



Tuition, Medical and Behaviour Support Service

Exam Contingency Policy

Adopted:	November 2016
Reviewed:	September 2023
Next Review:	September 2024
Responsibility:	Lindsay Crozier

Introduction

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the exam process at Tuition, Medical and Behaviour Support Service. By outlining actions/procedures to be invoked in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our exam process. Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by scenarios contained in the Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This plan complies with JCQ general regulations (section 5) in that: The centre agrees to “have in place a written examination contingency plan/examinations policy which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the senior leadership team to have a robust contingency plan in place, minimising risk to examination administration, should the examinations officer be absent at a crucial stage of the examination cycle;”

Contingency Days 2024 – 6 June and 13 June afternoon only and all day on 26 June 2024 – all students must be available up to and including 26 June 2024

Causes of potential disruption to the exam process

Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

The following are the key tasks involved in the management and administration of the examination cycle which would be at risk in the event of the Examinations Officer being absent:

Planning

- annual data collection exercise not undertaken to collate information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered
- annual exams plan not produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines
- sufficient invigilators not recruited and trained

Entries

- awarding bodies not being informed of early/estimated entries which prompts release of early information required by teaching staff
- candidates not being entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessment
- awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees being incurred

Pre-exams

- exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared
- candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates
- exam/assessment materials and candidates' work not stored under required secure conditions
- internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work not submitted to awarding bodies/external moderators

Exam time

- exams/assessments not taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies
- required reports/requests not submitted to awarding bodies during exam/assessment periods e.g. very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration
- candidates' scripts not dispatched as required to awarding bodies
- Results and post-results
- access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates
- the facilitation of the post-results services

Centre actions:

- Examinations Officer and Examinations Administrator both fully trained in the Examinations Officer role.
- Deputy Business Manager to be trained in Examination processes and procedures.
- All issues to be reported to the Examination Board for further support and advice.
- Communicate any changes to your plans with parents and students

SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle**Criteria for implementation of the plan:**

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the access arrangements process within the exam cycle not undertaken including:

Planning

- candidates not tested/assessed to identify potential access arrangement requirements
- evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working not collated

Pre-exams

- approval for access arrangements not applied for to the awarding body
- modified paper requirements not identified in a timely manner to enable ordering to meet external deadline
- staff providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained

Exam time

- access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

Centre actions:

- Education Centre Managers to cover role with the support of the Specialist Teacher for Access Arrangements
- SLT to support Centre Managers
- Offer administration support to Centre Managers
- Deputy Business Manager to be trained in examination administration
- Communicate any changes to your plans with parents and students

Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

Key tasks not undertaken including:

- Early/estimated entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in pre-release information not being received
- Final entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in:
 - candidates not being entered for exams/assessments or being entered late
 - late or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies
- Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines

Centre actions:

- Education Centre Managers and Subject Co-ordinators to oversee that the above is completed. This may mean movement of students across Centres.
- Advice sought with JCQ and Examination Boards.
- Communicate with parents/carers any issues.

Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open

Key tasks not undertaken including:

- Unable to sit examination paper due to a unexpected crisis including:
 - sickness
 - incident / accident
 - school transport issues

Centre actions:

- Communicate with examination boards at the outset to make them aware of the issue
- Liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with examination boards
- Communicate any changes to your plans with parents and students
- Apply to examination boards for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements

Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams
- Invigilator shortage on peak exam days
- Invigilator absence on the day of an exam

Centre actions:

- All TMBSS staff to be trained as invigilators
- An emergency list of trained staff to be kept

Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre Managers and Exams Officer unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exams timetable planning
- Insufficient rooms available on peak exam days
- Main exam venues unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time

Centre actions:

- Education Centre Managers to identify appropriate rooms within their Centres for the examinations
- Exams Office informed of any clashes/problems with rooms
- Alternative venues to be sourced by Exams Administrator
- Utilisation of all rooms in Education Centres within TMBSS.

Cyber attack

Where it is identified that a cyber attack may compromise any aspect of the delivery of examinations Exams Officer will work with IT and make contact with the relevant Awarding Body to seek further guidance.

Senior Leaders will monitor the situation and take any action required as directed by the Awarding Bodies. Exam Officer & IT Team.

Failure of IT Systems

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

- Internet system failure at final entry deadline
- Internet system failure during exams preparation
- Internet system failure at results release time

Centre actions:

The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue.

Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

Centre closed or candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or study supported time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning

Centre actions:

Centre to communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this

Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

Centre actions:

- A centre which is unable to open as normal for examinations must inform each awarding organisation with which examinations are due to be taken as soon as is possible.
- Other Education Centres to accommodate candidates in agreement with examination boards and alternative site procedures will be followed
- Head of Centre will decide whether the Centre is safe to open, based on advice or instructions from relevant local or national agencies
- Communicate any changes to your plans with parents, carers and students
- Apply to Examination Boards for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements

Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations

Centre actions:

- The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers.
- Find out from the Examination Boards if they're able to organise an alternative courier and time to deliver hard copies
- If the above isn't possible, you will receive electronic access to papers via a secure external network and follow JCQ/Exam Board guidance regarding secure storage.

Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

Centre actions:

- The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue.
- Only make alternative arrangements after approval from the awarding organisation and make sure papers are securely stored until collection
- Ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until collection

Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked

Centre actions:

It is the responsibility of the head of centre to communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s) and subsequently to students and their parents or carers.

Centre unable to distribute results as normal**Criteria for implementation of the plan:**

Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post results services Centres to contact awarding organisations about alternative options.

Centre actions:

- Contact Examination Boards about alternative options
- Make arrangements to access results at an alternative site
- Share facilities with other schools/colleges if possible
- Co-ordinate access to post results services from an alternative site

Disruption to Transport preventing students from reaching Exams Centre.**Criteria for implementation of the plan:**

- Candidates unable to take examinations due to planned lack of transport.
- Candidates unable to take examinations due to sudden disruption to transport.
- Candidates arrive late due to transport problems.

Centre actions:

- Monitor news agencies on a regular basis to identify any potential transportation difficulties.
- Communication with Passenger Transport Services to see if alternative transport can be organised
- Centre to utilise staff vehicles to transport candidates to centre.
- Centre to liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations.
- Centres to offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series.
- Centres to apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements.
- Latecomers to be permitted to take their examinations providing they are within the JCQ regulations.

The JCQ and Examination Boards will designate a 'contingency day' and confirm this to all Centres.. The 'contingency day' is in the event of national or local disruption to examinations in the UK. It is part of the contingency planning for awarding bodies.

Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning

Ofqual Joint Contingency Plan in the event of widespread disruption to the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland
<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents/jcq-joint-contingency-plan>

JCQ Guidance on conducting examinations <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice--instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

Guidance on access arrangements and special consideration <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>