position of AUSU regarding the cost of exam invigilation services for students who cannot attend an established AU Exam Centre in person.

POLICY RESEARCH

Athabasca University (AU) offers its students a variety of choices in order for writing exams required for their courses. Although AU operates mainly in an online environment, it does have three physical campus locations that allow students in the area to come in and physically write exams with an AU invigilator. Exam invigilation at the AU Exam Centres does not incur a fee to the student. In 2020, these locations were temporarily closed for public safety during the COVID-19 global pandemic. Those students who are unable to access the AU Exam Centres are required to book their own AU-approved invigilator at an out-of-pocket cost.

Alternatively, students can choose to use the online invigilator ProctorU¹ rather than travel to the physical Exam Centres or use a local invigilator. This service is provided in partnership with AU, but also presents an out-of-pocket expense to students. In addition to this expense, not all of AU's exams are in an online format, so this option can only apply to courses that have had their examinations digitized. Although AU is working to digitize as many exams as possible in order to align with the University's strategic plan², the utilization of an online invigilator still comes at a cost to the student.

In traditional brick-and-mortar institutions, the student does not bear the burden of exam fees. While students who live near the Exam Centres are able to use free invigilation services, those who are too far away cannot. Students who must seek out invigilation services outside of the AU Exam Centres will have to pay for those services the majority of the time. These exam fees are not considered to be part of tuition, so funded students cannot acquire additional funding to pay for them.

There are other Canadian post-secondary institutions aside from AU that offer distance programs in an online environment. Some of these institutions do not require their students to pay exam invigilation fees. These institutions include the University of Manitoba Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning³ and Royal Roads University.⁴

Accessing and paying for an exam invigilator can pose a barrier or hardship to students with financial constraints. This hardship is shared among those students who cannot physically access an AU Exam Centre.

Be it resolved that the Athabasca University Students' Union will advocate to Athabasca University to provide at least one exam option that does not incur out-of-pocket fees for the student, regardless of the course.

¹ ProctorU. (n.d.). Retrieved February 7, 2019, from <https://www.proctoru.com/>.

² Imagine: Transforming Lives, Transforming Communities. (n.d.). Retrieved February 7, 2019, from http://imagine.athabascau.ca/files/StrategyPlan_2018.pdf.

³ Final Examinations and Grades. (n.d.). Retrieved February 7, 2019 from http://intranet.umanitoba.ca/academic_support/catl/flexible/exams.html.

⁴ Online Exams. (n.d.). Retrieved July 27, 2020 from <https://www.royalroads.ca/current-students/online-exams>