



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS

**PRESS STATEMENT ON REOPENING OF
EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS UNDER COVID-19
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPs) AND
RECOVERY OF LOST TIME**

3RD MARCH 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

Following the decision to gradually allow other classes report back in a phased manner, and based on the lessons learnt from implementation of the SOPs in schools, Ministry of Health has accordingly updated the SOPs. These updated guidelines are, therefore, being issued to guide education institutions effectively implement the revised SOPs and the strategies for recovery of lost time.

2. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The SOP's have largely remained the same.

A critical addition to the revised guidelines is the section on Covid-19 surveillance in education institutions, which is intended to help monitor illness symptoms to ensure early detection of outbreaks of Covid-19 and provide measures to prevent transmission of disease.

All education institutions in Uganda are required to adhere to the requirements of the SOPs.

3. PHASED RE-OPENING FOR NON-CANDIDATE CLASSES (PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS)

- i. Schools opened on the 1st March 2021 for non-candidate classes starting with semi-candidate classes (P6, S3 and S5). All schools shall strictly follow the attached revised school calendar.
- ii. Special schools for learners with special needs may open and operate for all classes provided they have the capacity to adhere to the recommended social distancing.
- iii. A school categorized officially as “Day and Boarding” may operate as such, subject to a compliance certification from DES, or may opt to operate as “Day schools” and **NOT BOARDING** as the new arrangement only.
- iv. A school operating as “Day and Boarding” shall make arrangements to ensure that the two categories of learners do not interact physically.

4. SAFE EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OPERATIONS:

The SOP's elaborate what the schools need to do to ensure safe operations.

Nevertheless, it is the primary responsibility of the heads of education institutions, working with School Management Committees / Boards of Governors / Governing Councils, to create a safe learning environment. The management of institutions should put in place appropriate measures to implement the SOPs for prevention and management of Covid-19.

All education institutions shall support and participate in the Covid-19 surveillance mechanism as detailed in **Section 7.3** of the SOPs. This is to ensure early detection of infection and effective management of cases to prevent the spread of the pandemic.

The revised SOP's provide an elaborate mechanism of COVID 19 surveillance in education institutions which will help monitor and report symptoms for early detection and management of outbreaks.

6. EFFECTIVE UTILIZATION OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

Implementation of the SOPs requires ample facilities such as classrooms, desks and hand washing equipment, which may not be readily available in all institutions. It is necessary that institutions effectively utilize the available facilities to implement the requirements of the SOPs.

For example:

- i. This may include use of libraries, laboratories, dining halls and main halls where available, as classrooms.
- ii. Safe temporary shelters, such as tents, may be used as classrooms. Open air spaces, such as tree shades may be improvised as temporary venues for some classes.
- iii. Institutions with large numbers of learners, which cannot be accommodated in the available classrooms at the recommended social distancing, may make arrangements to operate either:
 - a. Morning and afternoon shifts. **or:**
 - b. An alternate-day attendance schedule for different classes.

5. MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH ISSUES IN SCHOOLS.

- i. Schools that do not employ a qualified and dedicated health worker are advised to establish a formal collaboration with a health facility within a radius of 5kms for quick response and management of emerging health issues.
- ii. Each education institution shall work closely with the district Covid-19 taskforce to organize basic training for its staff on management of Covid-19.
- iii. Institutions shall build staff awareness and knowledge on Covid-19 safety measures through regular sharing of accurate information and literature.

6. STRATEGIES FOR RECOVERY OF LOST TIME

The strategies for recovery of lost time are premised on the following guiding principles:

- i. All essential curriculum content shall be recovered over the period of the education cycles i.e. lower primary, upper primary, lower secondary and upper secondary
- ii. Curriculum delivery is sequential, cumulative, spiral and concentric; therefore, curriculum coverage should not be restricted to a particular class in an education cycle.
- iii. Learning happens in both the classroom and beyond; therefore, learning to learn is critical in curriculum implementation.
- iv. Teachers and schools are capable of innovative ways of interpreting and implementing the curriculum to recover time if appropriately guided.

To ensure effective recovery of lost learning time, Ministry of Education will implement the following strategies:

1. Reorganization of the sequencing of the curriculum content such that work which cannot be covered in the current class is pushed to the next class(s).
2. Hybrid curriculum implementation which shall include distribution of self study materials to the learners, Lesson broadcasts on radio and TV.
3. Upload of published audio and audio-visual learning materials on the Ministry Website.
4. Exploring the possibility of dedicated Education Media Channels.

7. SCHOOL FEES

- i. Education institutions shall engage their parents/guardians to adopt flexible fees payment arrangements and allow payment in appropriate installments.
- ii. The management and governance of all education institutions shall review institutional annual work plans and budgets to realign them with the changes in education institution programmes and priorities.
- iii. During this Covid-19 emergency period, schools should avoid implementing major infrastructure development and asset acquisition budgets that are funded from parents' contributions.
- iv. Education institutions shall not increase fees from what was charged for first term 2020.

Alex Kakooza

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Annex 1: School Calendar

Non-Candidate Classes Academic Year 2020

	March 2021					April 2021					May 2021					June 2021					July 2021					
	Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	Wk 5	Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	Wk 5	Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	Wk 5	Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	Wk 5	Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4		
Primary Schools																										
P1																					7 th					24 th
P2																					7 th					24 th
P3																					7 th					24 th
P4											6 th										4 th					
P5											6 th										4 th					
P6	1 st																				21 st					24 th
Secondary Schools																										
S1																									3 rd	
S2																					31 st					24 th
S3	1 st																				21 st					24 th
S5	1 st																				21 st					24 th

Academic Year 2021

	2021												2022				
2021	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May
Term 1								9 th (12 weeks)		29 th							
Term 2												15 th (12weeks)		4 th			
Term 3														21 st (12 weeks)			2 nd

Academic Year 2022

	2022												2023				
2021	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May
Term 1					16 th (12 Weeks)			5 th									

Term 2									22 nd	(13 Weeks)			16 th						
Term 3														2 nd (12 weeks) 24 th					

Academic Year 2023

	2023												2024				
2021	Januar y	Februar y	Marc h	April	May	June	Jul y	Augus t	Septembe r	Octobe r	Novembe r	Decembe r	Januar y	Februar y	Marc h	Apri l	Ma y
Term 1				10 th (12 weeks) 30 th													
Term 2							17 th (12 weeks) 6 th										
Term 3												23 rd (8weeks) 22 nd					

Annex 2: School Health Surveillance Register

Name of School..... Day/Boarding.....Govt./Private.....

District..... Subcounty..... Parish.....

Nearest Health Facility.....Phone Contact of Incharge.....

Date:

	Name	Age	Class	Tel. No. of Caretaker	TEMP READING (°C)	FLU / RUNNY NOSE (Yes/No)	SORE THROAT /COUGH (Yes/No)	DIFFICULTY IN/SHORTNESS OF BREATHE (Yes/No)	LOSS OF SMELL AND/OR TASTE (Yes/No)	FATIGUE (Yes/No)
1.										
2.										
3.										
4.										
5.										
6.										
7.										
8.										
9.										
10.										
11.										
12.										
13.										
14.										
15.										
16.										
17.										
18.										

Annex 3: Daily Summary Report

PARAMETER	NO. OF CHILDREN
Temperature >37.5	
Flu / Runny Nose	
Sore Throat /Cough	
Difficulty In/Shortness in Breathing	
Loss of Smell and/or Taste	
Fatigue	

The Summary report should be sent inform of a message to the following:

1. Head of the School
2. In-charge of the nearby Health Unit
3. District Surveillance Officer
4. District Education Officer
5. Ministry of Health EOC/School Health Unit/Surveillance Unit
6. Ministry of Education