

Our rapid move to online exams and beyond

CA ANZ



CA ANZ's Remote Invigilated Exams Delivery
Term 1 2020

The move

The move to online exams was originally planned as part of an ambitious project that is in flight to redesign the current CA Program. The future state, digital first design sets out to maximise our existing core strengths while developing new, high-impact areas as we empower a new wave of Chartered Accountants with work-ready, future focused skills.

Project activity to date had focused on procuring a single vendor that could offer a technology solution that would digitise assessment delivery and enable remote marking while providing in-person invigilation by hosting exams across a global network of test centre venues. With a selection and implementation timeline of 12 months to the first pilot it was an ambitious target in itself.

In March 2020, the four Term 1 CA Program modules were underway with seated paper-based exams scheduled for the 8,750 enrolled candidates. Exam centres were booked in multiple locations to host between 1 and 1,000 candidates each. Marking weekends were also scheduled for hundreds of members to attend CA ANZ offices to mark the hand-written scripts over set weekends.

On 16 March 2020 it became apparent that this approach wasn't going to be feasible and there was a need to fast track the move to online exams.

6 weeks

From start to delivery

Our objective – was to allow progression and maintain academic integrity – through online exams delivered via myLearning, our CA Program candidate Learning Management System with ProctorU remote invigilation

What we did

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of candidates, members and our people, we pivoted to offering our Term 1 modules using a range of online delivery systems for:

- remote invigilated online exams for all modules
- marking of exam papers
- a new compulsory academic integrity module and test for all candidates taking an online exam

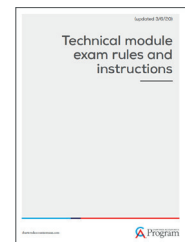
8,750 Candidates enrolled in Term 1 CA Program were given a choice to continue with their studies online



Our approach to deliver the Term 1 CA Program exams online included:

- Maintaining as many of our current workflows as possible due to the tight delivery time
- Utilising technology familiar to our candidates where possible to minimise disruption and therefore delivering the exam via myLearning, our CA Program candidate Learning Management System
- Partnering with ProctorU to provide remote invigilation to maintain academic integrity
- Using the exams that had been prepared for the paper-based exams that candidates had been preparing for

- Developing additional resources for candidates – Academic Integrity module, Practice online exams, Exam rules and Instructions, Reference guide for online exams, Technical requirements for online exams, how to approach online exams video, module assessment rules and module feedback and FAQ's for online exams



- Conducting marking on two online platforms for the first time and developing training materials and events for markers on how to mark using one or both automated marking systems
- Developing a new support team to guide candidates who were facing issues accessing and sitting the online exam

Key to the pivot was managing risk at pace for all key stakeholders from The Board and Regulators to employers and candidates. It was accepted that this would involve risk outside our usual risk appetite.



What we delivered

In a short timespan of 6 weeks from when candidates elected the option to progress their studies we were able to deliver exams for four modules remotely with the introduction of remote invigilated exams.

To summarise in Term 1:

- 9 remote invigilated exams for over 8,000 candidates were held across ten countries

8,000⁺



10

- 6797 candidates chose to sit their main exam online and 1211 chose to sit the supplementary exam online (8008 candidates elected to continue with their studies with an online remote invigilated exam)

96%
of
candidates

accessing the remote
invigilated exams
without any problems

- 7155 candidates successfully completed a new Academic Integrity Module and Academic Integrity Test
- 446 markers were successfully trained using our automated marking systems and marked all our main exam papers
- 154 markers marked all our supplementary exam papers

“I just want to express that I appreciate the effort your team have made in catering for the candidate’s exam during the pandemic. It was a fast decision that your team has undertaken, and worked on under such a short time, from the online workshop to the online exam while many other institutions decided to defer the class and exam to a later time, you did not bow to the pandemic and come out with such a brilliant alternative! Proud to be your student, candidate and hopefully member soon. Big round of applause to you and big Thank you!”

Post implementation review

Candidate

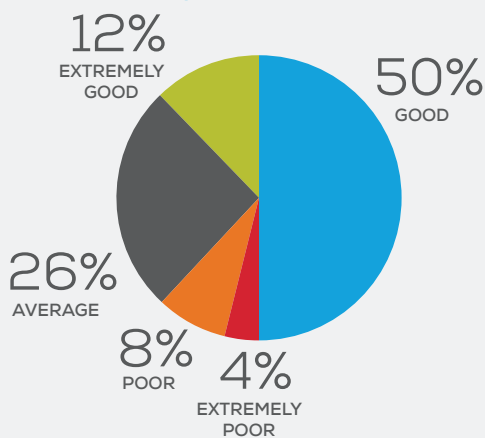
After we held the remote invigilated online main exams we conducted a short survey to feed into our planning for future modules. 34% of our candidates responded to the survey and below is a summary of how satisfied they were with their online exam experience.

2,416

Candidate survey responses

- Candidate surveys 2416 responses (34%)
- Major employers of candidates in Australia and NZ accounting for 426 candidates
- 258 Marker surveys responses (58%)
- 32 interviews with groups of CA ANZ employees involved in the delivery of the remote invigilated exams

Online exam experience



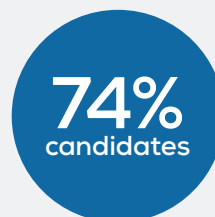
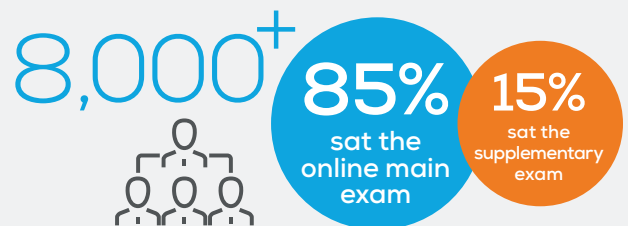
What did our Candidates say?

“Thank you very much for organising and adapting to the changed environment for the convenience of the candidates. I am extremely appreciative for all your support and effort that enabled us to continue the study. Taking exam online was really good as it saved time and energy to write down answer in handwriting, which eliminated the risk that my writing is hard to be read and allowed easy editing. Thank you so much!”

“It was great to not delay the exam further. So many family, work, life commitments are put on hold in my life because of CA exams. Thank you for keeping them running online.”

“In a world where pen and paper are now seldom used, I found the use of typing instead of writing, and calculation in excel instead of a calculator in an exam setting more applicable to the real world. However I was not a fan of the functionality of the blackboard exam space (i.e the text boxes provided to insert question answers). I thought this part of the system felt clunky and outdated.”

“Please have Invigilated Online Exams as an option for future exams. It saves time for travel and it’s much easier to type and create tables than writing them out (and probably a lot clearer to read for the markers).”



Approximately three in four candidates (74%) taking online exams rated the options offered by CA ANZ as “Good or Extremely Good”

Post implementation review

Markers

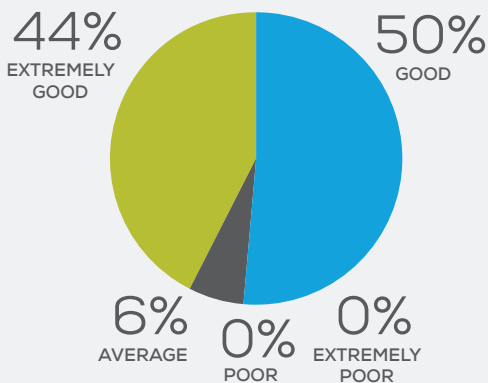
After we held the remote online marking sessions for the main exam papers, we conducted a short survey to feed into our plans of how marking may occur in future. From the 446 markers involved in marking the main exam we received a 58% response to our survey and below is a summary of how satisfied markers are with moving to an online marking platform.

258

Marker survey responses

- Candidate surveys 2416 responses (34%)
- Major employers of candidates in Australia and NZ accounting for 426 candidates
- **258 Marker surveys responses (58%)**
- 32 interviews with groups of CA ANZ employees involved in the delivery of the remote invigilated exams

Online marking experience



“I found this extremely good and after 25 years of involvement in the marking process, this was a great new direction for the process.”

“Everything was really smooth and well run. perhaps a bit more lead time to review the sample scripts but I appreciate that the exam was only days before the marking weekend ...”



rated their experience as “Good or Extremely Good” with online marking

What did our Markers say?

“Much easier to read typed exam papers rather than trying to decipher handwriting. This increased the speed of marking.”

“Online training session for using teams was helpful.”

“.....Hadh't had any issues, technical or otherwise. Hoping for more online marking in future!”

Looking ahead

What we are doing differently in term 2?

After reviewing our experience in Term 1 and considering the current COVID-19 impacts on our candidates we are continuing with online delivery of our exams. While there were some technical problems during the exam roll-out we were able to provide an outcome for all candidates who elected to proceed in Term 1 2020. We have extensive learnings from our remote invigilated exams delivery to support improved offerings as we navigate the remainder of 2020.

With Term 2 online, we are implementing the following changes:

- Candidates having the opportunity to practice an exam in an online proctored environment to ensure they have the right equipment and understand how to access the online exam
- Step by step guide and introduction of additional video's about the online exam set up
- Redesigning the exams to improve the online exam experience including allowing the exam paper to be highlighted, annotated, and printed
- Improved communications to candidates
- Improved support to ensure candidates are technically ready
- Refinement of our support model
- Looking at simplifying the marking process utilising Blackboard as the marking platform
- Appointment of a dedicated Online Exams Manager to manage the process of delivering modules online from start to finish.

Online exams - getting ready

To access your exam online you will need:

- A desktop or laptop (single display only)
- A webcam (built-in or external)
- Speakers (built-in or external)
- Microphone (often this is built into the webcam)
- A reliable internet connection
- A suitable private space where you won't be interrupted

STEP 1
Installing the ProctorU extension:
If you already have a ProctorU extension, please make sure to update it prior to the exam. (Also make sure you have the latest version of Google Chrome)
[Pinning the ProctorU extension to the top right of browser window](#)
[Removing the extension \(video\)](#)

STEP 2
Setting up Proctor U account:
You must set up a Proctor U account to sit the exam

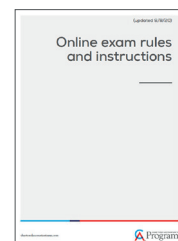
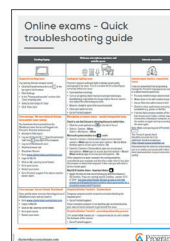
STEP 3
Testing your equipment:
We highly recommend that you sit the sample/trial ProctorU exam in the morning prior to your exam. Failure to do so may result in you not being able to sit your exam on the day due to technical issues.
[What to do if the camera and mic do not appear under the postlock icon \(video\)](#)

STEP 4
ProctorU Onboarding (Reference guide for online exams):
Please make sure to watch this video which simulates the exam day experience for onboarding.

[Frequently asked questions \(FAQ's\)](#)

charteredaccountantsnz.com

CA Program





How have our plans changed for the future?

The benefits derived from delivering remote invigilated exams has led to a review of our proposed approach. A change in scope of the project has been approved to replace the proposed seated computer based exams (CBE) with remote invigilated exams which will:

- Provide a higher quality candidate experience by eliminating travel, removing the stress of the exam centre, completing the assessment on a device that is familiar and being better able to cater for special provision candidates
- Provide a scalable exam and assessment solution to accommodate the growth of the CA Program and enable the future state digital design proposed by the redesign
- Deliver a contemporary assessment experience in line with the direction of travel of other Accounting bodies

A single provider is being sought to replace the multiple systems that were used to pivot quickly to online exams with significant benefits expected from engaging a single vendor including:

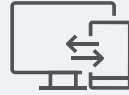
- Minimal technology support for integrations
- Unified candidate support model
- Consistent user experience across technology platforms

There are significant opportunities for improvement to remote invigilated exams, specifically in the areas of:

- Candidate onboarding
- Academic integrity
- Access to permitted materials
- Support
- Statistics reporting

Advantages of remote invigilated exams

1 Candidates are familiar with digital environments



Environmentally friendly – less paper, printing and transport 2

3 No geographical restriction or exam centre required



"Able to set up my own exam space in a 'controlled' environment which helped eased anxieties" Term 1 Candidate



Physical security of exam documents and response booklets (digital storage and access-control) 4

5 Flexibility for candidates to take exam in location of their choosing – saves time, travel and disruption



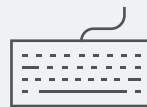
"I found this way much more efficient than handwriting an exam and was able to get a lot more in - less stressful so felt I was better able to show what I could do rather than being so constrained by time. It was also really good not having to travel 3 hours each way plus finding accommodation." Term 1 Candidate

"I greatly appreciate the CA ANZ team making an online exam possible. I am autistic and found it much better to take an exam at home. This could be an excellent way to be inclusive of people like me going forward." Term 1 Candidate



Accessibility – easier to provide exams for special provision candidates – extra time, increased fonts, colours etc 6

7 Typed responses – no handwriting



"Online exam allows electronic documents which make searching faster and easier. Typing is easier than hand writing for both candidates and reviewers. Easier to make any amendments while answering the questions. Online exam fits in the current workplace where everything goes online and electronic" Term 1 Candidate



COVID-19 safe 8

9 Less stress from atmosphere of exam room/venue



"I find exam environments very stressful, even though I study hard and am always prepared, seeing all the other students with all their critical files and notes makes me question myself right before the exam which reflects in my performance. The online option avoided this stress of the exam room and I was more calm just on my own" Term 1 Candidate

"I believe this should be the future of exam taking for CA as it's more realistic in terms of finding information through digital means than physical means. Despite the connection issues which I believe will be resolved in the future, it was a very seamless experience. Best part was I did not have to travel to the venue saving a lot of time as well. Very happy with the experience. Will be very happy to see the same format for my future exams" Term 1 Candidate