



# **Tuition, Medical and Behaviour Support Service**

## **Exam Contingency Policy**

<b>Adopted:</b>	November 2016
<b>Reviewed:</b>	September 2025
<b>Next Review:</b>	September 2026
<b>Responsibility:</b>	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 2025 – 11 June afternoon only and all day on 25 June 2025 – all students must be available up to and including 25 June 2025**

## **Causes of potential disruption to the exam process**

### **Head of Centre extended absence at key points in the exam process**

#### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

If the head of centre is absent due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances and unable to perform key tasks required for the management and administration of examinations/assessments.

#### **Actions**

- Contact the relevant awarding organisation promptly and follow its instructions
- Designated member of SLT will deputise for the head of centre

### **Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process**

#### **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

### **Actions:**

- Contact the relevant awarding organisation promptly and follow its instructions
- Centre Administrators to be trained
- Examinations Officer and Examinations Administrator both fully trained in the Examinations Officer role.
- 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

#### **Actions:**

- Contact the relevant awarding organisation promptly and follow its instructions
- Exams officer to work with deputy SENCO/member of the SLT to put access arrangements in place
- Look into support from third party assessor (ex-member of staff)
- Communicate any changes to your plans with parents and students

## **Disruption in 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 and staff 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 an 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
- Approach ex-members of TMBSS staff who have previously offered invigilator support if needed

## **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**

The head of centre is responsible for ensuring there are procedures in place to maintain the security of user accounts by:

- Providing training for authorised staff on the importance of creating strong unique passwords and keeping all account details secret
- Providing training for staff on awareness of all types of social engineering/phishing attempts
- Enabling additional security settings wherever possible
- Updating any passwords that may have been exposed
- Setting up secure account recovery options
- Reviewing and managing connected applications
- Monitoring accounts and regularly reviewing account access, including removing access when no longer required
- Ensuring authorised members of staff securely access awarding bodies' online systems, in line with awarding body regulations regarding cyber security and the [JCQ guidance for centres on cyber security](#). (authorised staff will have access, where necessary, to a device which complies with awarding bodies' multi-factor authentication (MFA) requirements)
- Reporting any actual or suspected compromise of an awarding body's online systems immediately to the relevant awarding body
- Where it is identified that a cyber attack may compromise any aspect of the delivery of examinations, the 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.
- Further information on cyber attacks can be found in the TMBSS Cyber Policy.

## **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

### **Actions:**

- Centre to communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this
- Seek advice from relevant awarding organisations and the JCQ
- SLT and Centre Managers to facilitate alternative methods of learning, alternative venues or both
- Prioritise candidates who will be facing examinations/assessments shortly
- Advise candidates, where appropriate, to sit examinations/assessment in the next available series

## **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.
- Seek advice from relevant awarding organisations and the JCQ
- 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.

## **Secure room and the secure storage facility**

### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

Unable to access the secure examination paper storage facility.

### **Centre actions:**

- The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative ways of getting examination papers to Centres.

## **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>