



2020 European Board of Cardiothoracic Surgery Level 1 (MEBCTS) Examination

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

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INTRODUCTION

Precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the EBCTS examination will not be conducted physically at the EACTS meeting in Barcelona as had originally been planned.

Instead, the Level 1 examinations in both cardiac and thoracic surgery will be held using remote proctoring.

This method of professional delivery of high stakes examinations is established and secure and allows candidates to sit the examination in the privacy and safety of their own home or office provided certain equipment and environmental requirements are met. These are detailed later in this document.

Remote proctoring is very convenient and less stressful for candidates who can take their assessment in familiar surroundings. You must however find a suitable venue in which you can work alone, free from interruptions and which is secure for the duration of the examination.

If you are unable to find a suitable venue or if you cannot meet the technical specifications for the equipment required, then you will not be able to sit the examination.

REMOTE PROCTORING

Remote proctoring involves taking the examination using your own computer rather than sitting in an examination hall with a paper and pen.

Prior to taking the examination you will be required to download the ProctorExam app onto your mobile phone.

You will then be guided through a set up procedure on your computer and mobile phone. You will receive an email approximately 5-7 days ahead of the examination which will have a link to test your equipment and ensure that everything has been technically prepared for the examination to take place.

Nearer the time of the examination you will be sent a second email which has a link to the examination paper.

Before taking the examination, you will use your mobile phone camera to survey your room and working environment under the real time observation of an invigilator. You will also be asked to provide a formal identification document (passport or national ID card) which will be viewed before beginning the examination to check your identity.

Your phone camera is then used to observe you for the duration of the examination to ensure fair play. A live feed of your computer screen and of your computer webcam is monitored in real time by professional trained invigilators along with the live images and sound from your phone camera.



TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

a) Mobile device

You will need a mobile phone on which you will download the ProctorExam app. Instructions for downloading the app will be provided during the system check process around one week before the examination or you can do this prior to your system check by accessing the Google Play Store for Android devices and the App Store for iOS (Apple) devices and searching for ProctorExam.

Phone specifications are:

- Android 4.1 or higher.
- iOS (Apple) 8.0 or higher.
- Video resolution must be minimum 800 x 600 px.
- Ensure you can connect to WiFi so that you don't use up your data.
- Ensure that your mobile device can be plugged into power and be charged for the duration of your exam and in a position to view your working place.

b) Computer System & Internet Connection

- Bandwidth – Minimum 1Mbit/s upload speed. The recommend upload speed is 1.5Mbit/s. Additional recommended minimums are 10Mbit/s download speed and ping under 25 ms.
- Tethering to the internet via a mobile phone is not supported and so you must have either a wired or wifi internet connection. Ensure that you are positioned where you have a strong signal. Loss of internet connection during the examination may result in disqualification from the examination.
- Delivery of the examination is supported on the following operating systems:
 - Windows 8 or higher
 - MAC OS X (latest and previous releases)
 - Web browser – latest version of Google Chrome
 - You cannot sit the examination on a tablet device
 - A webcam is required – maximum resolution of 1280 x 720
 - A microphone is required
 - Audio is required
 - If possible, turn off any updates on devices

Please note that attempting to use a laptop or device that is intended for work purposes may have restricted access and administration rights installed. This may cause issues when trying to access the ProctorExam platform and therefore it is recommended to use a personal desktop or laptop computer.

Below are some links that we would recommend using to test your system ahead of the formal pre-examination system check:

- To check your microphone works
<https://www.onlinemictest.com/>
- To check your webcam works
<https://www.onlinemictest.com/webcam-test/> or <https://webcammictest.com/>

If you do find that your webcam or microphone does not work, please see the below links that will assist in fixing this:



- To allow microphone and camera
<https://support.google.com/chrome/answer/2693767?co=GENIE.Platform%3DDesktop&hl=en>
- To allow mic and camera on MAC
<https://support.apple.com/en-gb/guide/mac-help/mchlf6d108da/mac>
- To allow webcam on Windows 10
<https://www.howtogeek.com/394677/fix-my-webcam-doesn%E2%80%99t-work-on-windows-10/>

With the continual introduction of new hardware, there are some issues we are aware of which have settings that could potentially block access to the ProctorExam platform. Below are details on how to amend settings to allow access:

Lenovo

In order to allow enable webcam please click on this link:-

<https://success.highfive.com/hc/en-us/articles/360004684891-No-Video-from-Camera-on-Windows#lenovo>

MacOS Catalina

In order to grant access to folders permission to allow your webcam, microphone and screen sharing please click on this link :-<https://nektony.com/duplicate-finder-free/folders-permission>

REGISTRATION FOR THE EXAMINATION

Once you have registered for the examination, an email for your system check and a second email for your examination will be sent to you using the email address you provided when you applied.

The system check email will arrive approximately a week ahead of the test. This allows you to have the confidence that your system is set up ready for the assessment or alternatively address any issues that have arisen.

If you are unable to meet the technical requirements necessary, then you will not be able to sit the examination.

The email for the examination itself will be sent close to the examination date. However, you will not be able to sit the examination until the prescribed time.

All candidates will sit the examination at exactly the same time and under the same conditions of invigilation.

Please double check your junk email folder if nothing appears in your main inbox.



THE SYSTEM CHECK

Your system check email will contain instructions on how to perform a system check to ensure your computer and phone are set up and ready.

However, before you perform your system check, we strongly advise you do the following:

- Ensure that you are using the latest version of Google Chrome. To check if you have the latest version:
On your computer, open Chrome
 1. Click on the icon in the upper corner that looks like three dots
 2. Click on help
 3. Click on about Google Chrome which will then show your latest version and if up to date or not

- To update Google Chrome:
 1. Click on the icon in the upper corner that looks like three dots
 2. Click Update Google Chrome. If you don't see this button, you're on the latest version
 3. Click Relaunch

- Allow pop-ups for ProctorExam:
 1. Type `chrome://settings/content` in to the address bar and press Enter
 2. Select Pop-ups from the Content Settings screen
 3. In 'Allow', click 'Add' and enter `https://surpass.proctorexam.com`
 4. Close the Content Settings screen and refresh your browser to enable Flash

- Install ProctorExam extension/plugin within Chrome to allow screen sharing:
 1. Click on the link here or type in `https://chrome.google.com/webstore/category/extensions`
 2. Search for ProctorExam
 3. Click on 'add to chrome'
 4. Click on 'add extension'

Please ensure that you run your system check as soon as possible to avoid any unwanted problems just before your examination. Once you click on the system check link, you'll be given simple instructions on how to complete the check.

TAKING THE EXAMINATION

Once your system check is completed, another email will be sent prior to your exam date – again, please check your junk email folder. This email contains the link to your test.

For the exam, you will need to use your mobile phone because this provides additional coverage of the test taking environment alongside your computer webcam and screen feed. As described above, you will need an Apple or Android mobile device with the ProctorExam app installed to facilitate this.

Around 15-30 minutes before the scheduled start time of your examination, simply click on the exam link in your email, follow the identity check, environment viewing instructions and read in full the 'Instructions for Candidates'. You can then launch your examination which will start at the prescribed time for all candidates.

You will require Adobe Flash Player. You will be presented with the following message on screen 'This page requires flash, select here to enable flash content". Click on here, then click on 'Allow' which will then appear in the top left of the screen.

There will be a timer on the screen to help you judge your passage through the examination.

Invigilators can, if necessary, communicate with you by audio if they have a concern and may ask for a video sweep of your room. If this happens your examination timer will be paused so that you are not disadvantaged.

You are not permitted to ask questions of the invigilators at any time. They can provide no assistance in relation to the questions.

Once you have completed the examination, please ensure that you click on 'Finish' on your computer screen, and then click on 'Finish Exam' in ProctorExam on your mobile phone.

The ProctorExam Chrome extension will remain installed in your Chrome browser at the top right-hand side indicated by an icon as shown here:



In order to remove this once your assessment has been completed, right click on the icon and then click on 'remove from Chrome'. The extension will now be removed.

If you have applied to take both the cardiac and thoracic examination, you will need to re-install the Chrome extension if it is removed for your second assessment. However, you can keep the extension installed until all exams have been completed.

SUPPORT

During your system check and on the examination day, if you encounter any technical difficulties, you will be able to access online chat support. You will find this in the bottom right hand corner of your screen:



ANOMALIES

All footage and sound from all sources are recorded and can be reviewed as evidence in the event of an anomaly during a candidate's examination by the EBCTS Board who will then judge, taking into account the advice of the professional invigilator, whether a candidate is to be disqualified.

The decision of the Board will be final and cannot be appealed. For a high stakes' professional examination, candidates are strongly advised to ensure that their environment for the duration of the examination and their own conduct is controlled and will not give rise to any concern or anomaly that might require action.

Invigilators are able to speak with candidates throughout the examination and can pause the assessment if they have a concern and ask for additional views from your camera to be taken of the environment.

Invigilators cannot provide advice on the examination questions. There is a 'Help' button on the screen if you have any difficulties during the examination.

It will be your responsibility to ensure that your environment meets our requirements and that the instructions are followed. It is your responsibility to ensure that the technical specifications for equipment are met and maintained for the duration of the examination. For example, loss of internet connection or of your webcam, screen capture or phone camera stream may lead to disqualification from the examination. Any loss of our ability to invigilate your examination for any reason is likely to result in this outcome.

During the examination, no use can be made of references, books, articles, web sites or other sources of knowledge. Accessing any of these references or discussion with other people during the examination will lead to your disqualification.

Furthermore, the question bank is the property of the European Board. Any attempt at copying, reproducing, compromising or sharing questions with any other party will permanently disqualify you from the examination in future and will be part of your permanent record at the European Board. If the question bank is compromised then we may take legal action against you.



PRIVACY

If you choose to take the examination through this platform, you agree that you are being monitored over the Internet through your computer via your webcam, mobile phone and microphone during your exam session.

Online invigilation means that you will log on to a test platform through the internet to take your assessment and you will be monitored in real time by a professional invigilator during your entire assessment session so that your face, voice, desk and working environment will be captured and a recording will be made of these for the purposes of assessment security and the integrity of the assessment process.

It is your responsibility to ensure that only you will be recorded during an online invigilation testing session and that no one else will be physically in the room where you are testing and that no one speaks to you during your testing sessions.

BTL, who provides the examination delivery system, may also collect and record further information about you when you take the exam which is online invigilated, such as your name, email address, captured facial photo, captured ID photo/government issued ID, physical (visible) health data/condition (by virtue of video recording), racial/ethnic origin/religious beliefs (by virtue of video recording), IP address, browser agents, browser and operating system identifiers, screenshots of your PC, your exam setting (home, office etc), all recorded video streams (computer, webcam and mobile), name of the exam you are sitting and other assessment based data that may be collected, including information about browser version, appVersion, appName, product and appName, video frame size, type and library used for encoding, framerate, jitter, packet loss and bandwidth.

The video and audio recordings are standard test procedures for all awarding organisations' online invigilated tests and your video and audio recording will be used for purposes of identity verification, online observation, incident resolution such as fraud prevention, test security and for the integrity of the test and testing process.

All of the same personal data that BTL collect or receive as described above applies for all awarding organisations online invigilated tests.

Prior to the start of your online invigilated test you may be required to take a picture of yourself. The collection of such data is optional, but necessary if you choose to use the online invigilation function. You understand that the audio and video recordings of your testing session, as well as photos, will be supplied in certain circumstances to us, the awarding organisation, to assist with the test management of your examination.

BTL will retain your personal data no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which it is processed. The length of time for which BTL retain information may also depend on the specific retention periods set out by us, your awarding organisation, and applicable laws.

When you use the online invigilation service, BTL use selected third party service ProctorExam that is hosted in Germany (Frankfurt Region), to process your data on our behalf. As part of the provision of the service by BTL to us, your awarding organisation, you agree that some or all of the above personal data may be processed outside the UK and EEA. In such circumstances, and if you are based in the UK or EU, we will, as required by GDPR, ensure that your privacy rights are protected by appropriate safeguards.

As part of the online invigilation services you also agree to allow your personal data to be transferred by BTL to us, your awarding organisation, from whom you seek certification. We require your personal data so that tests can be correctly administered, and certification can be processed, granted and administered. For more information about how we, your awarding organisation, may collect and use your personal data we encourage you to review our full privacy policy.”

QUESTIONS & QUERIES

The remote proctoring examination delivery method provides a secure and professional method of sitting a high stakes examination in the safety of your home or office. It is a well tried and tested system. We hope that this will be a more comfortable and less stressful environment than a physical examination in a room with pen and paper and of course maintains your safety during the COVID19 pandemic.

It is critical that you follow the processes, rules and regulations described in this document to ensure that your computer, phone and working environment meet the requirements and standards needed.

Any failures to provide this risks disqualification. Given the need for remote invigilation in real time please make every effort to ensure that your success is not compromised whilst sitting the examination by technical issues or interruptions. Make sure that none of your behaviour during the examination can be misconstrued as misconduct. You will be under surveillance throughout the examination by trained professional invigilators using multiple video and sound sources.

Please direct any queries or questions to Amanda Cameron – ebcts@eacts.co.uk.

I wish you good luck and every success in the EBCTS examinations this year.



Stephen Clark
Chairman
European Board of Cardiothoracic Surgery