

Management of a confirmed case of COVID-19 during HSC exams

Notification of confirmed cases

Notification to NESA

The NSW Department of Education will notify NESA of a confirmed case of COVID-19 impacting a school in the following instances:

- Where NESA staff are required to self-isolate pending contact tracing process
- Where NESA staff have been identified as a close contact through the contact tracing process
- Where HSC assessments will be disrupted due to a COVID-19 case that results in a school closure
- Where a confirmed case of COVID-19 impacts planned HSC exams.

Notification to the school

The department will contact the school immediately to discuss the situation and provide advice on the actions and decision required to manage the health and safety of students, staff and visitors to the school and minimise disruption where possible to HSC exam in accordance with NSW Health advice and the departments COVID response procedures. This may be at any time during the day, late evening or weekends.

Where NSW Health confirm that a person has been infectious at a time when they had been at the school, the Health and Safety Directorate 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.

We ask that Principals be available on their phone after hours so they can be notified as soon as possible.

Key actions required for Schools

The school will be non-operational either on the day of notification or the following day to allow time for the school to be thoroughly cleaned and for the contact tracing process to be completed. Schools should be prepared to provide the following information to the Health and Safety Directorate and the Director, Educational Leadership if required to ensure rapid decisions can be made:

- A list of all students, staff and HSC supervisors who were on-site on the days provided to the school when requested
- Be ready to discuss the follow days exam plans and alternative examination locations so a decision can be made promptly on if the exam needs to be cancelled or relocated
- The school's communication process to get rapid information out to the school community and HSC students during the day or after hours

- List of additional staff available to support HSC exams
- Information on student timetables and school activities and programs for all students enrolled at the school to support rapid assessment of the situation to inform decisions on who may be a close contact of the confirmed case at the school
- Processes to enable the HSC exam to continue in an alternative location while the leadership of the school can complete the contact tracing process with the support of the Director Educational Leadership and Health and Safety Directorate.

Relocating or cancelling exams

The principal will participate in all actions and decision to be made. The principal will need to communicate with the presiding officer when a decision has been made to either cancel or relocate the exam to an alternative venue.

The decision to cancel an exam will be made after considering factors including:

- Year 12 students considered close contacts
- Access to exam venues on the school site or alternate venues
- Availability of supervisors.

The priority is to have minimal disruption to the exam timetable and examination period as possible. If only some students are deemed close contacts and/or required to self-isolate the exams will proceed for the remaining cohort.

Cleaning arrangements

The department will arrange for the school to be cleaned in accordance with NSW Health requirements if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 impacting the school. The school will be non-operational for on-site learning while the school is being cleaned.