

## Procedure in event that MCQ papers go missing

### Introduction

It is recognised that, on occasion, there will be instances where papers being delivered to exam centres for the MRCS Part A or DO-HNS Part 1 may not arrive at the exam centre at the scheduled time. The procedure below aims to provide a standardised approach across all four colleges in dealing with such a situation.

### 1. College identifies that MCQ papers have not been delivered at the scheduled time

- 1.1. In the first instance, the College affected should investigate the circumstances to establish the nature of the delay.

### 2. If MCQ paper whereabouts are known but delivery is delayed:

- 2.1. The likely delivery date should be established.
- 2.2. If the delivery date is likely to affect the running of the exam, the College should contact the ICBSE office to inform them.
- 2.3. The ICBSE can arrange, if necessary and viable, for an electronic copy of the exam papers and candidate answer sheets to be sent securely to officials at the affected exam centre (using password-protected documents and FTP site). Strict instructions will be given regarding the secure printing of the exam papers and immediate deletion of files.
- 2.4. These papers will be returned to the College after the exam as usual.
- 2.5. The original papers should also be returned to the College as and when they are delivered.

### 3. If MCQ paper whereabouts are unknown:

- 3.1. The College affected should contact the ICBSE office to inform them.
- 3.2. The ICBSE can arrange, if necessary and viable, for an electronic copy of the exam papers and candidate answer sheets to be sent securely to officials at the affected exam centre (using password-protected documents and FTP site). Strict instructions will be given regarding the secure printing of the exam papers and immediate deletion of files.
- 3.3. These papers will be returned to the College after the exam as usual.
- 3.4. The ICBSE office should contact the relevant sub group Chair to inform them of the situation.
- 3.5. The affected College should work with the delivery company to attempt to trace the missing MCQ papers.
- 3.6. If the papers are not found, the standard setting panel for the exam should be informed and pass rates should be analysed to assess if there has been a potential leak.
- 3.7. The original papers should also be returned to the College if they are found, with checks made to confirm that the correct number of papers have been returned and that the papers have not been tampered with.

### 4. If it is established that there has been a security leak of the MCQ papers:

- 4.1. The questions in the affected paper should be removed from the live question bank by the ICBSE office, and efforts should be made to rewrite them before they can be used again.
- 4.2. Security measures for the exam centre/College involved should be reviewed to minimise risk of incident recurring.