



Human Resources

Procedure for working arrangements during adverse weather and/or travel disruption

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1. Introduction

The University recognises the importance of having a procedure in place to support our staff during instances of adverse weather and/or travel disruption.

We are committed to providing an environment that supports the wellbeing, safety and health of our staff; and reflects our values of academic excellence, community, professionalism, integrity and inclusiveness.

During instances of adverse weather and/or travel disruption, there may be times when it is necessary to be more flexible in the approach to working arrangements. This includes where work is undertaken, and the time staff may arrive at or leave work.

Whilst striving to keep resulting disruption to its services to a minimum, particularly to frontline services and learning and teaching activity for students, the University's

primary concern is for the wellbeing, safety and health of its staff and anyone undertaking work for or on behalf of the University.

This document outlines the arrangements that should be applied under such circumstances.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all staff and anyone undertaking work for or on behalf of the University. Hereinafter referred to as staff.

The intention of the procedure is to promote fairness and consistency in the treatment applied during periods of adverse weather and/or travel disruption, and to:

- Outline expectations and responsibilities.
- Set out our approach and the procedure to be followed.
- Set out how resulting absences may be managed.

We recognise that the situations covered in this document will affect everyone differently. While the intention is for a consistent approach to be applied, we recognise that this may vary depending on individual circumstances.

3. Key Principles

The procedure applies when there are adverse weather conditions and/or disruption to travel that impact upon staff being able to safely travel to and/or from work. For example:

- Adverse weather, such as heavy snow, ice, fog, floods, high winds, extreme heat.
- Disruption to private or public transport, including overseas travel.

3.1 Accounting for time

Where the member of staff demonstrates they have explored all options, but remains unable to get safely into work, arrives late, has to leave early, and/or is unable to work from home/suitable alternative location, a discussion should take place with the line manager.

Following these discussions, it will be line manager discretion as to how the time will be accounted for. This may be:

- Paid leave (i.e. special leave)
- Making up for lost time, on a date(s) to be agreed with the line manager (within a reasonable time - usually within one month)

- Using annual leave
- Using lieu time, for staff who worked fixed hours and are eligible to claim TOIL
- Taking authorised unpaid leave

Whilst an individual's preference will be considered, it is the line manager who retains overall discretion on the way in which time will be accounted for.

On a case-by-case basis, the line manager should ascertain and take into account all relevant information. For example:

- Severity of conditions, including conditions local to the member of staff if necessary.
- Weather advice/advisability of travel including guidance that has been cascaded by the University, and the proposed time frame the disruption will continue for.
- Individual needs/circumstances and the fact they can differ.
- The nature of the role, i.e. whether it can be undertaken remotely.

Above all, the wellbeing, safety and health of all concerned will take priority.

Line managers should ensure consideration is given to members of staff with disabilities and/or health conditions which may further impact on their ability to travel safely to or from work during adverse weather conditions and/or travel disruption.

Further advice and support may be sought from your local HR.

3.2. Decisions made at University level

When deemed necessary, the University will make the decision, as opposed to local decisions, regarding how staff are expected to respond to a particular incident. For example, to close the premises in extreme weather, and will communicate to all staff the steps to be taken.

Following any such University decision, for example, when staff are required to finish early or not travel into work, there will be no loss of pay or requirement to make up the time. However, if authorised and able to work from home or a suitable alternative location, there will be an expectation for this to happen.

Staff engaged in what are deemed to be essential services, for example Security, may be asked, where they can safely do so, to work on University premises during periods of closure. Individual discussions should be held, and any necessary risk assessments undertaken to ensure the safety of anyone required to travel/remain on campus.

The University will implement any necessary procedures for ensuring the safety on campus/sites during any adverse weather events; for example, undertaking gritting.

3.3. Overseas travel disruption

Staff stranded whilst on holiday

Staff stranded overseas, for example, due to travel disruption and who cannot return to work on the expected date, are required to notify their line manager at the earliest opportunity and where possible, before the date they were due to return to work.

They should make every reasonable effort to safely return to the UK, at the earliest opportunity, and keep their line manager updated.

Discussion should take place between the staff member and their line manager regarding the circumstances and how the time should be treated. Advice and support are available from local HR.

Staff stranded whilst on a business trip

The University will do all it can to advise and/or assist members of staff who are stranded overseas on University business, within the remit of the University's Travel and Subsistence policy.

In the event of an emergency, incident, delay, or travel disruption, 24-hour support is available, seven-days a week, from the University's appointed Travel Management Company 'Key Travel'.

Where agreed between the line manager and the staff member, staff should undertake any duties that can be done remotely. Where it is not possible to work remotely, discussions should take place as to how the time will be treated. Advice and support are available from local HR.

3.4. Disruption to carer arrangements

Where normal carer arrangements have been disrupted, or schools/nurseries are closed without warning, or at short notice, for example, late in the day prior to disruption or on the day, suitable alternative carer/childcare arrangements should be explored. Alternatively, staff may refer to the University's 'Time off for carers and domestic reasons policy'

If there is the potential for the disruption to last longer than one day, then it is the member of staff's responsibility to ensure suitable alternative arrangements are in place for as long as required.

Where a member of staff is not able to make suitable alternative carer arrangements, this should be discussed with their line manager as soon as possible, in advance of their next scheduled shift/start time.

4. Responsibilities

Staff member

It is the responsibility of the member of staff to:

- Familiarise themselves with the principles and procedure as outlined in this document.
- Proactively engage with their line manager to meet responsibilities under this procedure.
- Follow the procedure and comply with any required timescales.
- Explore safe alternative travel options for getting to work if their regular mode of transport has been disrupted, is unavailable or unsafe.
- Take care of their own wellbeing, safety and health and that of any other person who may be affected. This includes taking extra care during adverse weather conditions.

Management

It is the responsibility of management to:

- Familiarise themselves with the principles and procedure as outlined in this document, before engaging with a member of staff.
- Seek clarification/guidance from their Head of School/Service or local HR where appropriate.
- Make staff aware of this procedure document and provide guidance where necessary.
- Proactively engage with their member of staff to meet responsibilities under this procedure.
- Approach the matter positively, fairly and consistently.
- Act with due regard to the wellbeing, safety and health of all concerned.

Human Resources

It is the responsibility of Human Resources to:

- Familiarise themselves with the principles and procedures as outlined in this document.

- Take a proactive role to ensure compliance and the consistent and fair application of the procedure across the University, managing or escalating concerns accordingly.
- Provide advice, guidance and support to managers and staff on the application of the procedure, as required.

5. Procedure

Where on campus working is a requirement of the role, we trust that our staff will make every reasonable effort to travel to work, without putting their personal safety or the safety of others at risk.

Staff should use their own judgement to assess whether it is safe and reasonable to travel to work. They should seek official weather/travel advice, for example, from weather centres, travel update services, when necessary and before attempting to travel, where possible.

If unable to get safely to work, or arrive on time, where practicable and safe to do so, staff should notify their line manager before their normal start time.

Staff should discuss and agree alternative working arrangements with their line manager, including whether working from home or a suitable alternative location is possible/practicable. The nature of the role and individual circumstances should be considered.

Staff should check the situation throughout the day in case the weather situation or disruption improves, and it potentially becomes safe to travel, keeping their line manager updated. If it does become possible and safe to travel, staff should discuss this with their line manager to agree whether the journey onto campus is required.

Section 3.1 sets out how time may be accounted for.

Where adverse weather and/or travel disruption persists into the following working day(s) and staff remain unable to safely travel to work or there remains a risk they will be late for work, it is important they keep in contact with their line manager to discuss and agree the action that should be taken.

Where the time away from work may be prolonged, and the work cannot be undertaken at home, it is recommended that discussions take place as to how work will be covered, and the time should be treated.

Weather conditions/travel disruption that develop during the course of the working day

Where adverse weather conditions and/or travel disruption develop during the working day, staff should use their own judgement to assess whether it is necessary for them to leave work early. For example, they should consider:

- Weather forecasts and the severity of conditions (in all locations as relevant).
- Official travel information/advice and any guidance from the University.
- Their individual circumstances, for example, disabilities and/or health conditions which may further impact on their ability to travel home safely during adverse weather conditions and/or travel disruption.

The wellbeing, safety and health of all concerned will always take priority.

Where an individual deems it necessary to leave work early, before doing so, they should inform their line manager or another manager. Where a manager is not available, they can contact their local HR team and make them aware.

If staff leave work early, they may be required to work remotely where possible. Where work cannot be undertaken remotely, line manager discretion will apply; please see section 3.1.

6. Supporting Information

Further advice about this procedure is available from the local Human Resources Teams.

During periods of adverse weather and/or travel disruption, staff should consult the 'For Staff' website for University communications, updates, and further guidance.

Information and guidance on weather conditions and safe travelling, may be available from sources such as weather centres, travel update services, public transport and motoring organisations, the police and local radio stations.

7. Equality Statement

We are committed to fostering a supportive working environment that promotes equality, diversity and inclusion in which everyone has the freedom to contribute and flourish based upon their merits, abilities and potential.