

# Digitizing ISB's term exam

Mercer | Mettl's advanced  
anti-cheating technology  
safeguarded the integrity of  
ISB's honor code for 20,000  
assessments.



welcome to brighter

# About the institution



Established in 2001, the Indian School of Business (ISB) evolved from the need for a world-class business school in Asia. Its innovative programs, outstanding faculty and thought leadership transform young minds and professionals into leaders who script new growth narratives across various sectors.

ISB is the hundredth institution in the world to achieve the *'triple crown'* of accreditations from the Association of MBAs (AMBA). This unique distinction means that ISB has the highest-caliber programs that demonstrate the best teaching standards, curriculum and student interaction.



# Challenges and requirements

ISB offers a plethora of programs that are designed to cater to the needs of various professionals with diverse experience and career paths in tandem with current and future opportunities. Concurrently, academic ethics and integrity are critical elements of ISB's quality education.

ISB conducted a detailed and timely orientation on maintaining academic integrity and professional and ethical conduct to strengthen educational and social excellence. So, a strict standard of academic honor was ingrained in ISB's culture -be it faculty who were expected to build and uphold the highest standard of fairness in academic undertakings or students who were expected to adhere to and understand and appreciate intellectual honesty.



However, an unexpected disruption created an unprecedented crisis in ISB's academic plans. The COVID-19 pandemic coerced ISB to adjust its administration and management of large-scale learning modules and high-stakes term exams. It took three weeks to devise a migration plan to ensure continuity for all forms of education by shifting them online. But thereafter, it hit a roadblock in moving its term exams to the online ecosystem.

ISB examined possible risks, typically associated with online exams that could tarnish the professional validity of its foundational courses. Any breach in established norms or act of academic misconduct during the exam could undermine the course and the result's integrity. Also, the lack of unique requirements during an online exam, namely no face-to-face interaction, followed by limited collaboration, evoked significant concern among academia.

[Connect with an expert](#)



**How could ISB maintain its exams' integrity in an online environment?**

**We have detailed the story ahead!**

However, an extensive debate ensued on the pros and cons of taking the digital route. But with the deadline looming, the management reached a consensus, realizing that it had no option but to pursue online term exams. However, it would only be under specific guidelines and strategies to eliminate the possibility of academic misconduct and maintain the sanctity of the process.

One of the most notable suggestions in the masterplan included collaborating with a holistic online examination system provider to replicate an offline exam experience by offering the following features:



## **A dynamic platform**

ISB sought a secure, robust and user-friendly platform to give its faculty complete control over their exams. From helping them manage and create different question paper templates to automating workflows with instantaneous evaluation and full encryption, ISB mandated top-notch technological interventions to ensure an excellent examination experience for all stakeholders.



## **Online proctoring**

ISB understood that the lack of in-person supervision and interaction could challenge academic integrity. Some students could take to academic misconduct, knowing that they were unsupervised. Hence, it wanted a multi-layered proctoring system to create a fair and uniform environment, according to the established guidelines and norms. It also mandated some professional proctors and training of its in-house faculty to offer its students a positive and supportive yet strict online exam experience.







## Integration with LMS

ISB was using the world's most popular Learning Management System (LMS) to support its learning and training needs. All stakeholders had access to it. Therefore, everyone had unhindered, anytime, anywhere access to information. So, the management warranted a system that could integrate with its LMS and provide students' entire exam history in one place. Therefore, the service provider was expected to make everything available within its LMS, from the drive's recording to exam results.



## Integrity

ISB pursued all academic endeavors with integrity. The moral values taught and exhibited by professors, administrators and faculty were instilled in students and were intrinsic to their professional conduct. Hence, even a minor compromise in the exam-taking process could tarnish ISB's reputation, painstakingly built over many years. Therefore, ISB wanted an online assessment platform that was resilient against academic misconduct and data breaches, such as loss or theft and identity falsification.



## Emphasis on user experience

ISB wanted to offer students a seamless online exam-taking experience as some of them had faced multiple internet issues during a remote exam in the past. Thus, they constantly lost connection and repeatedly restarted their exam, which had created avoidable stress among the test-takers. Therefore, ISB wanted an anxiety-free, safe environment where considerations such as time management, homely distractions and navigation difficulties did not arise. It also wanted a rational solution that offered students a seamless writing experience in their preferred format.



Moreover, June to August was the peak monsoon season in India, which exacerbated connectivity issues. ISB did not want students to worry about trivial matters such as technical glitches, internet and power failure during exams. It wanted a system that could promptly address such niggles, if any, without taking test-takers' time.

[Connect with an expert](#)

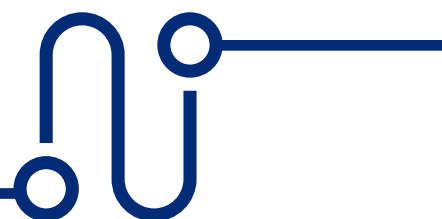
# Discovering Mercer | Mettl


ISB and Mercer | Mettl's partnership commenced in 2017. Since then, the latter had been an eponym of online exams for the institution's part-time program. Thus, some faculty members and students had already tried and tested the system. Therefore, they vouched for its benefits and ease. This favorable perception among the insiders encouraged the management to engage Mercer | Mettl for its online examination requirements.



Mercer | Mettl was keen on addressing ISB's challenges. However, academia did not want any ready-to-go solutions. Instead, it sought specific custom features and some tailored changes to eliminate every drawback that could arise during the exam-giving-and-taking process. It also mandated an explicit acknowledgment of its honor codes when setting up the solution.

Extensive consultations followed, but Mercer | Mettl ironed out every issue, assuring the management of delivering on its diverse and unique requirements. Subsequently, the administration gained confidence in Mercer | Mettl's prowess to host various high-stakes full-time online exams.





ISB places a lot of emphasis on the integrity of all academic work done by its students. Due to the pandemic, ISB had to look for ways to conduct exams online that ensured that there was no compromise on the academic integrity of the exams as well as ensuring the security and privacy of exams and student data. Mercer Mettl was able to provide these and ISB now uses their platform for exams across all its programmes. The Mercer Mettl team has been extremely receptive to ISB's ideas on changes that improve the experience for both the students and the exam graders.

**Prof. Ramabhadran S. Thirumalai**

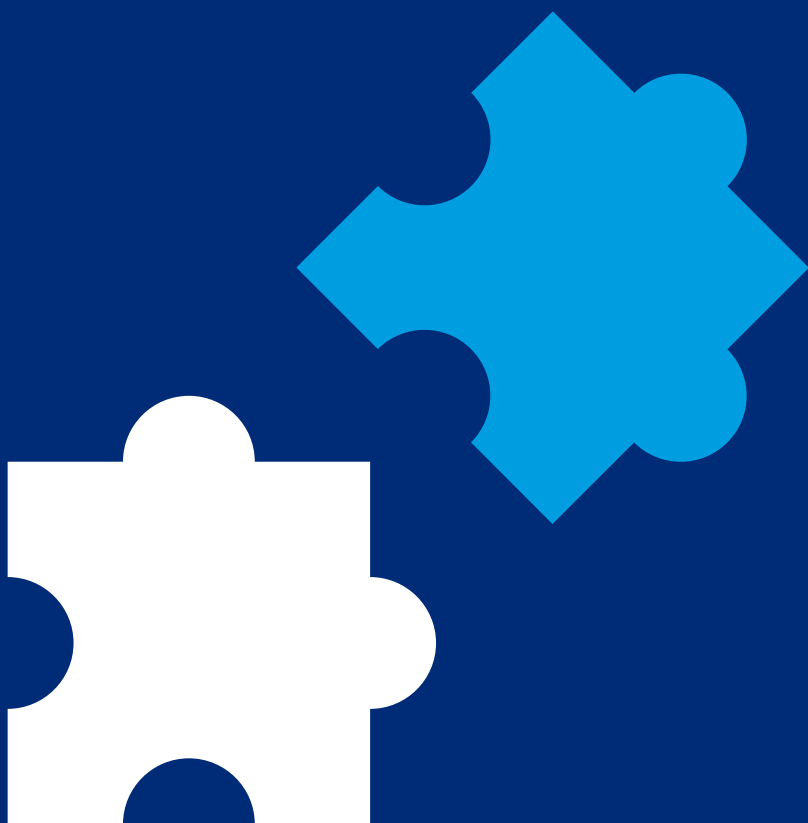
Deputy Dean, Programmes  
Associate Professor of Finance (Practice)  
Indian School of Business



# Solution

## Mercer | Mettl EXAMIN - An online proctoring and examination system

The idea was to replicate and retain a traditional exam's experience for ISB's stakeholders. Thus, an advanced solution, such as Mercer | Mettl Examine, was leveraged to help conduct online exams in the most automated, comprehensive, secure, quick and reliable manner. The solution not only bridged the gap between geographic distance and academic integrity, but it allowed faculty to run fully supervised exams with considerable flexibility and reduced human workload.



[Connect with an expert](#)



## Mercer | Mettl's examination platform that addressed ISB's unique and diverse exam requirements are listed below:



### Freedom to host exams

ISB's faculty could set up various academic exams themselves without needing any assistance, using Mercer | Mettl's user-friendly and easy-to-navigate platform. The well-defined test setting enabled them to host tests independently, with a dedicated admin dashboard to gain deep and detailed insights into the assessment process.



### Highly scalable

The number of students appearing for the exam was not limited by seating capacity constraints and geographical distances, usually associated with brick-and-mortar examinations. Mercer | Mettl software exhibited an impressive load testing ability with volume proficiency, regardless of the numbers.



### No internet-related disruption

Mercer | Mettl's software's minimum upload speed of 512kbps abated the institution's technical difficulties with intermittent high-speed internet connectivity. It also removed geographical barriers and enabled a wider reach and remote participation.



### Question bank management

The platform offered a rich repository of 26 different question types, considering ISB's academia's distinct exam patterns and user requirements. This mechanism enabled the creation of objective, subjective and multimedia-oriented question papers, followed by real-time updates.



### Easy LMS integration

Mercer | Mettl's examination platform was seamlessly integrated with ISB's third-party LMS, using software APIs (Application Programming Interfaces). A single sign-on process helped the students to log into their existing LMS accounts and access the test link without any complications.

Faculty, too, had a hassle-free experience as they did not need to remember any additional passwords. They could also access students' metrics and results in one place, along with other exam-related content. Besides, staff had instant and continued access to information, with a comprehensive overview of each learner's performance, which helped them ensure that they achieved their performance milestones.

More than  
**20 million**

To date, over 20 million online assessments have been conducted using Mercer | Mettl's platform, and the numbers continue to grow.



## A seamless user experience

Mercer | Mettl's examination platform leveled the playing field by delivering a safe and controlled exam experience for each student. It was interactive and easy-to-use, with no complaints around test anxiety that could inhibit a student's ability to perform.

Furthermore, a user-friendly process did not demand students' time for downloading software and tutorials. It ran seamlessly on applications' systems, irrespective of their location. As a result, students attempted their tests confidently, and the management noted no change in their experience.

Summarized below are the features of **Mercer | Mettl's advanced proctoring technology** that ensured a sanitized test-taking environment, replete with cheat-proof mechanisms to preserve the integrity of ISB's online term exams.



## Experienced proctors' support

Mercer | Mettl assigned a set of professionally trained live proctors to ISB who, without being intrusive, preserved the exam's integrity. From validating the test-takers and their submissions, asking for a 360 view of the exam room when required, to supporting them by assuaging concerns via a live chat option, proctors provided the best possible exam environment to every student throughout the assessment.



## Training for live proctoring

Mercer | Mettl's team also trained some of ISB's staff on the nuances of proctoring to add an extra layer of security for some internal assessments. The team prepped the faculty about the expectations during the exam sessions and shared some best practices concerning AI and live proctoring to smoothen the learning curve. The staff members were well-versed in monitoring the drive, validating test-takers' identities and clamping down on any academic integrity-related issue in only a few days' training.



## Eliminating impersonation

ISB wanted to enhance preventive measures before the exam to eliminate any chance of impersonation. Thus, Mercer | Mettl employed its dynamic 3-point authentication process to ensure that only genuine students took the exam. It confirmed the same through the following mechanism:

- First, the webcam asked students to click their photos through their webcam.
- Then they were asked to show their ID proof to the webcam.
- Professional proctors or faculty members verified every student's photo ID against the registration details to attest to their legitimacy.

Students could take their exams only after the faculty had matched and approved the details.



## AI proctoring

Mercer | Mettl's AI algorithm, trained with more than 2.8 million proctored assessments, helped newly trained and professional proctors detect up to 18 dynamic digressions with over 98% accuracy during the exam. Besides, the powerful AI engine and real-time video streams assisted in flagging cases such as the non-visibility of face/ presence, mobile phone detection and a distracted eye movement, among others, empowering ISB to ensure a safe and rigorous testing environment.



## Recorded proctoring

ISB also used recorded proctoring for specific exams wherein it could record examinees' screens and audio-video feeds without real-time monitoring. The assessors then used the video and audio playback features to scan the exam for any red flags and verify a fair testing experience for all. Besides, the system ensured that the entire drive was recorded and logged with a time stamp. The institution's administration could present it as evidence anytime any student undertook any suspicious activity.



## Integrity report analysis

ISB mandated a bird's eye view of the proctoring sessions to gauge students' integrity scores. Thus, Mercer | Mettl's used its 'Credibility Index,' a propriety algorithm, that incorporated inputs from various proctoring flags and the test finish status to create a detailed analytical report. Much akin to a piece of critical evidence, this report displayed valuations as "high," "medium," and "low" to examiners that helped identify students who may have resorted to cheating.



## Data security with integrity

Mercer | Mettl's online solutions did not compromise on data integrity. Its electronic audit trails identified all touchpoints with transparency and accuracy. The system was hosted on a highly secure cloud platform, Amazon Web Services, one of the world's leading cloud storage platforms on the market, for storage and computation. It ensured that all exam-related content and student details were fully encrypted in transit and at rest. This [arrangement shielded the institution's data and student information](#) before, during and after the exams, thereby guaranteeing utmost security and compliance standards concerning data privacy.



## Stellar customer support

Mercer | Mettl's commitment to ensuring exam continuity for ISB's test-takers warranted the team to work round the clock to keep the software up-to-date, compatible and error-free. It also made sure that there were no technical lags that left any student in the lurch. These included creating a process that outlined the workflows for power or internet disruption, to being available 24\*7 to assuage students' concerns instantly. Thus, the team proactively and promptly assuaged test-takers' concerns before and during the exam. Such a proactive engagement ensured that students completed their exams successfully, with little stress.

[Connect with an expert](#)

# Impact

Despite various pandemic-related travel restrictions and lockdowns, ISB offered its students the flexibility to take a crucial exam from the comfort of their homes. It employed Mercer | Mettl's technology that matched the experience of an in-class exam. Thus, the management could overcome the looming uncertainty on scheduling the exam, which could have been postponed otherwise. Mercer | Mettl's team also ensured the exam's integrity that adhered to ISB's honor code system.

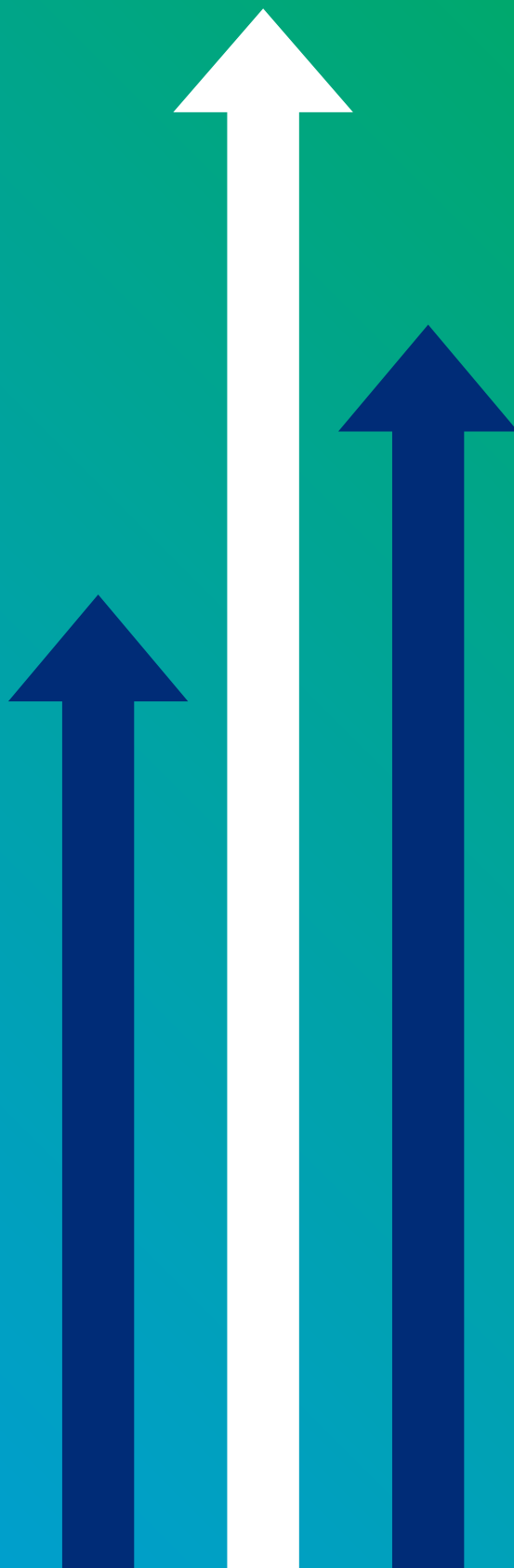
## Some highlights included:

- The platform accommodated around 1500-1600 test-takers simultaneously.
- Mercer | Mettl created 20,000 assessments as one full-time program, and eight part-time programs went online with their term exams.
- ISB reported no breach in academic ethics, ensuring that its students upheld its honor code's values in their professional settings.
- A well-documented report of every student's performance and integrity score was saved in the institution's LMS, which it subsequently leveraged for decision-making.
- A quicker turnaround in grading helped publish timely results.
- Students and faculty members provided positive feedback as Mercer | Mettl offered them the highest exam quality, which was conducted remotely.

[Connect with an expert](#)

# The way forward

ISB has been utilizing Mercer | Mettl's solutions for over a year to administer and deliver exams for its various programs. The ease of conducting online examinations has prompted ISB to leverage the online examination ecosystem for other exams in the longer term. Hence, Mercer | Mettl will continue to be a part of the system as long as ISB continues with online classes.





# About us

At Mercer | Mettl, our mission is to enable organizations to make better people decisions across two key areas: acquisition and development. Since our inception in 2010, we have partnered with more than 4,000 corporates, 31 sector skills councils/government departments and 15+ educational institutions across more than 90 countries.

✉ [mettlcontact@mercer.com](mailto:mettlcontact@mercer.com)

🌐 [www.mettl.com](http://www.mettl.com)

---

## Robust Information Security System



---

Be sure to carefully read and understand all of the disclaimers, limitations and restrictions before using the assessment services, reports, products, psychometric tools or the company systems or website.

Read the complete disclaimer here:  
<https://pages.mettl.com/disclaimer>

