



2023 Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) Contingency and Precautionary Measures at Examination Centres (Revised on 23 March 2023)

The HKEAA is implementing a series of contingency and precautionary measures, in consultation with 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. Schools and 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 and complete and sign the 'Candidate's Declaration Form on Health' before going to the examination centre on each examination day. The declaration form (one form per day) is available for download from the [HKEAA website](#). Candidates who feel unwell (e.g. acute respiratory tract infection) or have a fever (tympanic temperature at or higher than 38°C) should perform the COVID-19 rapid antigen test (RAT), take a photo of their negative RAT result next to their admission form for record purposes and retain the photo throughout the HKDSE examination period for random check. Those making a false, incomplete or misleading declaration may receive a penalty or even be disqualified from the examination.
2. Candidates infected with COVID-19 should consult a doctor as soon as possible. They are not allowed to enter normal/special examination centres but may opt to sit the written examinations at an examination centre designated by the HKEAA (see Paragraph 23).
3. In case a candidate cannot attend the speaking examination on the original examination date, he/she should apply for rescheduling of the examination date within three working days (Monday to Friday during office hours) after the original examination date. The supplementary fee will be waived if valid medical documents (original) can be produced. 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'](#) and Instructions to Candidates (Physical Education Paper 3) which have been uploaded on the HKEAA website in December 2022 and February 2023 respectively. They may apply to the HKEAA for assessment of their results with documentary evidence (see Paragraph 27).
4. Candidates are reminded to bring their completed 'Candidate's Declaration Form on Health' and surgical mask(s) to the written/speaking 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

5. Schools serving as examination centres ('centre schools') should maintain good indoor ventilation (open the windows as far as possible) and keep the environment clean and disinfected. The CHP has issued health advice (including personal hygiene, maintaining the environment clean and hygienic, etc.) to schools for the prevention of Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) (updated 2 February 2023).
6. Body temperature screening shall be set up at the designated location of the examination centres. Before entering the written/speaking examination centre, candidates must put on their own surgical mask properly (with the nose, mouth and chin fully covered) and use 70-80% alcohol-based handrub to sanitise their hands. Candidates can use their own sanitiser or use the sanitiser provided at the entrance. Invigilators will check on the spot whether candidates have 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 show the photo of their negative RAT result next to their admission form on the examination day. Candidates will be required to leave the examination centre and consult a doctor as soon as possible if the RAT result is positive. If the candidate concerned still opts to sit the written examinations, he/she should contact the HKEAA immediately and proceed to an examination centre designated by the HKEAA (see Paragraph 23). **The above procedures 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 maintain an appropriate social distancing.
7. For written examinations, centre schools shall admit candidates earlier **from 7:45 am** for examinations due to start at **8:30 am**.
8. To mitigate the risk of infections where candidates are required to take off the mask temporarily for verifying their identity during attendance taking, the procedure for checking candidates' identity will take place **before the written examination**. Apart from setting up body temperature screening and collection of 'Candidate's Declaration Form on Health', schools are requested to **set up booths/stations in an open area with good ventilation** (e.g. covered playground) to check the candidates' identity before admitting them to the examination hall/room. Transparent partitions can be used at the booths/stations to separate invigilation staff from the candidates. After verification of identity, the invigilation staff will put a stamp against the subject/papers concerned on the candidates' admission forms. The detailed procedures are given in **Annex 1**.
9. Candidates who have completed the procedures of having their body temperature taken, signed their health declaration and completed the identity verification procedure 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 22 April and 26 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 and 2 above and report to the examination centre on time, **by 8:30 am (for radio-broadcast centres or centres using the Infra-red Transmission System)/8:45 am (for centres using the School's Public Address System/USB player/computer).**

Precautionary measures for examination venues

10. Schools are advised to follow the practice of adopting the seating distance of no less than 1.5 metres between candidates (including front, back and sideways) (see diagram at **Annex 2**), and where practicable, schools should make optimal use of the school premises (including examination hall, classrooms and activity rooms) to space out candidates in the examination centre and avoid overcrowding outside the hall exits or along the corridors.

During the examination

11. In all examinations (including speaking 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. In the written examinations, invigilators should **not** ask candidates to remove their surgical mask during the taking of attendance. If invigilators have doubts or queries about any candidates' identity, the candidates concerned should be asked to stay behind for identity checking by removing their surgical mask temporarily after the examination session while maintaining an appropriate social distancing.
12. Candidates with serious sneezing, persistent coughing, respiratory tract infection or fever (but with negative RAT result) 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 should follow the instructions of the invigilators and those in need of a surgical mask may ask for help from the centre staff. If candidates need to drink during the examination, they could only do so outside the examination room under the supervision of an invigilator.

During the sessional break

13. Candidates should put on their surgical mask properly and maintain an appropriate social distancing during the sessional break. 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.
14. 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. 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. If possible, schools are advised to 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. Candidates should continue to wear masks and avoid mask-off activities during breaks as far as feasible. If they need to eat or drink, they should maintain an appropriate social distancing and should face one direction. Candidates are reminded (1) not to talk while not wearing a mask; (2) perform hand hygiene before and after eating; and (3) not to share food or drink, or utensils with others.

Candidates who fall sick during the examination

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 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.
 - (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).

Speaking examinations

20. Candidates are allowed to enter the reporting room 15 minutes before the reporting time (i.e. 4:45 pm, 5:45 pm or 6:45 pm) after they have signed their health declaration form. The reporting room supervisors will take attendance and ask candidates to remove their surgical mask temporarily for identity check in the reporting room. Candidates should follow the instructions of the reporting room and preparation room supervisors.



21. Candidates must wear a surgical mask throughout the whole examination and rub their hands with alcohol-based handrub before entering the preparation room and examination room. The seating plan of the examination rooms will be adjusted to maintain around 1 metre distance between candidates while seated.

Confirmed cases of COVID-19 during the examination period

22. 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 all potentially contaminated surfaces 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.

Special Arrangements for candidates infected with COVID-19 taking the HKDSE at the HKEAA's 'Designated Exam Centre'

23. The following categories of candidates who are infected with COVID-19 will not be allowed to enter normal/special examination centres but may opt to sit the written examinations at the 'Designated Exam Centre' arranged by the HKEAA [i.e. **Ex-premises of Cognitio College (Kowloon) (Address: 96 King Fuk Street, San Po Kong, Kowloon)**] (Centre Code: **H2400**):

Candidates infected with COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Received a positive COVID-19 nucleic acid test (NCT) resultReceived a positive RAT result
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24. For non-urgent cases (i.e. not on the day of examination), the candidates concerned or their representative(s) should contact the HKEAA Public Examinations Information Centre (PEIC) as soon as possible by calling the hotline 3628 8860 during office hours (Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 5:30 pm) or via email at rat@hkeaa.edu.hk outside office hours to indicate their identity as HKDSE candidates and their intention to sit the HKDSE at the 'Designated Exam Centre'. The candidates concerned should produce a valid proof (covering the examination day) for infection with COVID-19 (e.g. doctor's certificate, NCT result within 48 hours or RAT result within 24 hours). The HKEAA will make necessary arrangements for them to sit the written examinations at the 'Designated Exam Centre'. The candidates concerned should make their own transportation to the 'Designated Exam Centre'.



25. On each day of examination throughout the written examination period (i.e. 21 April to 18 May 2023), the PEIC hotline (Tel: 3628 8860) will operate from 7:00 am to 5:30 pm (Monday to Friday) and 7:00 am to 12:00 nn (Saturday). For urgent cases where candidates are confirmed to have infected with COVID-19 on the day of examination and intend to sit the HKDSE at the 'Designated Exam Centre', they must contact the PEIC via the hotline 3628 8860 or email at rat@hkeaa.edu.hk before 7:30 am on the examination day and produce a valid proof (covering the examination day) for infection with COVID-19 (e.g. doctor's certificate, NCT result within 48 hours or RAT result on the examination day) at the 'Designated Exam Centre'.
26. As the special examination arrangements (SEAs) for candidates with special educational needs (SEN) involve different types of support and additional equipment, and the provision is restricted by the venue and facilities, it would be difficult to provide SEAs for individual SEN candidates on the first day of examination at the 'Designated Exam Centre'. The HKEAA would arrange some approved SEAs (e.g. extra time allowance) for the SEN candidate on the following day of examination as far as possible, and the school of the concerned candidate should nominate a school invigilator to take charge of the invigilation work at the 'Designated Exam Centre' and cater to the special needs of the SEN candidate.

Absence from the Examination due to Illness or Special Circumstances

27. Candidates who are absent from the examination due to illness or special circumstances may apply to the HKEAA for assessment of their results with documentary evidence. Those who were able to sit at least one written paper for the subject concerned can apply to the HKEAA for an assessed mark on the part of a subject the candidate was absent from, based on the remaining parts/paper(s) that were sat in the same year. The arrangement is applicable to school and private candidates.
28. If candidates are absent from the examination of the whole subject, school candidates can apply to the HKEAA for an assessed subject result. Following the practice from the 2020 to 2022 HKDSE, the Public Examinations Board has approved that school candidates who are absent from the examinations due to medical reasons or special circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic may be considered for an assessed subject result up to Level 5 in the 2023 HKDSE. The candidates concerned must notify the HKEAA by phone (Tel: 3628 8860) or via email (dse@hkeaa.edu.hk) before the examination takes place. School should submit the completed application form for the candidate within 21 calendar days after the date of the relevant examination(s) together with the original of the medical certificate(s) or supporting documents to the HKEAA Southern Centre office (Address: 12/F, Southorn Centre, 130 Hennessy Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong). The above application form is available for download at the HKEAA website (https://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/Schools_and_Teachers/school_teachers/info_teachers/index.html). Details of the application procedures are given in Section D (Part 4) of the 2023 Handbook for Candidates: https://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/DocLibrary/HKDSE/Candidate_Handbook/4_23What_to_do_Under_Special_Circumstances_E.pdf

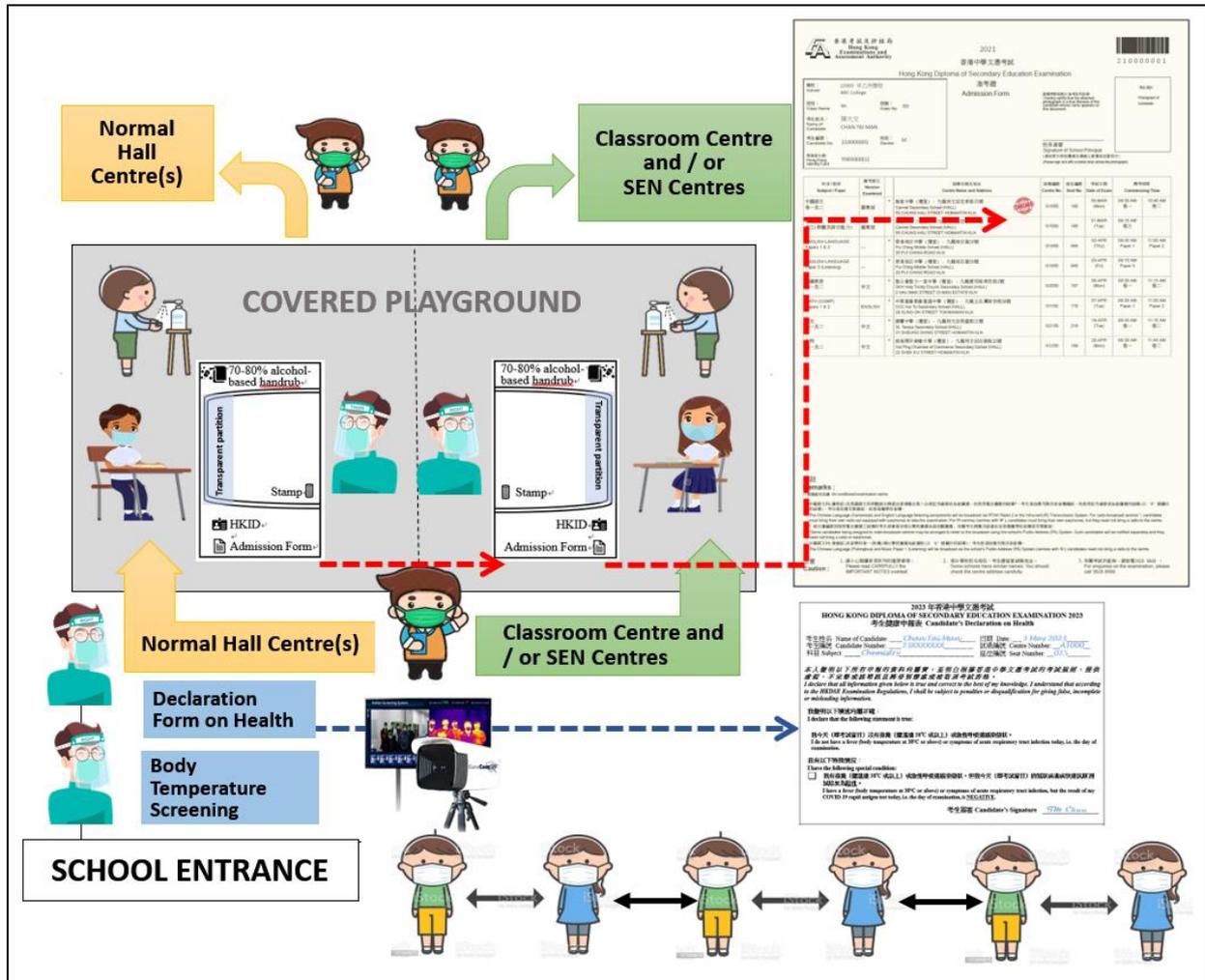


Annex 1

Procedures for Checking Candidates' Identity at Written Examination Centres for the 2023 HKDSE

Identity Checking before entering the Examination Halls/Rooms

1. Before entering the examination halls/rooms, candidates will be arranged to have their **identity checked in an open area with cover and good ventilation** (e.g. covered playground). If practicable, centre schools are advised to arrange separate stations in the open area to segregate candidates of hall centre(s) from those of classroom/special centres for crowd control purposes. Booths can be set up if the stations are located at an uncovered area.
2. Candidates should line up for identity checking at the designated station with appropriate social distancing. They should **put their Admission Form and a valid identification document (e.g. HKID) on the table**. Candidates will be instructed to **remove their surgical mask temporarily by sitting behind the transparent partition (of sufficient height above head level of the invigilator and the candidate while seated) erected on the table**, for identity checking by the invigilation staff. Candidates wearing a hat should also take off the hat at the same time. School staff staying at the stations are advised to put on protective gears such as goggles/face shield, etc.
3. After identity checking, the invigilator will **stamp on the candidate's Admission Form (against the relevant subject/paper examination session)**. Candidates must use their own sanitiser or the 70-80% alcohol-based handrub provided at the station to **sanitise their hands before leaving**.
4. Candidates should follow the centre school's instruction on using designated walkways and staircases to their examination hall/rooms after identity checking. The workflow of identity checking is given in the diagram below.



Admitting Candidates to the Examination Centre

- The Centre Supervisor of the hall centre(s) should arrange at least **one invigilator to stay at the entrance**. Before admitting the candidates to the hall, the invigilator(s) should **check if the relevant row showing the subject/paper to be sat on that day on the candidates' Admission Form has been properly stamped**. For classroom/special centres, the checking should be carried out by the Classroom Invigilator/Centre Supervisor when candidates enter the classroom.



Annex 2

Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) 2023 Seating Distance Between Candidates at Written Examination Centres

