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To: Deputy Directors-General, Chief Directors, Directors (Head Office and district offices), Chief Education Specialists, Heads: Curriculum Support, Circuit Managers, Heads: Management and Governance, Deputy Chief Education Specialists, Assessment and Examination Coordinators, Subject Advisers and Heads of education institutions that prepare candidates for the National Senior Certificate, Senior Certificate and Adult Education and Training Level 4 examinations

**Subject: Norms and standards for school walk-in safe/strongroom and the handling of the walk-in safe/strongroom keys**

1. A policy on the norms and standards for the use of strongrooms and the handling of the strongroom keys was issued in 2016. This policy is now amended in 2019.
2. The Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) audit and monitor the public and independent examination centres continually to assess their readiness to host and conduct national examinations. It was found that many schools/centres still do not have a policy on the use of the school's/centre's walk-in safe/strongroom and the handling of the walk-in safe/strongroom keys during the conduct of the National Senior Certificate (NSC)/Senior Certificate (SC)/Adult Education and Training (AET) Level 4 (L4) examinations.
3. During the October/November 2019 NSC examinations, principals/centre managers of public and independent schools/examination centres must ensure that the norms and standards for the handling of the strongroom key are implemented to ensure that the NSC/SC/AET L4 examinations are not compromised in any way.
4. The Policy on the Norms and Standards for the School Walk-in Safe/Strongroom and the Handling of the Walk-in Safe/Strongroom Key is attached for implementation by all public and independent schools.

5. Principals and centre managers are expected to implement the norms and standards for school walk-in safes/strongrooms and the handling of the walk-in safe/strongroom keys with immediate effect.
6. An example of a register to record access to the walk-in safe/strongroom is attached as **Annexure 1**.
7. A poster, reflecting the main elements of the policy, was developed for display on the door of the walk-in safe/strongroom. This poster with the summary of the walk-in safe/strongroom policy is attached as **Annexure 2**.
8. Principals/centre managers must read the policy and bring its content to the attention of all staff members.

**SIGNED:** PAD BEETS

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT MANAGEMENT**

**DATE:** 2019-10-15



**Western Cape  
Government**

Education

Directorate: Examinations Administration

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**CHIEF DIRECTORATE: ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS**

**POLICY ON THE NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR THE SCHOOL WALK-IN SAFE/STRONGROOM AND THE  
HANDLING OF THE WALK-IN SAFE/STRONGROOM KEY**

**Released in September 2016**

**Amended in August 2019**

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## 1. **Introduction**

The security of the national examinations is one of the most crucial aspects in the implementation of a credible and fair examination. Despite various measures that are currently in place to ensure that the question papers for the National Senior Certificate (NSC)/Senior Certificate (SC) and Adult Education and Training Level 4 (AET L4) examinations are not compromised, security can always be improved. The WCED has, however, observed that principals/centre managers implement different security measures with regard to question paper safeguarding, and it has therefore become essential to stipulate the norms and standards that must be adhered to during distribution and storage of NSC question papers. This document will assist principals/centre managers to establish security processes that will comply with the national standard.

## 2. **Storage of national question papers by public and independent schools**

- 2.1 National question papers of a school/examination centre must be stored in a walk-in safe/strongroom.
- 2.2 Principals/centre managers/chief invigilators must ensure during examination periods that their walk-in safe/strongroom is cleared of all textbooks, stationery, and/or other material that might compromise the integrity of the NSC/SC and AET L4 examinations.
- 2.3 Only material pertaining to the NSC/SC and AET L4 examinations are allowed in the walk-in safe/strongroom for the duration of the examination.
- 2.4 Access to the question papers must be obtained via a double locking system.
- 2.5 If a security system is not in place, principals/centre managers are advised to install an alarm system with linkage to a security company for 24-hour surveillance.
- 2.6 Throughout the examination period, the school/examination centre must ensure that access to the premises is controlled.

## 3. **Entering the school safe/strongroom**

- 3.1 No individual will be allowed to access the school walk-in safe/strongroom by themselves while question papers are stored in the walk-in safe/strongroom. For the entire duration of the NSC/SC and AET L4 examination period, the school secretary or other staff members are not allowed to have any access to the walk-in safe/strongroom at any given time.

- 3.2 Only the principal/centre manager/chief invigilator/delegate **and** SMT member may access the walk-in safe/strongroom as a group when removing question papers from the walk-in safe/strongroom on the day of a specific examination.
- 3.3 On the day of the examination, an hour prior to the start of the examination, the principal/centre manager/chief invigilator, SMT member and senior subject teacher may remove the question papers from the walk-in safe/strongroom.
- 3.4 Access to the walk-in safe/strongroom must be monitored and controlled at all times.
- 3.5 There must be a register for the walk-in safe/strongroom. All staff members/invigilators entering the walk-in safe/strongroom must use the register to sign in and out and they must indicate the reasons for entering/accessing the walk-in safe/strongroom.
- 3.6 As soon as the intended duty/activity is completed, officials must lock up the walk-in safe/strongroom immediately.

#### 4. **Double locking system**

- 4.1 The double locking system requires two locking mechanisms to gain access to the question papers in the walk-in safe/strongroom. The principal/centre manager/chief invigilator/delegate will keep the one walk-in safe/strongroom key and the SMT member the second key.
- 4.2 Schools are therefore required to implement a double locking system to the school walk-in safe/strongroom so that it is impossible for one official to have the opportunity to access the question papers on his/her own.
- 4.3 Where a double locking system is not possible, other means of storing the keys to the walk-in safe/strongroom must be explored so that no one person/staff member can access the walk-in safe/strongroom to obtain access to the question papers and examination material. The principal/centre manager/chief invigilator should not be able to access and remove examination material and question papers on his/her own.
- 4.4 If the school strongroom is not fitted with a double locking strongroom door, the following options can be implemented:
  - (a) The principal/centre manager/chief invigilator can install a safety gate across the strongroom door and the principal/centre manager/chief invigilator/delegate will keep the walk-in safe/strongroom key and the Senior Management Team (SMT) member will keep the safety gate key; or

(b) The principal/centre manager/chief invigilator can, for example, place a lockable steel cabinet in the strongroom and store the national question papers in the steel cabinet. The principal/centre manager/chief invigilator/delegate will then keep the strongroom door key and the SMT member will keep the key to the steel cabinet.

## 5. **Handling of the keys to the safe/strongroom**

- 5.1 The principal/centre manager/chief invigilator is solely accountable for the safe keeping of the keys to the walk-in safe/strongroom.
- 5.2 The principal/centre manager/chief invigilator must identify and task another staff member to manage the key and access policy in the event that the principal/centre manager/chief invigilator is away on leave or is on official duty outside the office.
- 5.3 All walk-in safes/strongrooms must have a duplicate key. The WCED recommends that the duplicate key be kept with the circuit manager and assessment coordinator at the district office.
- 5.4 If the district office is more than 20 km away from the school, the duplicate key should be stored at the nearest South African Police Station.
- 5.5 The duplicate key to the second lock to access the question papers must also be kept at the district office.
- 5.6 The details of the person who is responsible for the duplicate keys must be forwarded annually to the WCED by the end of September and it must be addressed to:  
Mr Clive Berry  
Fax number: 021 461 5637 or 086 660 1965  
Email address: [Clive.Berry@westerncape.gov.za](mailto:Clive.Berry@westerncape.gov.za)
- 5.7 Duplicate keys must not be stored or kept at private institutions.
- 5.8 Annual audits of the keys will be conducted by the WCED to ensure that all keys are accessible in cases of an emergency.
- 5.9 Principals/Centre Managers/Chief Invigilators are accountable for the management of the keys to the walk-in safe/strongroom and must have security measures in place to safeguard the keys after hours.

6. **Procedures to follow when school safe/strongroom keys are lost**

The following procedures must be followed meticulously in the unfortunate incident of a school safe/strongroom key being lost during an examination period:

- (a) Report the lost key immediately to the district director and Head Office for attention of Mr Clive Berry at telephone number 021 467 2265.
- (b) Report it simultaneously to the South African Police and get a Crime Administration System (CAS) number from them.
- (c) The duplicate key must immediately be fetched in order to open the safe/strongroom.
- (d) Arrange with the specific safe/strongroom service provider or local locksmith to replace the lock mechanism.
- (e) Two new safe/strongroom keys must be provided to the school and the original safety procedure must be followed.

**SIGNED:** PAD BEETS

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT MANAGEMENT**

**DATE:** 2019-10-15





7	09:00-12:00	MATH.1									
	09:00-12:00	TMAT.1									
8	14:00-16:00	HNDFA.2									
	14:00-16:30	HNDHL.2									
	14:00-16:00	HNDFA.2									
	14:00-16:00	GUJFA.2									
	14:00-16:30	GUJHL.2									
	14:00-16:00	GUJSA.2									
	14:00-16:00	TMLFA.2									
	14:00-16:30	TMLHL.2									
	14:00-16:00	TMLSA.2									
	14:00-16:00	TLGFA.2									
	14:00-16:30	TLGHL.2									
	14:00-16:00	TLGSA.2									
	14:00-16:00	URDFA.2									
	14:00-16:30	URDHL.2									
	14:00-16:00	URDSA.2									
	14:00-16:00	ARBSA.2									
	14:00-16:00	FRHSA.2									
	14:00-16:00	HBRSA.2									
	14:00-16:00	ITLSA.2									
	14:00-16:00	MANSA.2									
	14:00-16:00	MGRSA.2									
	14:00-16:00	SRBSA.2									
	14:00-16:00	SPNSA.2									
	14:00-15:30	LTNSA.2									
	14:00-16:00	PRGFA.2									
	14:00-16:30	PRGHL.2									
	14:00-16:00	PRGSA.2									
	14:00-16:30	GRMHL.2									
	14:00-16:00	GRMSA.2									

Friday  
2019/10/25









Tuesday 2019/11/19		09:00-11:30	ZULHL.3																			
		09:00-11:30	SWAFA.3																			
		09:00-11:30	SWAHL.3																			
		09:00-11:30	SASHL.3																			
	39		14:00-16:30	SEPFA.3																		
			14:00-16:30	SEPHL.3																		
			14:00-16:30	SESFA.3																		
			14:00-16:30	SESHL.3																		
			14:00-16:30	SETFA.3																		
			14:00-16:30	SETHL.3																		
		14:00-16:30	TSVFA.3																			
		14:00-16:30	TSVHL.3																			
		14:00-16:30	XITFA.3																			
		14:00-16:30	XITHL.3																			
Wednesday 2019/11/20	40	09:00-12:00	TRSM.1																			
	41		14:00-17:00	CVTC.1																		
			14:00-17:00	CVTW.1																		
		14:00-17:00	CVTV.1																			
Thursday 2019/11/21	42	09:00-12:00	DRMA.1																			
	43	14:00-17:00	VLSA.1																			
Friday 2019/11/22	44	09:00-11:30	AFRFA.3																			
		09:00-11:30	AFRHL.3																			
	45	14:00-17:00	INFT.2																			
Monday 2019/11/25	46	09:00-12:00	AGRM.1																			

	<b>47</b>	14:00-17:00	HIST.2									
Tuesday 2019/11/26	<b>48</b>	09:00-11:30	ENGFA.3									
		09:00-11:30	ENGHL.3									
	<b>49</b>	14:00-17:00	DNCE.1									
Wednesday 2019/11/27	<b>50</b>	09:00-12:00	MUSC.1									
		09:00-12:00	SPES.1									
	<b>51</b>	14:00-17:00	EQNS.1									
14:00-15:30		MUSC.2										
Thursday 2019/11/28	<b>52</b>	09:00-12:00	AGRT.1									
	<b>53</b>	14:00-17:00	DSGN.1									

## POLICY ON THE NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR THE SCHOOL WALK-IN SAFE/STRONGROOM AND THE HANDLING OF THE WALK-IN SAFE/STRONGROOM KEY DURING NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

### STORAGE OF NATIONAL QUESTION PAPERS BY PUBLIC AND INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

The walk-in safe/strongroom must be uncluttered and organised and only question papers, answer books, examination stationery and answer scripts must be kept in the walk-in safe/strongroom during examination periods.

### ENTERING THE SCHOOL WALK-IN SAFE/STRONGROOM

- No person is allowed to access the school walk-in safe/strongroom by themselves while question papers are stored in the walk-in safe/strongroom.
- For the duration of the examination period, the secretary or other staff members must not have access to the school's walk-in safe/strongroom at any given time.
- Only the principal/centre manager/chief invigilator/delegate and SMT member may access the walk-in safe/strongroom as a group when removing question papers from the walk-in safe/strongroom on the day of a specific examination.
- All authorised school staff and invigilators entering the walk-in safe/strongroom must use the register to sign in and out.

### DOUBLE LOCKING SYSTEM

- The school walk-in safe/strongroom must have a double locking system.
- In the absence of a double locking mechanism on the walk-in safe/strongroom door, the following double locking options can be implemented:
  - A lockable security gate can be installed across the walk-in safe/strongroom door
  - A lockable steel cabinet can be placed inside the walk-in safe/strongroom.

### HANDLING OF THE KEYS TO THE SAFE

- The principal or centre manager is solely accountable for the safe keeping of the keys to the walk-in safe/strongroom.
- The principal or centre manager must designate a second official as back-up in the event of any emergency, or when the principal or centre manager is away on leave or is on official duty outside the office.
- The details of the person in possession of the duplicate keys must be forwarded to the WCED every year by the end of September.
- The principal/centre manager/chief invigilator will keep the key to the walk-in safe / strongroom, and the SMT member will keep the key to the second lock, allowing access to the Smartlock canvas bags (security gate or steel cabinet).

### PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN SCHOOL WALK-IN SAFE KEYS ARE LOST

The following procedures must be followed meticulously when a walk-in safe/strongroom key is lost during an examination period:

- Report the lost key immediately to the district director and Head Office for attention of Mr Clive Berry at telephone number 021 467 2265.
- Report it simultaneously to the SA Police Service and obtain a CAS number.
- The duplicate key must immediately be fetched from the place where the duplicate keys are stored in order to open the walk-in safe/strongroom.
- Arrange with the specific safe/strongroom service provider or local locksmith to replace the lock mechanism.

The above rules must be observed.

Principal:

Signature:

Date: