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COVID-19 Organizing and Conducting Exams and Assessments during School & University Closures – Resources & References

Background Document

Education Sector

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This document was prepared by Le Thu Huong, Teerada Na Jatturas and Ashley Stepanek. It was compiled from various sources, mainly the official websites of national Ministries of Education, the media, and the information available online (e.g. articles, papers, blogs) for curated information on how governments are planning for assessments, especially high-stakes exams in the context of prolonged and massive school and university closure and a shift to distance learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. The document serves as a background document for the UNESCO COVID-19 Education Response Webinar on *Managing high-stakes exams and assessments during the Covid-19 pandemic*.

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UNESCO

Global Education Monitoring Report

Article

- GEM Report. [Could coronavirus shape the way assessments work forever? 20 March 2020.](#)

Resources/ tools

- The [2020 GEM Report](#) looks at assessments from the viewpoint of inclusion and calls for the focus to shift away from high-stakes assessments and instead to focus on students' tasks: how they tackle them, which ones prove difficult and how some aspects can be adapted to enable success.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Cambridge Assessment International Education

Resources/ tools

- Cambridge International. [Update from Cambridge International on May/June 2020 exams](#). 23 Mar 2020. *(The British body that runs the international GCSE exams, Cambridge O Level, Cambridge International AS & A Level, Cambridge AICE Diploma and Cambridge Pre-U exams required for university entrance also announced "the difficult decision not to run our international examinations in the May/June 2020 series in any country").*

GPE

Resources/ tools

- GPE COVID-19 [response](#).

INEE

Resources/ tools

- INEE [Guidance Notes on Teaching and Learning](#). 30 June 2010.

International Baccalaureate

Articles

- IB [statement](#) on May 2020 Diploma Programme (DP) and Career-related Programme (CP) examinations (also [here](#)).

OECD

Articles

- OECD. [How can teachers and school systems respond to the COVID-19 pandemic? Some lessons from TALIS](#). 23 March 2020.

Oxford International AQA Examinations

Articles

- OxfordAQA. [News: May/June Exam Series 2020 – Q&A](#). 13 April 2020. *(OxfordAQA will not hold exams (including GCSEs, AS, A-levels and Independent Project Qualification - IPQ) in May/June 2020 because they want to ensure that all students will be treated fairly, given the unprecedented circumstances).*

UNICEF

Resources/ tools

- UNICEF [proposal](#) on COVID-19 response. 1 April 2020.

UNESCO MEMBERS STATES

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Senegal

Articles

-
- Diawara Rokhaya Fall and Tidiane Sall. 2020. "[COVID 19: how Senegal intends to ensure #LearningNeverStops.](#)" 3 April 2020.

ARAB REGION (ARB)

Tunisia

Articles

- *University World News*. [Students 'in torment' after minister says exams are still on.](#) 13 April 2020. (*Tunisia's MOE insists that the baccalauréat examinations will take place as scheduled, in spite of the closure of schools.*)

ASIA AND PACIFIC (APA)

Australia

Articles

- *Sydney Morning Herald*. 2020. [NAPLAN to be cancelled for 2020 due to COVID-19 disruption.](#) 20 March. (*Country decision to cancel annual testing of years 3, 5, 7 and 9, but will resume next year.*)

Resources/ tools

- Details regarding the cancellation of the National Assessment Programme Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) test window, see the response from the Australian government [here](#).

Bhutan

Resources/ tools

- The MOE lays out an adapted curriculum [guidelines](#) for education in emergencies (including info on summative and formative assessment).

Brunei

Articles

- *Borneo Bulletin*. [May/June exams cancelled; tuition teachers feel the heat of COVID-19.](#) March 26, 2020.

China

Articles

- Articles discuss how China manages online classes for the [nationwide](#) and for [primary and secondary students](#) and college entrance exams [here](#). However, China [delays college entrance exam](#) as fears grow over risk of coronavirus second wave.

Resources/ tools

- This [official document](#) highlights the new exam arrangement due to the disruption of the COVID-19.

Hong Kong SAR, China

Articles

- Hong Kong schools are to remain [suspended until further notice](#) (schools have been closed since January 2020).
- Hong Kong's [Diploma of Secondary Education exams](#), due to begin 26 March 2020, have been postponed until 24 April 2020.
- [Chinese and English-language oral examinations](#) have been cancelled.
- [Written tests for university entrance exams](#) will be held from 27 March 2020, with tightened hygiene measures such as wider spaces between candidates and masks for all candidates.

India	<p>Articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>College Dekho</i>. List of Exams Cancelled or Postponed Due to Coronavirus (COVID 19) Outbreak in India. 14 April 2020. • <i>New Indian Express</i>. COVID-19: UGC tells universities to postpone exams, suspend evaluation work. (Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the University Grants Commission-UGC directed all universities to reschedule the university examinations). <p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Testing Agency. Public Notice: Postponement of National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) UG May-2020. 27 March 2020. • Central Board of Secondary Education. Press release 1 April 2020. (The postponement of the board examinations between 19 and 30 March 2020 due to the COVID-19).
Indonesia	<p>Articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Jakarta Post</i>. Indonesia scraps national exams due to COVID-19. 24 March 2020. (The government cancelled national exams).
Japan	<p>Articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Star</i>. Japan to reopen schools closed for coronavirus after spring recess. 20 March 2020. (The Japanese government will not extend schools closures until the spring break to stem coronavirus infections, setting the stage for classes to resume in April 2020). • <i>University World News</i>. Virus-related closures disrupt university entrance exams. 27 February 2020. (Some Japanese universities propose catch-up exams).
Malaysia	<p>Resources/ tools: EIE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call centre is set up by the MOE of Malaysia (in Malaysian). • Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Coronavirus Infectious Disease Prevention 2019 (COVID-19) 14 March 2020. • Implementation of School Assembly during Transmission of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). • Media Statement: Suspension of Sports Programs and Curriculum Activities Following Coronavirus Novel Infection (COVID-19). • KPM Release No. 3 of 2020: Teaching and Learning Implementation Guidelines (PdP) During Movement Control Command Due to Covid-19 Infection. 27 March 2020. • COVID19 DISEASES IN SCHOOL. 14 March 2020. (These documents are in Malaysian and partially written in English).
Maldives	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MOE's Standard Operation Procedures on COVID-19.
Myanmar (Burma)	<p>Articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Irrawaddy</i>. Universities suspend exams as first COVID-19 cases confirmed. 28 March 2020. (University examinations across Myanmar, which started on 19 March and were scheduled to continue until 1 April, have been suspended after discovering two COVID-19 cases on 23 March). <p>Resources/ tools</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MOE's website • The website of the Myanmar Examiner Department (in Burmese)
Nepal	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology's website. • Nepal's MOE. Important Information on Voluntary Operations for the Prevention and Control of Corona Virus (COVID-19). 16 March 2020.
New Zealand	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The New Zealand's MOE page dedicated to response to the outbreak. COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) Education. (last updated 14 April 2020). • New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA) FQA: Final Exams Digital Assessment Vision: a design principles approach. • Digital Assessment: National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) Online. (<i>Info on how it works – shortly to be updated for 2020 – e.g., browser, operating system and device requirements changed slightly with more subjects available</i>). • National secondary examinations timetable (<i>The 2020 exams this year [in yellow] - about two third of all exams.</i>) • 2018 Trials & Pilots evaluation reports <p>The evaluation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the 2019 digital exams is about to be published but the documents in draft are still disorganised – participation and results are impressive – four times as many schools, three times as many students, four times as many exams offered as in 2018. - the 2018 digital exams (<i>NZQA had Trials where the marks did not count towards the qualification and Pilots where they did</i>).
Pakistan	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution of Pakistan (Article 25-A): "Right to education - The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to sixteen years in such manner as may be determined by law."
Palau	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The website of the MOE. • MOE COVID-19 Response: Directive No. 02-20: School Closure Extension Press Release. March 31, 2020. • MOE COVID-19 Response: Directive No. 01-20: School Closure Press Release." March 19, 2020.
Philippines	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Education page dedicated to COVID-19 response. • Department of Education. OM OSEC 2020-005 – Supplement to Office Memoranda OM-OSEC-2020-002, OM-OSEC-2020-003, and OM-OSEC-2020-004. 4 April 2020. • Department of Education. Authority to use Disaster Preparedness and Response Program Funds (Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation of DRRM/CCA/EIE Implementation) for COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Measures. 3 April 2020.

Samoa	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture dedicates a page for the measures response to the coronavirus outbreak. • Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture. Press Release: Plans and Programmes for all Year levels." March 31, 2020.
Singapore	<p>Articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Channel News Asia via University World News</i>. Universities cancel in-person examinations. 11 April 2020. <i>(Course grades will be computed based on each student's existing continual assessment scores)</i>. • <i>Strait Times</i>. No mid-year exams amid Covid-19 pandemic but national, varsity exams to continue. 3 April 2020. • <i>Which School Advisor</i>. All Singapore Schools to Close from April 8. 3 April 2020. <i>(The government announced that all MOE and private schools will close from April 8 until at least May 4 and move to full-time home-based learning)</i>. <p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singapore's MOE. "FAQs for COVID-19 Infection in Singapore." 25 March 2020. • Singapore's MOE. FAQs for COVID-19 Infection in Singapore (exam-related questions #5).
South Korea	<p>Articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Japan Times</i>. South Korea to open schools online and reschedule college exam. Mar 31, 2020.
Sri Lanka	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sri Lanka's MOE website. • Department of Examinations • Special Notice: Dates of all examinations have been extended until further notice
Thailand	<p>Articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sor Thor 365°</i>. The Minister of Education's first public announcement on teaching and learning amidst the COVID-19 outbreak. 11 April 2020 (in Thai). • <i>Bangkok Post</i>. Schools won't reopen until July 1. 7 April 2020. • Bureau of International Cooperation, MOE. Ministerial Meeting with UNESCO HQ: Thailand's educational measures responding to COVID-19. 10 March 2020 (in Thai). <p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Education
Viet Nam	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Education and Training issued guidelines to adjust the content of teaching for the second semester of the school year 2019-2020.
EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA (EUR)	
Austria	<p>Articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Austria's government presents COVID-19 exit schedule.

	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry of Education's (MOE) website dedicated to response to the COVID-19 outbreak.
Belgium	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A page dedicated to response to the outbreak of COVID-19 by the Flemish MOE (in Flemish).
Bulgaria	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry of Education and Science recommends for schools to delay courses due to the coronavirus cases. 24 February 2020. • The Ministry announced the visits of children in kindergartens and day nurseries were suspended. 6 April 2020.
Czech Republic	<p>Resources/ tools: distance learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Agency updates regularly the coronavirus-related FAQ for foreign students on its website.
Estonia	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Education and Research FQA: Final Exams (in English) <i>The government provides answers to questions on coronavirus measures related to, for example, the final / vocational / professional exams and graduations.</i> • Foundation Innove also provides information on how to support children during the COVID-19 outbreak.
Finland	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Matriculation Examination Board updates regularly the dates of the tests and provides answers for the upper secondary schools on this FAQ website. • See the response to COVID-19 by the Ministry's examples of actions during the coronavirus crisis (in Finnish). • See also the government policy for universities, universities of applied sciences, general upper secondary education, vocational education, liberal education, basic art education, primary and lower secondary education and early childhood education and care during the coronavirus pandemic of 16 March 2020 (in Finnish). • HEIs have tools such as electronic exams such as EXAM as well as joint electronic entrance exam to UAS.
France	<p>Articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Le Parisien</i>. Coronavirus : les écoles rouvriront à partir du 11 mai, les universités «pas avant l'été». 13 avril 2020. (<i>The 2020 baccalaureate will be validated via continuous assessment</i>). <p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of National Education. Questions/Réponses - Coronavirus Covid 19: Bac, brevet 2020 : les réponses à vos questions (in French). (<i>The BAC is cancelled this year due to the uncertainty amid the outbreak</i>). • The French Ministry of National Education's webpage, titled: Coronavirus (COVID-19): Information and recommendations for the educational institutions and personnel, is dedicated to response to the outbreak of COVID-19. Last updated on 4 April 2020 (in French).

Germany	<p>Articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Deutsche Welle</i>. Germany: School-leaving exams will go ahead despite coronavirus. 25 March 2020. <p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Federal Ministries of Education, Cultural Affair and Science’s webpage dedicated to response to the outbreak of COVID-19.
Greece	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry of Education and Religions’ decisions on GEL and EPAL nationwide exams, 2020. (<i>The Ministry redefines the exam material for admission to Higher Education, with proportional reductions in all national exams in the third grade of all the General and Vocational High Schools of the country, according to the progress that had been made in the teaching of the subject, until the date that the operation was universally suspended for schools</i>) (in Greek). • Extension of the suspension of educational institutions. 10 April 2020. (<i>The Ministry commenced the suspension of schools since 11 March 2020 and extends the temporary ban on the operation of all educational structures until 10 May 2020, for precautionary reasons against the COVID-19</i>) (in Greek).
Hungary	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates on COVID-19 are continuously, centrally published in KRÉTA electronic administration system for public education, on the governmental information webpage and on the website of National Public Health Center.
Ireland	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral and practical performance tests of the state examinations which were originally scheduled to take place from 23 March to 3 April 2020 have been cancelled. All students who were due to take these tests will be awarded full marks for this portion of the exam. See details here.
Italy	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Education, Ministry of University and Research. Coronavirus, online dedicated page and FAQ. 27 February 2020 (in Italian). • The Ministry creates additional two webpages on the COVID-19 Emergency and on virtual learning (in Italian).
Lithuania	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutorials and Answers for Matriculation Examinations, Basic Education Achievement Testing, National Student Achievement Testing (here).
Luxemburg	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Education, Children and Youth. Schools and childcare facilities: the suspension of activities extended until 19 April 2020. 18 March 2020.
Malta	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Information. Closure of Schools Order, 2020. B 499, L.N. 41 of 2020. PUBLIC HEALTH ACT (CAP. 465).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Information. Closure of Schools (Extension of Period of Closure) Order, 2020. B 630, L.N. 77 of 2020. PUBLIC HEALTH ACT (CAP. 465). Government Printing Press. • 'MySchools' is an administrative tool to record attendance and exam results. (<i>Login credentials required</i>).
Netherlands	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Dutch Government's page on policy response to the outbreak COVID-19. • The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. News release: No national exams this year. 24 March 2020.
Norway	<p>Articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>NewsinEnglish.no</i>. Norway cancels written exams. 25 March 2020. <p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press release: Norway to lift COVID-19 restrictions gradually and cautiously. No: 62/20. 8 April 2020.
Poland	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance education can be carried out using materials made available by a teacher, in particular those recommended by the Ministry of National Education (especially the Integrated Educational Platform) and the Central and Regional Examination Board.
Slovakia	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers can also use the system of online testing E-test. This platform enables the teachers to compose tests using assignments from the pool, or to create own assignments and tests according to their needs. • Students preparing for their school leaving exams were recommended to practice online tests from previous years on the website of the National Institute of Certified Measurements of Education - Testing 9. • Preparation for school leaving exams – Maturita (2019/2020).
Spain	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources in the webpage includes rubrics database to help evaluation process.
Sweden	<p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Education and Research. The Government's work in the area of education in response to the coronavirus. 30 March 2020.
United Kingdom	<p>Articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Guardian</i>. "School closures: a catastrophe for students or a golden opportunity?" • <i>Guardian</i>. Oxbridge to replace summer exams with online assessments due to coronavirus. 21 March 2020. <p>Resources/ tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department for Education. "Coronavirus (COVID-19): cancellation of GCSEs, AS and A levels in 2020." (<i>Country decision to cancel primary assessments for upper secondary students to enable schools and colleges to support vulnerable children, and those of essential workers</i>).

- UK Government's [announcement](#) on Closure of educational settings: information for parents and carers and on the [cancellation of GCSEs, AS and A levels in 2020](#).
- UK Government's [announcement](#) on assessing apprentices.
- UK Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education's [response to COVID-19](#).
- UK Office of the Independent Adjudicator's [decision to postpone the exams](#).

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Argentina

Articles

- *Buenos Aires Times*. [Argentina to close schools for two weeks, borders to visitors](#). (Kindergarten, primary and secondary schools to be suspended until 31 March 2020).

Brazil

Resources/ tools

- A [page](#) dedicated to the measure response to the outbreak of COVID-19 by the Brazilian MOE.

Chile

Resources/ tools

- The MOE of Chile [extends schools closures](#) to May 2020 (as of 25 March 2020. Classes were suspended since 16 March).

Colombia

Resources/ tools

- La educacion es de todos | Mineducacion | [Especial COVID-19](#) (especially dedicated for the COVID-19 measure response).

Dominican Republic

Resources/ tools

- Ministry of Public Health, Pan American Health Organization, and WHO, Basic Home and Community [Guidance](#): For the Prevention of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Other Respiratory Viruses, February 2020 (in Spanish).

Jamaica

Resources/ tools

- Ministry of Education, Youth and Information's [webpage](#).
- CPFSA [Child Protection and Family Services Agency] Activates COVID-19 [Response Plan](#).

Paraguay

Resources/ tools

- Ministry of Education's [website](#).
- [CIRCULAR DGUISITS N° 06/2020. March-April 2020 \(in Spanish\)](#).

Trinidad and Tobago

Resources/ tools: exams

- MOE's Exam Unit [webpage](#).
- MOE's [News release](#): Precautions to be taken in light of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).
- MOE's [Notice](#): Point Fortin East Not Shut Down.
- MOE's [Notice](#): CSEC and CAPE Exams Private Venues May/June 2020.

NON-UNESCO MEMBER STATES

United States

Articles

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- *Wall Street Journal*. [Students May Be Able to Take SAT, ACT at Home Due to Coronavirus](#). April 15, 2020. *(The US College Board and ACT are making plans so high-school students can take the college-admission exams this fall)*.
 - *Education Week*. [Op-ed - School Closures and COVID-19. Perhaps It's Time to Cancel High-Stakes Testing, Too?](#) 15 March 2020. *(Calls for cancellation of high-stakes tests given stressors on students, teachers, parents, staff and leaders. Instead, it should opt for locally developed assessments and for a review of testing approach generally)*.
 - Above the Law (online blog/ journal). [Elite Law Schools Move to Pass/ Fail System Over COVID-19 But Will It Hurt Students?](#)

Resources/ tools

- US Department of Education. 2020. "[Fact Sheet: Impact of COVID-19 on Assessments and Accountability under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act](#)." 12 March. *(Country decision to offer one-year targeted waiver to close schools through the testing window)*.
 - Preparing for the flu: [department of education recommendations](#) to ensure the continuity of learning for schools (K-12) during extended student absence or school dismissal.
 - Statement from Board of Regents Chancellor Betty A. Rosa and Interim State Education Commissioner Shannon Tahoe Regarding [Elementary- and Intermediate-Level State Assessments](#).
 - Preliminary [Guidance on the Preparation for Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Outbreak in New York State](#).
-