SINGAPORE: University students worried about possible MRT service disruption during their examination periods can be assured safety nets have been put in place by their respective institutions.

Service disruption during peak hours on the Circle Line on Wednesday morning and East-West Line on Tuesday morning has sparked concern among some university students, whose exams are ongoing or around the corner.

Examinations are ongoing at the Singapore Management University (SMU), while the National University of Singapore (NUS) and the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) will hold theirs from Thursday and Friday respectively.

SMU Business Management student Normen Goh said: "I do not think it's fair for the school to make special allowances for students who are late because of a train disruption, because that allowance might be abused."

Mr Goh added: "Given the high rate of MRT breakdowns these days, I would definitely
head for school much earlier before my paper. Unfortunately, if it's a morning paper at 8.30am, the only reliable way to ensure I arrive on time is to drive to school, but it would be costly to do so."

An SMU spokesperson told channelnewsasia.com the institution is monitoring the transport situation closely, in light of the recent disruptions.

"The university will take into consideration special cases whereby the delay in reaching the examination venue is due to unforeseen circumstances and valid evidence is produced to support students' cases," the spokesperson said.

"For example, students who are affected by the recent MRT train disruption during peak hours will be given the full examination time to complete their exams. If this is not possible, then special consideration will be given to these students in the assessment of their final exams."

Meanwhile, NTU Business School undergraduate Kenneth Teng, who lives in Pasir Ris, said he plans to stay over at a friend's place during his exam period.

"I cannot afford any MRT disruption especially since it takes me two-and-a-half hours to get to NTU (in Boon Lay). A taxi trip to school would cost me a bomb," Mr Teng said.

"I hope NTU can implement a shuttle service at various station points such as Tampines, Yishun and Kovan to allow students staying in the east or north to get to school on time, in case of a disruption."

When contacted, NTU registrar Chan Kwong Lok said NTU has informed the MRT operators about its upcoming exams from April 20 to May 4.

"They have kindly agreed to alert us if there are any service disruptions during this period. In the event of a major train disruption, NTU would consider making alternative arrangements for late-comers," Mr Chan said.

Generally, university students are not allowed to enter the examination hall more than an hour after the start of a paper.

In NUS, faculty administrators for exams will be reminded about the standard procedures to be taken in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

"As part of the university's standard procedures for the administration of examinations, the start time of an examination may be delayed by up to 30 minutes in the event of unforeseen events such as inclement weather and untoward traffic situations which are reported in reliable media sources," an NUS spokesperson said.

"Students who are late for exams are allowed to enter the examination hall within one hour after the start of the examination."

- CNA/wk