

Examination Contingency Plan

Smith's Wood Academy

Part of Fairfax Multi-Academy Trust

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SWA EXAMINATION CONTINGENCY PLAN 2024 -25

This plan has been written to mitigate any incident that could be identified and occur. This includes having communication plans for external parties ([Ofqual General Condition of Recognition A6](#)).

Externally awarded examinations can take place at various points in the year, with the vast majority taking place during the summer series.

Our school day begins for students at 8.15am and concludes at 3pm

Our exams officer is on site between 7.30am – 4pm each day

The Local authority, SWA staff, FMAT Trust staff, external agencies and SWA staff have senior leader contact details if any incident requires to enact this policy.

To enact this plan, contact:

Head of Academy contact information: s.huntington@smithswood.fmat.co.uk or call: 0121 788 4100
Or the Vice Principal or the HOA PA.

Further to this you can contact:

a.best.gov@fmat.co.uk (Chair of the Trust Board of Directors and member of local governing body for SWA)

All communication will go through the Head of Centre.

- Information will be shared and disseminated through the exams officer, senior leader line manager for exams and Head of Year 11.
- Trust support will be sought as required.

1. In the event of disruption

1. Contact the relevant awarding organisation promptly and follow its instructions.
2. Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether your centre is able to open.
3. Identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation, ensuring the secure transportation of question papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue. (appendix 1)
4. Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.

5. In the event of an evacuation during an examination please refer to JCQ's Centre emergency evacuation procedure (See appendix 2).

6. Communicate with students, parents and carers any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.

7. Communicate with any external assessors, invigilators or relevant third parties regarding any changes to the exam or assessment timetable.

2. After the exam

1. Consider whether any students' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply to the relevant awarding organisation for special consideration.

2. Advise students, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date.

- this will be communicated via MCAS and phone calls will follow this up.

3. Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.

- the exams officer will keep all secure material in the secure cupboard.

4. Return scripts to awarding organisations in line with their instructions. Never make alternative arrangements for the transportation of completed exam scripts, unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.

3. Wider communications

The regulators, [Ofqual](#) in England, will share timely and accurate information, as required, with awarding organisations, government departments and other stakeholders.

The [DfE in England](#), will inform the relevant government ministers as soon as it becomes apparent that there will be significant local or national disruption, and ensure that they are kept updated until the matter is resolved.

Awarding organisations will alert relevant professional bodies or employer groups if the impact of disruption particularly affects them.

This communication will come from our CEO and Director of Education via the HOA (Head of Academy).

4. Widespread national disruption to the taking of examinations or assessments

As education is devolved, in the event of any widespread sustained national disruption (eg. Covid 19) to examinations or assessments, national government departments will communicate with regulators, awarding organisations and centres prior to a public announcement. Regulators will provide advice to government departments on implications for examinations and assessments, including exam timetables.

In September 2023, Ofqual and the DfE published [joint consultation decisions on long-term resilience arrangements](#). As in 2023, Ofqual has provided [guidance on collecting evidence of student performance to ensure resilience in the qualifications system](#) for students entering GCSEs, AS and A levels, the Advanced Extension Award and Project qualifications. For VTQs and other qualifications used alongside or instead of GCSEs, AS and A levels, awarding organisations will provide guidance where needed and will contact schools and colleges with more information.

The DfE has updated its guidance on [handling strike action in schools](#) in England in light of the industrial action in 2023. The guidance recommends schools should prioritise the running of examinations and assessments on any strike days and should review their contingency plans to make this happen. Schools, colleges and other exam centres must speak to the relevant awarding organisations if they are expecting any disruption that might affect the sitting of exams and assessments.

- *The vast majority of our invigilators are non teachers.*
- *We also train some of our admin staff and cover supervisors so that we have sufficient staff to accommodate change or external emergencies.*

[What schools, colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

5. Wellbeing & Safeguarding

Every emergency is different. In all cases, you should consider educational and wellbeing impacts before taking any actions. You should do your best to minimise the amount and length of any disruption to education or childcare. This includes maximising the number of children, pupils and students who are in face-to-face provision.

Our wellbeing lead for staff at Trust is Debbie Bunn: d.bunn@fmat.co.uk

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children remains of paramount importance. You must continue to follow any statutory safeguarding guidance that applies to you and your setting.

To contact our safeguarding team email: safeguarding@smithswood.fmat.co.uk

Our DSL is Kate Tucker: k.tucker@smithswood.fmat.co.uk

6. Health & Safety

This guidance does not cover every aspect of what settings should do in relation to emergency planning. You must comply with your legal responsibilities, including under health and safety law. You should get legal advice as needed.

Head of Academy: s.huntington@smithswood.fmat.co.uk Steve Huntington

Health and safety lead: b.fox@fmat.co.uk Brian Fox

Trust link for H&S: j.fitzgerald@fmat.co.uk John Fitzgerald

BAM are our external facilities provider for the site. John Fitzgerald has the contact details for this service regarding out of hours.

Each morning when entering the site BAM have a duty site manager who works closely with the academy leaders to communicate any issues that have or may be arising. The main office and office manager have a direct radio link to this team to report any emergencies or site issues.

7. FIRE / Evacuation

We practice our fire drill as a minimum once a term. We brief students on what to do in an evacuation.

If an evacuation occurs during an exam series or assessment, students will follow the invigilator instructions and walk out in silence. They will line up on the grass near the muga but away from the rest of the school.

Digital devices which have been collected will remain in the building and will not be redistributed in an emergency to students.

Invigilators stay with students, alongside the exams officer and the senior leader responsible for examinations.

Students will return to the exam hall, with JCQ paper work completed to report the incident.

The exams officer will contact the exam board for guidance after the evacuation.

8. Loss of power/telecoms

As our MIS system is in the cloud, the system is still accessible by hot-spotting. This allows constant communication with parents and carers at all times using MCAS messages.

RM are our IT providers and will be contacted by the Head of centre or whom he delegates to get regular updates by our account manager.

Head of Academy: s.huntington@smithswood.fmat.co.uk Steve Huntington

Trust link for RM network provider: j.fitzgerald@fmat.co.uk John Fitzgerald

9. Cyber / data breach

In this instance, we will follow our Data Breach Notification Procedure which can be found in the FMAT trust policies folder on the U:Drive.

Rob Fitzgerald is our DPO for the TRUST: r.fitzgerald@fmat.co.uk

10. Emergency alerts

The government's emergency alerts system will send alerts to all compatible 4G and 5G devices in England if there's a danger to life nearby. You'll be able to [check an alert is genuine](#).

Find out [how emergency alerts work](#) and the reasons why people may get an alert.

You should review your emergency plans to include relevant processes in case of an emergency alert in your area.

11. Severe weather

In the event of extreme heat, the academy will adjust school uniform to make the exam room more comfortable eg. Remove ties, blazers
If required external air coolers may be sought.

In the event of extreme cold, we will liaise with BAM to make sure the rooms are adequately heated. If required, external heaters may be sought.

12. Sharing information

This policy will be shared with staff annually and used as part of the training for new induction of invigilators.

As a Trust we have a strong network of exams staff which meet and share practice over the academic year.

The exams officer is encouraged to attend all national exam updates annually and regularly complete best practice exams officer training to bring back to the academy.

13. Loss of assessment/ exam due to an emergency

If a student misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency, or other event, outside of the student's control happens we will work closely with the families.

- Students who are not on the centre premises by 8.30am / 12.30pm on the day of exams will have calls made by the pastoral team and safeguarding team to ascertain the delay.
- Students are provided with key staff emails in the academy so we can be contacted at all times.
- The exams officer will contact JCQ and relevant exam boards for advice and guidance on a case by case basis.

14. Loss of exam paper

We will follow our malpractice policy and Staff code of conduct policy.

The HOA will be informed and the appropriate awarding body for guidance.

Fact finding will take place and inform next steps in conjunction with the above policies and exam boards.

Appendix 1

Disruption – venue change

Currently our main sports hall holds the majority of our external exams. We also use smaller classrooms to accommodate those students with identified needs or exam requirements.

In the event we could not use the sports hall we would then relocate to (in order of priority):

1. The theatre which can hold the vast majority of a year group.
2. The school gym which can hold a large majority of a year group

We also have a staffroom that can accommodate 2 large classes (dependent on the exam).

In the event of an emergency where the centre would need to close such as flooding etc we would use an alternative centre Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst. This would require booking coaches and communicating to students and families in advance of the exams.

This would be communicated to parents and staff via MCAS and email.

Students would need to arrive at 7.45am so we could transport students to one of our Trust schools prior to the 9am start.

At 7.45am we would collect mobile devices of SWA students prior to boarding coaches. This would then make the arrival at any new centre smoother and faster.

Appendix 2

Smith's Wood Academy 2025-26 Emergency evacuation procedure for examinations

When dealing with emergencies you **must** be aware of any instructions from relevant local or national agencies.

In an emergency such as a fire alarm or a bomb alert, the invigilator **must** take the following action:

- stop the candidates from writing;
- collect the attendance register (in order to ensure all candidates are present) and evacuate the examination room in line with the instructions given by the appropriate authority;
- advise candidates to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room. Candidates **must** be advised to close their answer booklet;
- ensure the candidates leave the room in silence;
- ensure candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room so that there is no discussion about the examination;
- make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted;
- allow the candidates the remainder of the working time set for the examination once it resumes;
- if there are only a few candidates, consider the possibility of taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination;
- make a full report of the incident and of the action taken and send to the relevant awarding body.
- Students to stand in silence on the grass area by the assembly point in silence with invigilators and a member for SLT and exams officer.

Appendix 3

Absence of Exams officer, Head of centre, SENCo or relevant senior leaders.

In the event of the Exams Officer being away from the Academy, Scott Friswell (Vice Principal) will be point of contact and will be responsible for any exam related matter.
Scott Friswell – Vice Principal: s.friswell@smithswood.fmat.co.uk

In the event of Head of Centre being away from the Academy, Scott Friswell (Vice Principal) or Nagina Munawar (Vice Principal) will be point of contact and will be responsible for any exam related matter.

Scott Friswell – Vice Principal: s.friswell@smithswood.fmat.co.uk

Nagina Munawar – Vice Principal n.munawar@smithswood.co.uk

In the event that one of the SENCo leads was absent, the other would be the point of contact and will be responsible for Access arrangements and any exam related matters.

Emma Douglas – Head of Inclusion – e.douglas@smithswood.fmat.co.uk

Chris Hanks-Sedman – SENCo – c.hankssedman@smithswood.fmat.co.uk