Solicitors Regulation Authority

Remote assessment guidance

19 October 2022

This information is for LPC providers wishing to apply to the SRA to vary their validation to allow for remote assessment.

As with any application to vary validation it should:

- Be submitted to the SRA at least six months before students are due to enrol, structured around the criteria for the validation of courses.
- Identify which of the criteria for authorisation and validation, set out in 'Authorisation and validation requirements', are relevant to the changes proposed.
- Include the rationale for the proposed changes and any evidence to support the case for change.

For changes to allow for remote assessment specifically, providers must demonstrate the following in their application:

- A clear rationale for introducing remote proctoring, including the benefit to students.
- That their remote proctoring arrangements maintain the security and integrity of the LPC assessment.
- That their remote proctoring arrangements are fair and include adequate arrangements for students:
  - requiring reasonable adjustments
  - who are digitally disadvantaged or unable to access remote teaching and assessment
- That they offer informed choice to students between face-to-face assessment and remote assessment. On registration, students should be provided with information to allow them to make an informed decision on which form of assessment best fits their needs and be given a reasonable time within which to make their choice. Requiring students to make a case based on exceptional circumstances around reasonable adjustments and digital disadvantages/home circumstances will not be enough.

The key risks and issues that we expect providers to have considered and addressed in applications to us for remote proctoring are:

- Security of the assessment - remote proctoring arrangements must maintain the security and integrity of the LPC assessment.
- Assessment strategy for remotely proctored assessments – providers should review their approach to assessment if using remote proctoring software. Open book assessment is likely to be more appropriate in many areas, and assessments should be designed for open book assessment. Assessments should be separated to make them shorter to remove the need for toilet

breaks mid-assessment, subject to requests for reasonable adjustments. This approach should be replicated for face-to-face assessment.
- Cyber security – mitigations and plans must be in place should assessments be compromised in the event of a cyber incident occurring before or during an assessment.
- Use of facial recognition technology – where providers are proposing to use systems that rely on this technology, information about how the risks associated with this technology are being mitigated and managed.
- Arrangements in place for students requiring reasonable adjustments.
- Arrangements in place for those who are digitally disadvantaged and unable to access remote teaching and assessment.
- Student privacy concerns.
- How providers have reviewed their assessment strategy to ensure that there is parity in the experience of those being assessed remotely and those being assessed face to face.

Any application for remote proctoring that is approved us would be subject to additional general conditions including:

- A requirement to report any problems with online remote assessments immediately to the SRA.
- A requirement to report to the SRA if the LPC provider changes remote assessment providers - a change of provider must be approved by the SRA.
- A condition that the SRA can withdraw or make authorisation subject to further conditions, should there be serious concerns that the requirements for authorisation are not being met. This would include but would not be limited to, where there are concerns about the security and integrity of LPC assessments undertaken using remote proctoring software.
- Additional reporting requirements to the SRA in responses to the annual course monitoring report process, including the performance of those taking assessments remotely compared to those taking assessment face to face.