

FINAL EXAMINATION – FIRST PART (FE-1)

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2023

Online Examination

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How long is the examination?

Each exam is 3.5 hours.

All examinations will take place between 10.00am and 1.30pm. Candidates should log on to Better Examinations by no later than 9.30am. We are encouraging all candidates to log on earlier if possible. To facilitate candidates, we are allowing candidates to log on from **9.00am**.

Where should I sit the examination?

- Make sure that no other people are present in the room or enter the room while you are taking the examination.
- Minimise the occurrence of any noise during the examination.
- It is important to have sufficient lighting for the webcam to work properly. The lighting in the room should be bright enough to be considered "daylight" quality. Overhead lighting is preferable. If no overhead lighting is available, the light source should not be behind you. Your face should be clearly visible through the webcam.
- Check you are in an area where you can have your device plugged into a power outlet and are not working off a battery.

What equipment do I need?

Please see [Technical Requirements](#)

May I use an extra screen?

No, this is not allowed.

Can I have a smartphone in my workspace?

You are allowed to have one smartphone on your desk in airplane mode. You may only use your smartphone if you need assistance from our helpline.

May I use a smartphone as a webcam?

No, this is not allowed.

Are earbuds/headphones permitted?

No.

What materials are permitted in my workspace?

- Legislation included in the permitted legislation list for your exam.
- Water/Tissues.
- Mobile phone, facedown and in airplane mode. Your phone can be used only if you need to contact the Law Society's helpline.

Can I take a bathroom break?

Yes. Candidates are permitted to take a bathroom break.

Am I allowed to have a bottle of water in my workspace?

Yes.

Is it possible to print the examination questions?

No. Better Examinations has a Highlighter tool which you may find helpful.

Am I allowed notepaper and pens?

No. Better Examinations has a notepad and sticky notes which you may find helpful.

Am I allowed to have legislation for consultation?

Yes. The legislation contained in the list of permitted legislation is allowed.

What do I do if the internet drops?

If your internet connection drops during your examination, don't panic - your examination responses are automatically saved every 60 seconds.

If you are unable to reconnect to your online exam session, call the Law Society Helpline - we will do our best to get you reconnected as soon as possible. We will also record that you encountered a problem during your exam.

Is it a problem if my internet connection occasionally fails while taking an exam through online proctoring?

It is important to ensure a stable internet connection. If you experience technical problems despite having a stable internet connection, you can report these to the helpline or to fe1section@lawsociety.ie.

What is online proctoring/invigilation?

Online proctoring is where invigilation takes place online using special software (Proctorio plugin as a Chrome web browser extension).

This tool will enable the recording of Image (via the webcam) and sound and the activity performed within the online examination platform. It will also establish certain restrictions in the use of the device for the purpose of ensuring a fair performance of the exam. The restrictions are as follows:

- Force full screen;
- Disable new tabs;
- Close open tabs and windows;
- Disable printing;
- Block downloads.

Why is the LSI using online proctoring?

The selection of a specific Artificial Intelligence tool for online proctoring was defined by the need to allow over 1,800 students to sit exams simultaneously regardless of their location at the time.

How does online proctoring work?

Once you have logged into Better Examinations, you will need to install the Proctorio Chrome extension. While in the lobby you will have a link to access the Chrome Web store. Alternatively, you can visit www.getproctorio.com and follow the instructions to install it and

further setup for the exam.

Once you have finished the exams, you can remove the Proctorio plugin from your web browser (by visiting: <https://chrome.google.com/webstore/user/purchases>)

After logging in to Better Examinations and selecting your examination, Proctorio will run an automatic check of your equipment and the environment where you will sit your exam:

- Proctorio records what can be seen and heard in the room where you take the examination and what happens on the screen of your device from the moment you give permission to use the webcam and microphone until you finish the examination.
- You will need to validate your identity. This can be done by presenting a photo ID, such as your passport or driving licence and holding it for a few seconds to the camera.

The Proctorio extension for Chrome is only active while you are taking a proctored exam. At that time, the Proctorio shield icon changes from grey to green.

You can then start your examination.

At the end of the examination, the system provides a risk score per student, based on parameters established by the Law Society. After the exam, the ID of all candidates will be checked; the remaining data will only be viewed for candidates in exceptional circumstances where significant concerns arise.

What is the record and review method used by Proctorio?

The record method is done in real time of you, your immediate surrounding environment and the device used while you sit your exam, by the Proctorio extension.

Online proctoring software detects suspicious behaviour but doesn't determine whether fraud has occurred. The risk score created by Proctorio will be logged and reviewers from the Law Society will check these.

The recordings will be reviewed only where the risk score raises significant concerns to the reviewers and a suspicion arise on the back of any perceived breach of compliance.

If a reviewer detects a potential case of fraud, an official report will be compiled and submitted to the Education Committee. The Education Committee will conduct an investigation and assessment based on the official report and the information recorded by Proctorio. You will be notified and have an opportunity to comment prior to any referral to the Education Committee. Due process and fair procedures will be followed in any investigation undertaken.

The company that supplies the software (Proctorio) may not see the images because they are encrypted (end-to-end, zero knowledge encryption). The servers are located in the EU and after thirty days everything is automatically deleted. It can also be confirmed that the images will never be used for anything other than detection of possible fraud.

What is considered to constitute potential fraud during exams subject to online proctoring?

Fraud is assessed among other factors by looking for the behaviour and actions described below. Note: the Law Society determines, before the exam is held, which behaviour and actions will be given the greatest weight:

- looking away from the screen other than to review permitted legislation (once for a prolonged time or repeatedly over a period of time);

- whether the student leaves the room, using toilet facilities will not be recorded as a breach of the FE1 examination rules or suspicious behaviour;
- whether the student uses aids or another device without the express permission of the examiner;
- whether other faces can be seen;
- whether the student uses software which may collude with the examination software;
- whether the audio signal does not match the video;
- whether the starting time, ending time and duration of the exam do not match.

What happens to the saved data after an exam subject to online proctoring? What happens to the saved data after an exam subject to online proctoring?

The data is stored in an encrypted form in an environment that can only be accessed by authorised Law Society staff. After the stored video and sound data has been assessed, it is deleted as soon as possible (check the privacy statement for the exact timeframes).

Can I temporarily or permanently uninstall or deactivate the Proctorio extension?

The Proctorio extension for Chrome is only active while you are taking a proctored exam. In other words, it is not active before or after exams are taken. However, if you want, you can uninstall or deactivate the Proctorio extension after you have taken an exam.

Uninstalling

You can uninstall the extension by clicking on the Proctorio shield icon in the upper right corner of your Chrome browser. Click “remove from Chrome”, then click “remove”. However, you will need to reinstall the extension next time you take a proctored exam.

Deactivating

It is also possible to deactivate the extension instead of uninstalling it. You can do this by clicking on the Proctorio shield icon in the upper right corner of your Chrome browser. Click “manage extensions”, then click “off”. Don’t forget to reactivate the extension before you take another proctored exam. You can do this by clicking on the Proctorio shield icon, then clicking “manage extensions”, and then “on”.

May I use a VPN connection?

No, this is not allowed. Proctorio will recognise any use of VPNs or anonymous proxy services. These programmes are designed to conceal your identity and may therefore not be used during exams.

If you have further concerns regarding your privacy and the use of online proctoring, please contact the Law Society.