



**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 KEYS**

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## 1. Introduction

The security of the national examinations is one of the most crucial aspects in the conduct of a credible and fair examination. The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) has proposed 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.

The WCED has, however, observed that principals/centre managers implement different security measures with regards to the safe-keeping of question papers and related examination material, and it has therefore become essential to stipulate the norms and standards that must be adhered to during the distribution and storage of examination 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 with **double locking features**.
- 2.2 Principals/centre managers/chief invigilators must ensure that during examination periods, 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 is 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 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** Senior Management Team (SMT) member may access the walk-in safe/strongroom 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. The two persons 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 will keep the second key. Where delegation is involved such delegation must be in writing.
- 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 complete/full access to 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's 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 in front of the strongroom door and the principal/centre manager/chief invigilator/delegate will keep the walk-in safe/strongroom key and the SMT member will keep the safety gate key; or

(b) The principal/centre manager can, for example, place a lockable steel cabinet inside the strongroom and store the national question papers in the steel cabinet. The principal/centre manager delegate will then keep the key to the strongroom door and the SMT member will keep the key to the steel cabinet. In principle, access to the strongroom must always involve two persons.

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

- 5.1 The principal/centre manager is solely responsible for the safe keeping of the keys to the walk-in safe/strongroom.
- 5.2 The principal/centre manager must identify and task another SMT member to manage the key and access policy, in the event of the principal/centre manager/ chief invigilator being away on leave, or on official duty outside the office. Any alternative arrangements must be recorded in writing and approved by the District Director.
- 5.3 All walk-in safes/strongrooms must have a duplicate key. The WCED requests that the duplicate keys be kept with the district Circuit Manager and Assessment Coordinator at the district office. The principal/centre manager must request a letter from the district as evidence that the duplicate key is stored at the district office/police station.
- 5.4 If the district office is more than 50 km away from the school, the duplicate key may be stored at the nearest South African Police Services (SAPS) station.
- 5.5 The details of the person who is responsible for the duplicate keys must be forwarded annually to the WCED, by the end of October, 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).
- 5.6 Duplicate keys must **not be** stored or kept at private institutions.
- 5.7 Annual audits of the keys, both at the school and at the district, will be conducted by the WCED to ensure that all keys are accessible in cases of an emergency.
- 5.8 Principals/centre managers 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 the attention of Mr Clive Berry at telephone number 021 467 2265.
- (b) Report it simultaneously to the SAPS and get a Crime Administration System number from them.
- (c) The duplicate key must be fetched immediately 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:** H MAHOMED

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

**DATE:** 2020-10-12

























## POLICY ON THE NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR THE SCHOOL WALK-IN SAFE/STRONGROOM AND THE HANDLING OF THE WALK-IN SAFE/STRONGROOM KEYS 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 when removing question papers from the walk-in safe/strongroom on the day of a specific examination.
- The two persons 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.

### 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/centre manager is solely responsible for the safe keeping of the keys to the walk-in safe/strongroom. They will be held accountable.
- The principal/centre manager must designate a second official as back-up in the event of any emergency, or when the principal/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 October.
- The principal/centre manager will keep the keys 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: