

HSC written exams – Exam day procedures

These guidelines are designed to support schools in managing the operation of HSC written exams during the current COVID-19 pandemic. These guidelines aim to protect the health and safety of students, staff and supervisors and minimise the risk of disruptions to or cancellation of the HSC exams.

NESA is also providing updated guidelines to support the HSC written exams. Further advice on NESA's requirements can be found on their [Coronavirus advice page](#).

COVID-19 safe expectations of students

Schools should put in the place the following measures to keep students safe on each day of the exam:

- Remind students they are expected to stay away from school when unwell.
- Hygiene supplies should be available at all exam venues including
 - Sanitiser
 - Wipes.
- Students should arrive no more than 20 minutes prior to the exam and report directly to the designated exam room for screening and sign-in.
- Students should not mingle in large groups prior to, or after the exam.
- School staff should be available to support screening and minimise students interacting in large groups.

Screening and identifying students with symptoms

Schools will be required to screen students each day prior to commencing the exam. Schools should not conduct wide scale temperature checks consistent with infection control procedures and APHHC guidelines.

Schools will be required to implement the following screening procedures prior to each exam:

- A copy of the screening declaration poster must be displayed at each venue.
- Students should be screened before the exam by being asked if they have any flu-like symptoms or are required to self-isolate (wide scale temperature checking should not be used to screen students).
- Students should sign an attendance sheet confirming attendance at the exam, providing contact details and that they do not have flu-like symptoms and are not required to self-isolate.
- Students displaying any symptom should be acted upon quickly. The student must be asked to leave the examination centre/room and arrange for a COVID-19 test.
- Students with a clinical history/known illness that may appear like COVID-19 symptoms should provide written assurance from their doctor/GP that the symptoms they are displaying are of a known medical condition and are normal for the student.
- Students who present with negative COVID-19 test results may participate in the exam unless they have been asked by NSW Health to self-isolate.

Flu-like symptoms

Flu-like symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, loss of taste, and loss of smell. Additional information about COVID-19 symptoms can be found on the [NSW Health website](#).

Students who are displaying even mild flu-like symptoms they should leave immediately and not return until they have a negative COVID-19 test and are symptom-free.

Displaying symptoms during the exam

Schools should ensure that a delegate (Principal or Executive) is available for the duration of the exams in the event that a supervisor or Presiding Officer identifies a student as having possible symptoms during the exam.

The school delegate will make the final call on whether a student should be asked to leave.

Fast track COVID-19 test results

Students should be reminded they can fast-track their COVID-19 test results.

The process for students requiring testing is:

- say they are an HSC student when taking a test
- ensure the nurse or doctor doing the test marks their referral 'urgent — HSC'
- self-isolate until a negative result is received
- show the school the negative result
- call the contact number provided by the clinic if results are not received within 36 hours.

Illness/Misadventure

Students who do not attend an exam due to having symptoms, or who are turned away as a result of screening will be eligible for an illness/misadventure claim. The department is working with NESAs and will provide clear guidance for schools before the end of Term 3.

Response protocols for confirmed cases of COVID-19

If the school is advised on a confirmed case they think may impact the school they must call the Incident Report and Support Hotline immediately. The school should continue to operate as normal and must not share the information with staff or students until they have received advice from the Health and Safety Directorate (HSD).

The Health & Safety Directorate will confirm test results with NSW Health and determine what additional action may need to be taken by the school. The school will only be required to implement the [departments procedures](#) if the person was deemed to be infectious at a time when they had been at the school.

Where NSW Health confirm that a person has been infectious at a time when they had been at the school, the HSD will contact the Executive Director and make urgent arrangements to set up a teleconference with the Director, Educational Leadership and the Principal to discuss relevant actions which will include plans for the HSC.

Further advice is available on the [department's response protocols page](#).