



Human Resources

ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The University's normal practice is to remain open during adverse weather and to ensure that disruption caused to its services remains minimal.
- 1.2 The University recognise that, during periods of extreme adverse weather, or when there are significant disruptions to public transport, employees may face difficulties in attending their place of work and returning home.
- 1.3 The University is committed to protecting the health and safety its employees and asks that all employees have due regard for their own safety and the safety of others in the event of adverse weather conditions.
- 1.4 The aim of this Policy is to outline the responsibilities of employees for attendance at work during extreme adverse weather conditions or when there are significant disruptions to public transport and to confirm appropriate procedures.
- 1.5 The policy outlines procedures for employees and line managers to follow to ensure that a fair and transparent process is in place when making decisions regarding absence relating to adverse weather conditions.
- 1.6 Where contacting the University under this policy an employee should make contact by telephone. Other methods of contact, such as text message, should only be used if contact by telephone is not possible.
- 1.7 In a situation where an employee's line manager is unavailable, the employee should contact an appropriate manager in the department. The manager may make decisions as outlined in this policy, as if they were the line manager.
- 1.8 This Policy applies to all employees. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants or self-employed contractors.
- 1.9 This Policy is non-contractual and may be amended from time to time.

2 REASONABLE EFFORTS TO ATTEND WORK

- 2.1 Employees should use their best endeavours to attend work at their normal time in all circumstances. This may include leaving extra time for the journey and/or taking an alternative route, or using an alternative means of transport. However, it is not the University's intention that employees put themselves at unnecessary risk when trying to attend work. Employees should use their own judgment and, if unable to attend work, contact their line manager as soon as possible.

3 WHEN THIS POLICY WILL APPLY

- 3.1 This Policy shall apply when extreme adverse weather conditions occur or when there are significant disruptions to public transport.

4 ADVERSE CONDITIONS OR SIGNIFICANT DISRUPTIONS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT OCCURRING AT THE START OF A WORKING DAY

- 4.1 Employees unable to attend work or delayed by extreme adverse weather conditions or significant disruptions to public transport should contact their line manager as soon as possible and before the employee's normal start time.
- 4.2 Employees who are unable to attend work should check the situation throughout the day in case it improves. If conditions improve sufficiently, employees should report this to their line manager and attend work unless told otherwise.
- 4.3 Employees who do not make reasonable efforts to attend work on time or who fail to contact their line manager without good reason may be subject to disciplinary proceedings for misconduct. The University will consider all the circumstances including; the distance the employee has to travel, weather conditions in the employee's location, the status of roads and/or public transport, and the efforts made by other employees in similar circumstances.

5 LATENESS

- 5.1 Employees who are delayed will have the opportunity to make up this time on the day in question or within a reasonable time. However, if the lateness is negligible, having regards to the severity of the weather conditions or disruptions to public transport and the employee's personal circumstances, and the manager is satisfied that the employee made a genuine attempt to arrive on time, the line manager may agree to waive this requirement.
- 5.2 If lateness amounts to half the time of the employee's normal working day or more, the provisions in relation to absence below will apply.

6 ABSENCE

- 6.1 If an employee has made all reasonable efforts to get to work but failed to do so because of extreme adverse weather conditions or significant disruptions to public transport, it is the responsibility of the employee's line manager to make a decision as to whether or not the employee should:
 - 6.1.1 be required to work from home;
 - 6.1.2 take the time as annual leave; or
 - 6.1.3 make up for the time at a later date.
- 6.2 When making this decision the line manager should take into account the employee's circumstances (i.e. distance from their home to work and the mode of transport), the needs of the University and the employee's views.
- 6.3 When these options are not available or where the line manager sees fit, the employee may, with the consent of their line manager:
 - 6.3.1 be paid as if they had attended work; or
 - 6.3.2 take unpaid leave and a deduction will be made from the employee's wages.

7 SCHOOL CLOSURES AND OTHER UNEXPECTED ISSUES

- 7.1 In an emergency situation involving a dependent, an employee has the right to take unpaid time off.
- 7.2 In the context of extreme adverse weather conditions and significant transport disruption, situations could include:
- school is closed and an employee cannot leave their child
 - caring arrangements for a disabled relative are cancelled
- 7.3 The employee should talk to their line manager as soon as they know that they may need to take time off, explaining:
- exactly what the issue is
 - the likely length of the absence
 - that they are taking the time off to look after dependants.
- 7.4 The line manager and employee may agree that this time can be taken as annual leave to avoid any deduction in pay, or make the time up at a later date.

8 ADVERSE CONDITIONS OR SIGNIFICANT DISRUPTIONS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT DURING THE COURSE OF A WORKING DAY

- 8.1 It is the University's opinion that an employee is best placed to identify whether there is a need to leave work early in the event of adverse weather conditions, taking into account their individual circumstances (i.e. distance from home to work and mode of transport) and local weather reports.
- 8.2 In such cases, it is the responsibility of the employee's line manager, taking into account the amount of working hours left in the day, the employee's circumstances and the needs of the University, to make a decision, in consultation with the employee, as to whether or not the employee should:
- 8.2.1 be required to work from home;
 - 8.2.2 take the time as annual leave;
 - 8.2.3 make up for the time at a later date
 - 8.2.4 be paid as if she/he attended work; or
 - 8.2.5 take unpaid leave and a deduction will be made from the employee's wages.

9 HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 9.1 Whilst the University will ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all its employees, employees are reminded of their duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions. This includes taking extra care when travelling to and from work in adverse weather conditions.

10 TEACHING COMMITMENTS

10.1 The cancellation of classes should always be a last resort. In the event that a member of teaching staff is unable to get to campus due to adverse weather, they should endeavour to ensure that where possible, classes are covered by colleagues. If this is not possible, teaching staff should follow the arrangements detailed in the Class Cancellation Policy:

<https://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/classcancellationpolicy.pdf>

11 CLOSURE OF A UNIVERSITY SITE

11.1 In the rare event of closure of one of the University sites due to adverse weather, and if it is not possible to work from an alternative site, consideration will be given to the options outlined in Section 6 of the policy. If the University takes the decision to close all sites, employees will receive normal pay for the period of closure.

12 STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

12.1 In the event of adverse weather conditions, the University will endeavour to provide employees with regular updates regarding the University sites and share links to useful resources regarding local weather conditions and travel information, to help inform employees of the current situation.

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