

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON THE CONDUCT OF DSA SELECTION
IN VIEW OF THE COVID-19 SITUATION**

1. Why did MOE proceed with the DSA exercises this year? Should the DSA exercises be delayed until the COVID-19 situation has improved?

The DSA exercises provide students with the opportunity for admission into a secondary school or JC based on their diverse range of achievements and talents, beyond academic performance at the national examinations. As part of our continued emphasis on holistic education and broadening definitions of success, we want to preserve this pathway for this year's primary and secondary school graduates, and not delay the exercises unnecessarily.

MOE will work closely with schools to take the necessary precautions to ensure the safety and well-being of our students and staff. This includes scheduling the use of simple video-conferencing tools. There will be designated rooms in the applicant's primary or secondary schools with ample space to ensure safe distancing during video-conferencing.

2. With the use of e-modes, will schools focus more on students' past achievements and records? Will this disadvantage students with little or no prior training or formal certification?

Our teachers and school leaders are experienced in conducting DSA selection, and will do their best to ensure that students are given due recognition for their diverse talents and achievements. When selecting students, DSA schools will continue to adopt a holistic approach, even with e-modes. Schools will consider various qualities and attributes and will not focus on students' past achievements alone. Schools will continue to shortlist students with potential, exemplary character and desirable personal qualities, regardless of whether they had prior training or formal certification.

These attributes can be assessed through e-modes or input from the students' primary or secondary schools. This ensures that students from less advantaged backgrounds, who may not have the resources to acquire formal training, are given due consideration.

3. How will MOE ensure a level playing field for students from disadvantaged backgrounds?

The e-modes will be conducted at the applicants' primary or secondary schools for standardisation of the setting and equipment available, to ensure fairness in the selection process. School staff will also be present to provide technical support where necessary, and there will be no assistance from others.

In addition, MOE provides financial assistance schemes, subsidies, scholarships and sets aside resources to ensure that no student with potential misses the opportunity to benefit from DSA due to financial concerns. Schools will continue to reach out to students from less advantaged backgrounds to ensure that they are aware of the support available to them and encourage those with talent and potential to apply for suitable DSA schools.

4. How will schools be able to accurately assess students' talents and potential without in-person trials and auditions, and given the suspension of the National School Games (NSG), Singapore Youth Festival (SYF) Arts Presentation and CCAs?

Due to the exceptional circumstances this year, in-person trials and auditions, and events like the NSG and SYF Arts Presentation cannot be used to assess students' talent, potential, passion and character. This means that besides using e-modes or input from the students' primary or secondary schools, the DSA schools will need to rely more heavily on students' track records in school and information provided in their application.

In-person assessments and placements in national events are only one of the many ways to assess students' competencies, dedication and training attitude.

Each school has its own criteria and assessment, but all schools look at a range of skills and attributes when shortlisting students. This includes students who demonstrate potential and personal qualities like resilience, which can be assessed through e-modes or input from the students' primary or secondary schools. These are all existing DSA selection practices that schools will continue to utilise.

5. Will DSA schools be allowed to conduct in-person trials and selection if the COVID-19 situation improves?

As the COVID-19 situation is fluid and may change from now till the end of the selection period, we will adopt e-modes of selection for the entire duration of the selection process this year, which is suitable for most scenarios.