



## basic education

Department:  
Basic Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X895, Pretoria, 0001, Sol Plaatje House, 222 Struben Street, Pretoria, 0002 South Africa, Tel: (012) 357 3000,  
Fax (012) 323 0601, [www.education.gov.za](http://www.education.gov.za)

**TO: HEADS OF DEPARTMENT  
HEADS OF EXAMINATIONS  
HEADS OF CURRICULUM  
TEACHER UNIONS  
SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY ASSOCIATIONS  
NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS (NAISA)  
UMALUSI  
UNIVERSITIES SOUTH AFRICA (USAf)  
DISTRICT DIRECTORS  
PRINCIPALS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

### **CIRCULAR E 31 OF 2020**

#### **ALLOWING COVID-19 POSITIVE LEARNERS TO WRITE THE COMBINED 2020 NOVEMBER NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE (NSC) EXAMINATION**

1. The Department of Basic Education (DBE) in consultation with the Department of Health (DoH), agreed on 4 November 2020, to allow learners that have tested positive for COVID-19, to write the Combined 2020 November examination, based on specific conditions that will be articulated in this circular.
2. The parents, care-giver or a 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 timeous arrangements can be made for the candidate to write the examination at an isolation venue that complies with the health and safety protocols and also the examination regulations relating to a secure examination.
3. The parents, care-giver or a designated family member that intentionally conceals the COVID-19 positive status of the candidate in their care will face legal consequences should it be later revealed that this information was wilfully withheld by the parent.
4. Only candidates that have tested positive and are deemed fit to write an examination, will be allowed to write the 2020 Combined November examination.

5. The Provincial Education Department (PED) will 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 in isolation for those that have tested positive for COVID-19.
  - (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 includes the home, that is conducive to the writing of an examination.
  
6. The invigilation at the isolation venue will be carried out by a health official, an educator, examination official or a private invigilator. 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.
  - (c) The individual must be trained to carry out the important task of invigilation.Educators must undertake the responsibility of invigilation on a voluntary basis and cannot be compelled to do so.
  
7. 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, 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.
  
8. In addition to allowing candidates that test positive for COVID-19 to write the examinations, candidates that present a temperature of 38°C and above and/or answer “yes” to two or more of the questions on the screening questionnaire must write the examination at an isolation venue at the school, identified and approved by the Principal and School Governing Body, as articulated in *Circular E23 of 2020*, entitled, *Protocol on the Writing of the 2020*

*November Examination in Compliance with the Covid-19 Regulations.* These candidates must be referred to a health facility or provider after the examination is written.

9. Candidates are advised to be extra cautious during this period of the examination to minimise their risk of contracting the virus. They should adhere to all health and safety measures and refrain from attending any social gatherings. Candidates must strictly observe the protocols relating to social distancing, wearing of the mask and hand sanitising.
10. Find attached the revised *Protocol on the Writing of the 2020 November Examination in Compliance with the Covid-19 Regulations*, dated 8 November 2020.
11. All enquiries regarding this circular must be directed to Dr R R Poliah, at Tel: (012) 357 3900/082 878 5696 or email: [Poliah.r@dbe.gov.za](mailto:Poliah.r@dbe.gov.za).
12. Your support in ensuring compliance to the contents of this circular will be greatly appreciated.



**MR HM MWELI**  
**DIRECTOR-GENERAL**  
**DATE: 08 NOVEMBER 2020**