

JOINT PRESS RELEASE



Ministry of Education
SINGAPORE



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FOR IMMEDIATE REPORTING

UPDATES TO THE 2021 NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS AND RESUMPTION OF CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS

1. Since 1 June 2021, over 310,000 eligible students (around 90%) have registered for their vaccination appointments and by this Sunday, 27 June about 297,000 would have taken their first dose of the vaccination before school reopens on 28 June¹. The breakdown of student vaccination rates can be found in [Annex A](#).

2. As part of our continued efforts to safeguard the safety and well-being of students and school staff, MOE and the Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board (SEAB) will be putting in place a series of enhanced Safe Management Measures (SMMs) for the 2021 national oral examinations.

Enhanced Safe Management Measures for Oral Examinations

3. In view of the more infectious variants of the COVID-19 virus, all candidates and oral examiners will be required to wear surgical masks during the upcoming PSLE and Singapore-Cambridge General Certificate of Education (GCE) oral examinations² to minimise the risk of transmission.

4. As facial expressions will not be taken into consideration for the assessment, candidates will not be disadvantaged by the wearing of surgical masks during oral examinations. The following processes will be in place to ensure that oral examiners and candidates can hear each other clearly:

- Before the start of the examination, oral examiners will ask each candidate to state his/her name and school loudly, to ensure that they can hear each other clearly.
- During the examination, candidates can request for the oral examiners to repeat their questions or speak louder. Likewise, oral examiners can also request candidates to speak louder if they are unable to hear them clearly. A placard will be placed in front of the candidate to remind them that they can do so. Similar to current practice, candidates will not be penalised for such requests. Oral examiners will also take the special circumstance of mask wearing into consideration when assessing the candidates.

¹ As of 22 June, 6pm.

² For candidates who do not have surgical masks, provisions will be made at the examination venue.

5. Other SMMs will continue to be in place for this year's oral examinations, such as:

- Temperature and symptom screening for entry into schools and examination venues;
- Staggered dismissal of candidates;
- Frequent cleaning of high touch surfaces; and
- Using a well-ventilated venue such as hall or classrooms for the examinations.

Candidates Unable to Sit for Oral and Listening Comprehension Examinations

6. Candidates will not be allowed to sit for the PSLE and GCE oral and listening comprehension examinations³ if they:

- have COVID-19,
- are placed on Quarantine Order (QO) or Stay Home Notice,
- are issued with Leave of Absence (LOA) due to close contact with confirmed case or as a result of staying in same household with individuals on QO,
- are on medical leave due to Acute Respiratory Infection, or
- are on Approved Absence, as a result of staying in same household with members (aged 6 and above) who have flu-like symptoms.

7. As the oral examinations are conducted over several days, candidates who miss the oral examinations on their assigned date with valid reasons (e.g. vaccination appointment that was booked earlier) can take the examinations on another date within the oral examination window or sit for the make-up oral examination. The date of the make-up oral examination will be provided to affected candidates. Candidates who miss the oral and listening comprehension examinations with valid reasons, and are unable to sit for the oral examination within the examination window or make-up oral examination, can apply for special consideration⁴.

8. For the remaining papers for the 2021 national examinations, SMMs and exam arrangements will remain similar to those implemented last year.

³ The PSLE and GCE oral and listening comprehension examination schedule can be found on SEAB's website at <https://www.seab.gov.sg>.

⁴ Special consideration is a well-established procedure which awards affected candidates with projected grades through an evidence-based and data-driven approach. SEAB will consider multiple sources of evidence, such as the candidate's performance in the other papers for that affected subject in national and school-based examinations as well as the school cohort's performance in national and school-based exams, to ensure a fair assessment. All special consideration applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis and subjected to a rigorous review process.

Removal of Common Last Topics in PSLE 2021

9. In 2020, Common Last Topics⁵ (CLT) were removed from the national examinations for graduating cohorts due to the impact of the extended circuit breaker period on curriculum time and on teaching and learning.

10. Drawing on last year's experience of 3.5-weeks of full Home-Based Learning (HBL), schools were able to carry out 7 days of full HBL smoothly from 19 to 28 May this year, and are expected to be able to cover the examinable curriculum in good time for this year's national examinations.

11. However, Primary 6 (P6) students may encounter additional disruptions to their learning compared to other graduating cohorts as a significant proportion of our P6 students are still not eligible for the COVID-19 vaccination due to age. With the more infectious variants of the COVID-19 virus, the need for occasional instances of full HBL in our primary schools, at the localised level, cannot be ruled out. After careful consideration of these factors, as well as the fact that younger P6 students may not learn as effectively during HBL, MOE and SEAB will remove the CLT for the 2021 PSLE (please refer to Annex B for the CLT to be removed). This move aims to support the wellbeing of our P6 students, who also have to familiarise themselves with the new PSLE Achievement Level scoring system.

12. The 2021 GCE-level examinations will not be affected as these considerations apply to a significantly lesser extent for older students, with over 90% expected to be fully vaccinated by August.

Resumption of Co-Curricular Activities From 12 July

13. MOE had earlier announced that students will progressively return to schools from 28 June 2021⁶, with in-person Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) gradually resuming from the second week of Term 3. In line with the national posture on the evolving COVID-19 situation, in-person CCA will now only resume from 12 July, the third week of Term 3, for secondary schools, Junior Colleges/Millennia Institute, aligned with national guidelines, to safeguard the wellbeing of students and staff. In-person CCA for primary schools will resume in the fifth week of Term 3.

14. MOE and SEAB will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and provide updates if there are further changes to the arrangements for this year's national examinations and school activities.

⁵ Common Last Topics (CLT) are a set of topics MOE has identified from the relevant subject syllabus that would be taught last by all schools for the graduating cohorts. In the event of unforeseen circumstances impacting the completion of schools' teaching for the graduation cohorts, CLT can be removed from the scope covered in the national examinations.

⁶ More information on the arrangements for students returning back in schools under Phase 3 (Heightened Alert) can be found here: <https://www.moe.gov.sg/news/press-releases/20210614-arrangements-for-schools-and-institutes-of-higher-learning-under-phase-3-heightened-alert>.

Number of students who have registered or received their vaccination

Level	Number of sign-ups	Number of students who have received their 1st jab (of those who have signed up)	Projected number of students who would have received their 1st jab by 28 June (of those who have signed up)
Graduating cohorts from Mainstream, Madrasahs and Privately Funded Schools	52,000	48,000	50,000
Non-Graduating cohorts from Mainstream, Madrasahs, Privately Funded and Special Education Schools	138,000	108,000	133,000
Students from the Institutes of Higher Learning	120,000	81,000	115,000

**As of 22 June, 6pm.*

***Figures are rounded off.*

Common Last Topics (CLT) to be removed in PSLE 2021

Subject	Topic
Standard Mathematics	Primary 6 content under Speed, Volume, Pie Charts, Solid Figures and Nets
Foundation Mathematics	Primary 6 content under Volume, Geometry, Pie Charts
Standard and Foundation Science	Interactions within the Environment

**For skill-based subjects such as English Language and Mother Tongue Language, it will not be meaningful and practical to identify CLT. In such instances, SEAB will take the disruption to curriculum time into consideration during marking and grading to ensure that all students are fairly assessed.*

***Schools will cover the CLT removed as non-examinable learning during the post-PSLE period.*