

Seatides Combined School

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DBE GUIDELINES

Candidates that have tested positive for COVID-19, writing the NSC Exams

1. Learners that have tested positive for COVID-19, will be allowed to write the examination, provided they are deemed fit, to write the examination. This determination must be made by the parent/guardian and the learner.
2. The parent, care-giver or designated family member, of candidates that have tested positive for COVID-19 are obliged to inform the school principal immediately of the positive status of the candidate, so that arrangements can be made for the candidate to write the examination at an isolation venue that complies with the health and safety and also the examination regulations relating to a secure examination. An early notification to the school will allow for the necessary preparations to be done in advance and will also allow for the candidate to be informed well in advance of the arrangement. **Parents that inform the school on the morning of the examination cannot be guaranteed that the candidate will be able to write the examination as scheduled.**
3. As soon as the notification is received of a candidate that is tested positive, an urgent meeting should be convened between the parent, the school principal, an examination official, a governing body representative and where possible a health official, and the most suitable arrangement for the writing of the examination for this candidate must be finalized. The parent must take responsibility for the transportation of the candidate to the isolation venue and the school and the Departments of Health and Education will take responsibility for the isolation venue.
4. The Provincial Education Department (PED) must liaise with the Provincial Department of Health and establish isolation venues at selected centres in the province. An isolation venue could be:
 - (a) A quarantine or isolation centre established by the DoH for the purpose of keeping persons in quarantine or those that have tested positive for COVID-19, in isolation.
 - (b) A venue identified by the DoH in conjunction with the PED that will serve as an isolation venue for the purpose of writing the 2020 Combined November examination. This could be a clinic, a room in a hospital, a community hall, a church hall or any other venue, which does not exclude the home that is conducive to the writing of an examination.
5. The invigilation at the isolation venue will be carried out by an educator, examination official, a private invigilator or, by agreement, a health official. In utilising the services of either of these persons to serve as an invigilator, the following must be complied with:
 - (a) The individual must be fully briefed of the task to be carried out.
 - (b) The written consent of the individual must be obtained.

Educators must undertake the responsibility of invigilation on a voluntary basis and cannot be compelled to do so.

6. In liaison with the DoH, the PED will also finalise the use of health officials as invigilators and where this is possible, the health officials must be trained by the PED on how the invigilation process is conducted. Private invigilators may also be used at the Isolation venue but it is essential that they be informed of the details of the invigilation task and are duly trained. The private invigilator must also agree in writing to undertaking this task.

7. The PED must have a pool of private invigilators available that are on standby in the different areas to conduct invigilation at short notice.

8. It needs to be noted that there will be strict compliance with the requirements of social distancing, the wearing of a face mask and hand sanitising, at the isolation venue. The social distancing at an isolation venue can be extended beyond the 1.5 metre requirement to at least 2 metres, given the limited number of candidates that may be located at an isolation venue at any given time. If the above three cardinal rules are strictly observed, the health experts confirm that the risk of contracting the virus are virtually non-existent.

9. Where personal protective equipment (PPE), is available which includes the body suit, this can be used, but the health experts confirm that this is not necessary given that the transmission of the virus is through the mucosa which is located in the mouth, nose, throat and eyes, and not through the skin.

10. Invigilation can be conducted by locating the candidate/s at a distance away from the invigilator depending on the space available and the invigilator does not have to approach the candidate, if he has a clear view of the candidate from the position he/she is located.

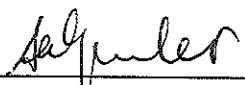
11. A candidate who has been in close contact with a person that has tested positive for COVID-19, as per the NICD and DOH guidelines as well as the DBE SOP, must be in quarantine for ten days, if not tested; hence such a candidate must be managed as if, he/she has tested positive, which implies that the examination will be conducted at an isolation venue, outside the allocated examination venue.

12. It is recommended that candidates that are in close contact with a person that has tested positive for COVID-19 be tested. If, based on the advice of a health professional, they are not tested, a 10 day quarantine period from last contact with the positive case must be observed (10.11 above), after which they are regarded as noninfectious and must be allowed to write the examination at the regular allocated examination venue.

13. The question paper will be brought to the isolation venue, at the beginning of an examination session, by an examination official who will then hand over the sealed satchel to the invigilator at the isolation venue. The examination official must remain at the isolation venue for the duration of the examination session and collect the script which will be placed in two security bags.

14. The script of a positive candidate must be inserted by the candidate, in the presence of the invigilator, into the plastic security bag and sealed by the candidate. The security bag is then sanitized by the candidate and dropped into a box made available for this purpose. The security bag is then placed into a second security bag and transferred to the examination official who will be at the isolation venue to exercise oversight over the process, but will not be involved in the invigilation process.

15. The Health experts have confirmed that the virus only remains viable on paper for a period not exceeding 2.5 hours and given that marking of the script only take place in January 2021, almost a three weeks from the date of the last examination, it is not necessary to identify the script as that of a candidate that is COVID-19 positive, since the script poses no risk to the marker.


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