**Michael Berkman MP**
*For Maiwar* ▲

30 April 2020

University of Queensland
Attention: Professor Peter Høj AC
Email: vc@uq.edu.au

**Online exam software privacy concerns**

Dear Vice Chancellor Professor Peter Høj AC,

I am writing to seek an update on the University of Queensland's practice of online examinations, in particular the use of the exam software ProctorU.

I have been contacted by a concerned UQ student and am aware of the UQ Union's public statements on this issue and the petition they are currently running to end the use of the software.

Some of the student's specific concerns are that:

- The third-party exam supervisors are not verified or vetted by UQ.
- Many of the exam supervisors will be working from home due to the current COVID-19.
- pandemic, meaning that there are no guarantees that unauthorised people will not be watching students take exams.
- The software records keystrokes (potentially including sensitive usernames and passwords).
- The software records video of students taking exams, which is kept for later review.
- The software also stores images of students' ID cards, their location, and their biometric data.
- Students are forced to do a video sweep of their workspace for supervisors. With many students living with other people, this workspace will often be a student's bedroom or other private, personal area.
- ProctorU, according to their privacy policy, may share users' personal information with undisclosed third-parties. Users' personal information may also be sold or transferred as part of, among other things, a "sale of assets".
- There is no specified time-frame for which users' personal data will be retained, it is kept for "as long as necessary".
- ProctorU only provides users the ability to delete data "to the extent required by applicable law" (with no specification of which law that is).
- ProctorU's terms of service say that they "will not be liable for any loss or damage caused by [..] viruses, or other technologically harmful material that may infect your computer equipment, computer programs, devices, or data due to your use of the Services."
- ProctorU uses eye-tracking software to decide if students are "cheating". "If they look off-screen for four straight seconds more than two times in a single minute, the motion will be flagged as a suspect event". This may cause students with disabilities who have "abnormal" gaze patterns to

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be disproportionately and unjustly accused of cheating. There is also the risk that students will be unjustly accused of cheating if they look away from their screen to solve a question on paper.

- Students using ProctorU are visually monitored for every single second of their exam. This could cause severe exam anxiety in many students, leading to far worse academic outcomes, especially for students with disabilities.

I understand that the COVID19 situation is an enormous challenge for institutions like the University of Queensland, and I know that you and your staff are working hard to ensure the best possible outcomes for your students. I appreciate the efforts the University has made in providing additional information via the FAQ site at https://my.uq.edu.au/information-and-services/student-support/proctoru-faq.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could provide me with an update addressing the concerns raised above.

Please do not hesitate to contact my office on 3737 4100 if you would like to discuss this matter in more detail.

Kind regards,

Michael Berkman MP

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