2021 Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE)  
Contingency and Precautionary Measures at Examination Centres  
(Issued on 22 January 2021)

The HKEAA is implementing a series of contingency and precautionary measures, based on the recommendations of the Centre for Health Protection (CHP), during the examinations to ensure the health and well-being of candidates, examination personnel and all involved in the administration of the examinations. Candidates should pay attention to the following important points when taking the examinations:

**Before leaving for the centre**

1. Candidates must check their body temperature, complete and sign the ‘Candidate’s Declaration Form on Health’ on each examination day. The declaration form (one form per day) is available for download from the HKEAA website from 22 January. Candidates making a false, incomplete or misleading declaration may receive a penalty or even be disqualified from the examination.

2. According to the advice from the Department of Health, candidates with any symptoms\(^1\) should **not** go to the examination centre and should consult a doctor as soon as possible.

3. Candidates are required to declare that they are not undergoing mandatory quarantine on the day of the examination; otherwise they should **not** go to the examination centre.

4. No supplementary examination will be arranged for written or practical papers. Candidates who cannot attend any written or practical examinations due to illness should follow the instructions given in Section D4 of the ‘Handbook for Candidates’ which has been uploaded on the HKEAA website in December 2020.

5. Candidates are reminded to take their body temperature each day, and bring their completed ‘Candidate’s Health Declaration Form’ and surgical mask(s) to the examination centre.  

   **Note:** *Neither candidates nor invigilation staff are allowed to wear masks or respirators with valves in the examination centres as respiratory droplets can be dispersed through the valve thus exposing other people to the risk of possible infections.*

**Before the examination**


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\(^1\) Examples of symptoms of COVID-19 include but not limiting to the following:

(1) Fever (typanic temperature at or higher than 38°C); or  
(2) Presence of acute respiratory tract infection symptoms such as cough or shortness of breath; or  
(3) Sudden loss of sense of taste or smell.
7. Body temperature screening will be set up at the designated location of the examination centres. Before entering the examination centre, candidates must put on their own surgical mask properly (with the nose, mouth and chin fully covered) and use alcohol sanitiser-gel to sanitise their hands. Candidates can use their own sanitiser or use the sanitiser provided at the entrance. Schools may also put disinfectant floor mats sprayed with bleach at the entrance of the examination centres. Invigilators will check on the spot whether candidates have completed and signed the ‘Candidate’s Declaration Form on Health’, and they will take the body temperature of those candidates whose body temperature is at or higher than the alert level of the screening system with a forehead thermometer and then an ear-type thermometer. If necessary, candidates may rest a while before having their body temperature re-taken. The reading of the ear-type thermometer should be taken as final. Candidates who have a fever will be required to leave the examination centre and consult a doctor as soon as possible. The above procedure will be strictly enforced by the invigilation staff. In addition, candidates should raise their awareness of the prevention of COVID-19 in the examination centres and should avoid talking with others.

8. For written examinations, centre schools shall admit candidates earlier from 8:00 am/1:00 pm for examinations due to start at 8:30 am/1:30 pm respectively. Candidates who have completed the procedures of having their body temperature taken and the health declaration signed should be allowed to enter the examination hall/room unless there are designated waiting areas for the candidates. If necessary, the Centre Supervisors may exercise their discretion to postpone the start of examination by 15 minutes for the 1st examination session and 30 minutes for the 2nd examination session. However, it should be noted that on 28 April and 30 April where the English Language and Chinese Language Listening and Integrated Skills are examined respectively, the radio broadcast of the examination content cannot be delayed and will start at 10:00 am sharp. In order to ensure that the listening component of the language subjects will proceed smoothly and as scheduled, candidates must strictly abide by the requirements in points 1 to 3 above and report to the examination centre on time, by 8:45 am.

During the examination

9. According to the advice from the CHP, spatial separation of seating arrangement should be adopted in hall and classroom centres for written examinations. Schools would optimise the use of their school premises in a bid to space out candidates in the examination centres as far as practicable. The seating distance between candidates should be standardised at around 1.5 metres (approximately 1.1 metres between desk edges).

10. In the written examinations, candidates are required to put on a surgical mask properly and should not remove it. Those who refuse to put on a surgical mask will be regarded as having breached the examination regulations. Invigilators may wear latex gloves during the distribution of question papers, attendance taking and collection of answer scripts. Invigilators may ask candidates to remove their surgical mask temporarily during the taking of attendance in order to verify their identity while maintaining an appropriate social distance. If any candidates would like to be exempted from wearing a surgical mask during the examinations, they should apply to the HKEAA with medical proof or acceptable reasons on/before 12 March 2021 for further arrangement. The HKEAA will not accept any such request on the examination day.
11. Candidates with serious sneezing/persistent coughing may be arranged to sit at the reserved seats of the examination hall or another examination room in order to minimise disturbance to other candidates. The time lost in the examination will not be compensated. Candidates who need a surgical mask may ask for help from the centre staff.

**During the sessional break**

12. Candidates should put on their surgical mask properly, wash their hands with liquid handwash regularly and should not talk with others during the sessional break. They should go to the open areas (and should avoid going to the crowded areas) designated by the centre school as far as possible. Centre schools are advised to make available their toilets as many as possible on various floors for use by candidates and invigilation staff during the sessional break for dispersion of crowds. Schools should pay attention to the gender distribution of the candidates being allocated to the centre on individual examination days.

13. To prevent crowding of candidates during the sessional break, candidates should be arranged to leave the examination room or go to the toilet in batches. Candidates should space out and maintain social distancing while queuing up outside toilets.

14. Candidates have the duty of keeping the centre school premises clean, particularly when using the toilets.

15. Schools are reminded to supply/refill liquid handwash and clean the toilets regularly. They should disable the use of hand dryers (if any) and should not use air blowers for drying the floor inside toilets. If possible, schools may assign their janitors or cleansing staff to station in the toilets to carry out rapid cleaning during the sessional break. Please put up a notice to remind candidates that they should put the toilet lid down after use before flushing. In addition, schools with drinking fountains should discontinue the provision of such facility in the school premises. Schools should put up suitable notices/posters to remind candidates to observe personal hygiene, e.g. wearing a surgical mask, washing hands with liquid handwash regularly, maintaining an appropriate social distancing during the sessional break, etc. Sample notices/posters will be provided by the HKEAA to examination centres for reference.

**Candidates who fall sick during the examination (fever / vomit)**

16. If a candidate is unwell, he/she can summon an invigilator or request a sick bag (provided by the HKEAA), and will be accompanied to the toilet or other location of the school, such as the medical room (if any) in order to rest. If necessary, the school can call an ambulance to send the candidate for medical treatment. The invigilator may request to take the body temperature of the candidate again. If the candidate is found to have a fever, the invigilators will ask the candidate to go home and consult a doctor as soon as possible. The HKEAA would give an assessed subject result to school candidates on medical grounds according to the stipulated procedures.

17. Handling pollutants such as blood, secretions or vomit, etc.:  
   (a) The centre schools should follow the recommendations of the CHP and the proper procedures to arrange their cleansing staff to wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) including a surgical mask, latex gloves, a disposable gown, eye protection (goggles/face shield) and a cap (optional) for the initial cleaning and disinfection.
[Note: The HKEAA will provide surgical masks, latex gloves and other prevention materials as well as a small number of eye protection (face shields) for use by the centre staff as and when necessary].

(b) After completion of the above procedures, schools should dispose of all waste and cleaning utensils (such as pliers, wipers or mop heads) in a waste bag.

c) Cleansing staff should carefully remove the PPE and dispose of it in a waste bag and then clean their hands immediately.

d) Cleansing staff should wear new gloves, properly wrap the waste bag and dispose of it in a covered rubbish bin.

e) Cleansing staff should carefully remove the gloves and wash their hands with liquid handwash and water.

After the examination

18. At the end of the examination, candidates should follow the instructions of Centre Supervisor in leaving the examination centre in batches, so as to avoid crowding at the exits.

19. Schools should clean and disinfect the examination centre facilities daily before each examination day/after the examination sessions by using 1:99 diluted household bleach (or 70% alcohol for metal).

Confirmed cases of Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) during the examination period

20. According to the advice of the CHP, if any candidate or member of the invigilation staff who has been in the examination centre and is subsequently confirmed as having COVID-19, the CHP will conduct epidemiological investigations and contact tracing to identify any close or other contacts. The centre school should disinfect all potentially contaminated surfaces or items by using 1:49 diluted household bleach (mixing 1 part of household bleach containing 5.25% sodium hypochlorite with 49 parts of water). If there is blood, secretions, vomitus or excreta spillage, the school should disinfect with 1:4 diluted household bleach (mixing 1 part of household bleach containing 5.25% sodium hypochlorite with 4 parts of water). School staff should wipe from the outside inward, leave for 10 minutes, rinse with water and wipe dry afterwards. The centre school should arrange for their cleansing staff to wear appropriate PPE including a surgical mask, latex gloves, a disposable gown (to be provided by centre school), eye protection (goggles/face shield) and a cap (optional). For proper wearing and removing of the PPE, please refer to the CHP’s video (www.chp.gov.hk/en/static/32975.html). After completing cleansing and disinfection, the examination centre can be used for another examination. If necessary, the HKEAA will endeavour to transfer candidates to another reserved examination centre in the same district and notify the affected candidates by email and SMS via mobile phone as soon as possible.

Points to note for household members of confinees

21. Persons who have travelled outside Hong Kong are subject to quarantine requirements according to law. For information regarding quarantine for inbound travellers, please visit the following website: www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/inbound-travel.html. Household members of confinees under quarantine are advised to take heed of measures including avoiding going to crowded places, wearing a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places, maintaining good personal hygiene, etc. Details can be found at the following website: www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/Points_to_note_for_household_members.pdf.