

Guidance for students completing VCE performance and Languages oral examinations and Extended Investigation oral presentations in 2020

While this information is directed at students, it is also provided to ensure families/carers are aware of the procedures the VCAA will have in place to ensure assessments are conducted in a COVIDSafe environment.

You should read the following information in conjunction with the 'Advice for Performance and Languages Oral examinations and the Extended Investigation Oral Presentation' contained in the [2020 VCE Exams Navigator](#) relevant to the assessment(s) you are undertaking.

What will be different about these assessments in 2020?

This year, VCE performance, Languages oral examinations and Extended Investigation oral presentations will be conducted with extra safety measures in place to keep you and examination venue staff safe.

The dates for performance and Languages oral examinations and Extended Investigation oral presentations have been pushed back due to disruption caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Your school will have notified you of the time, date and location of your assessment.

Who is allowed in the examination venue?

Entry to examination venues will be restricted to the following:

- students scheduled to be assessed at the examination venue on the day
- accompanists
- non-assessed performers
- personnel required to assist with setting up or putting on a costume
- personnel providing assistance approved under Special Examination arrangements.

Teachers and other personnel will not be allowed to enter the venue to assist with warming-up.

Personnel required to assist with setting up will be limited as follows:

- one person for Drama, Theatre Studies, Music solo performances
- one person to assist with putting on a Dance costume.
- three people for Music group performances.

Any authorised support personnel must leave the venue as soon as the set-up process has been completed. They may re-enter the venue to assist with pack up at the end of the assessment.

Assessors will operate the sound system for all Dance performances. Other students will not be admitted to the examination venue to operate the sound system.

What do I need to bring to the assessment?

You should make sure that you travel to the venue with:

- your Examination Advice Slip stating the date, time and venue of your assessment
- suitable photo identification
- all relevant documents that must be handed to assessors as part of your assessment
- your own bottled water.

There are no facilities for the safe storage of bags. If you bring a bag, you'll be required to leave it outside of the examination room. Please leave valuables at home.

What measures will be in place to make examination venues COVIDSafe?

Examination venues will put in place safety measures approved by the Victorian Chief Health Officer to ensure a COVIDSafe environment. Safety measures at examination venues include:

- Setting up safe examination venues that support physical distancing requirements
- Ensuring hygiene measures are in place throughout the venue. This includes providing and promoting regular use of hand sanitiser and soap
- Ensuring that cleaning is conducted where practicable at least twice a day
- Requiring students, assessors and examination venue staff to wear a face mask in line with current guidance for Victorian schools
- Managing on-site attendance, such as recording the attendance of students, authorised support people (e.g. accompanists) and examination venue staff to assist with contact tracing should it be required
- Restricting access to the examination venue until 30 minutes prior to the start of their assessment for all students, except for Music group performances (can be up to 60 minutes prior) and Dance students (can be up to 45 minutes prior)
- Ensuring students and other support personnel do not congregate at the entrance/exit to the venue.

What do I need to do to be COVIDSafe?

You must:

- travel to and from the examination venue according to the health advice in place at the time of your assessment (including physical distancing and adhering to face masks requirements). Students are encouraged where possible to avoid car-pooling and limit their use of public transport. The use of private vehicles is preferred.
- wear a face mask at all times, in line with current guidance for Victorian schools, except during your assessment if the face mask will inhibit your performance
- maintain physical distancing, keeping at least 1.5m away from others at all times where practicable
- perform regular hand hygiene, including before entering and when exiting the venue.
- avoid sharing musical instruments. However, there is an exception for large instruments that remain at the venue (e.g. marimba, pianos etc.). These large instruments will be cleaned with a disinfectant between uses.

Will I be required to have my temperature tested?

Based on the advice of the acting Deputy Chief Health Officer, given the current levels of community transmission in Victoria, mandatory temperature testing of all students on arrival at examination venues will not be required in Term 4. However, should community transmission of COVID-19 areas increase, temperature checking may be reintroduced.

Do I need to keep my face mask on while completing my assessment?

You can remove your face mask during your oral or performance examination if it will inhibit your performance.

When your face mask is removed, you should make sure the distance between you and others is at least 1.5 metres, to the extent that this still allows the performance to take place. If you are a singer, due to the risk for respiratory droplet spread, it is recommended that you stay at least 5 metres away from other performers, accompanists or assessors where feasible. This distance is also recommended during rehearsals. The VCAA will ensure examination rooms are appropriately marked to assist students and assessors to maintain appropriate physical distancing.

What should I do if I have a disability, illness or other circumstance that makes me vulnerable to coronavirus (COVID-19)?

If you have a disability, illness or other circumstance that makes you more likely to become very sick with coronavirus (COVID-19), you should discuss Special Examination Arrangement options with your school.

What should I do if I have a health condition, illness or disability that may present with similar symptoms to coronavirus (COVID-19)?

If you have a known health condition that may present with symptoms compatible with COVID-19, this should be documented and managed in consultation with your treating medical practitioner and, if necessary, brought to the attention of your school and examination venue staff when you arrive for your assessment.

What should I do if I am unwell in the week of, or on the morning of my assessment?

You **must not attend** your assessment if you have any coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, however mild, including:

- loss or change in sense of smell or taste
- fever, chills or sweats
- cough, sore throat or runny nose
- shortness of breath
- in certain circumstances headaches, muscle soreness, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea may also be considered as symptoms.

You should stay at home, contact your school and wait for further advice.

If you display any coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms on arrival you will be asked to wait in a separate area and your parent or carer will be called to pick you up.

Under what other circumstances should I not attend my assessment?

In addition to the above advice regarding if you are unwell, you **must not attend** your assessment if:

- you have completed a coronavirus (COVID-19) test and are awaiting your results
- you are isolating prior to completing a coronavirus (COVID-19) test (e.g. because you have recently returned from overseas)
- you have tested positive to coronavirus (COVID-19)
- you have been identified as a close contact of a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19).

In these circumstances, you should contact your school who will explore the possibility of rescheduling your assessment with VCAA. Alternatively, you will be eligible to apply for a Derived Examination Score (DES).

If I cannot attend my performance or oral examination because of coronavirus (COVID-19), how will my final results be calculated?

If you are unable to complete your assessment because of coronavirus (COVID-19), you will be eligible to apply for a Derived Examination Score (DES). Your final VCE results will be determined on your school-based assessments and examination results, as well as a range of additional data available to the VCAA, including the GAT. This will ensure your final results are fair and equitable.

What evidence do I need to apply for a DES due to coronavirus (COVID-19)?

You will be eligible to apply for a DES if you are prevented from completing your assessment due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Your application will need to include:

- a supporting statement from your school
- evidence of testing for coronavirus (COVID-19), which may include a medical certificate from an independent health professional recommending testing or direction to isolate having been identified as a close contact of a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19).

What mental health and wellbeing support is there for me?

Feelings of general stress and anxiety can be felt by you and your family during the VCE external assessments period. Some of you may draw motivation from these feelings, but others may need additional support, from family, friends, a trusted teacher or a medical or mental health professional. If you have had a relationship with a medical or mental health professional in the past, now may be a good time for a 'check-in' to refresh strategies to actively manage any concerns that you, your family, friends or school may have.

There are range of supports available for you, such as:

- [Accessing Support](#) – The Department of Education and Training 'Coronavirus (COVID-19) advice for students'
- a 6-part series of short videos focused on mindfulness called [Feeling It](#)
- a series of videos to help support student wellbeing: [Wellbeing with Melbourne Football Club](#).

You can also access external help through:

- [eheadspace](#)
- [Kids helpline](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Beyond Blue](#)
- [ReachOut – getting a mental health care plan](#).

What resources are available for parents/carers?

It can be difficult at times for parents to know how best to support their children. Resources for parents and carers include:

- [Tips for parents to support their child's health and wellbeing](#).
- [Raising Learners Podcast Series](#).

Where can I find further information?

- For further health advice you can contact the 24-hour COVID-19 hotline on 1800 675 398, your GP or visit the DHHS website: <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-public-coronavirus-disease-covid-19#what-are-the-symptoms-of-coronavirus-covid-19>.