

# SEVERE WEATHER - Guidance

## 1. INTRODUCTION

It is recognised that severe weather conditions, such as snow, extreme winds or flooding, may occasionally make it problematic for staff to travel to work.

This guidance clarifies expectations on attendance at work where weather conditions cause disruption to normal travel arrangements, and on how resulting absences will be dealt with where normal working becomes impossible.

## 2. PRINCIPLES

.1 It is expected that all staff will make every reasonable effort to get to work. Where normal travel arrangements have broken down, all possible alternatives should be explored, including, where distance and fitness permit, walking.

.2 Notwithstanding the above, the University recognises that health & safety considerations are of paramount importance, and staff should not take unnecessary risks.

.3 Where any individual member of staff is unable to get to work, or are likely to be significantly delayed, they must inform their line manager at the earliest opportunity, and, if appropriate, give an indication of expected arrival time.

.4 Where a member of staff arrives at work late due to severe weather conditions they will not be required to make up the lost time and will not suffer any loss of pay.

.5 Where attendance at the normal workplace is not possible at all there is no automatic entitlement to payment for the absence. Staff may be required, where possible, to work from an alternative location, which may include their own home.

.6 Where it is not possible to undertake any work from an alternative location, the individual must agree with his/her line manager how the absence will be treated and whether it will be paid or unpaid.

## 3. GUIDANCE IN DETAIL

### 3.1 Severe weather overnight causing disruption at the start of the day

Staff should make every effort to get to work. If they normally travel by car and are unable to then they should try alternative arrangements, e.g. public transport. If a regular bus or train service is not operating then it may be possible to get a later service, use a different operator or get to an alternative bus stop or station which is unaffected by the disruption.

Staff who live within a reasonable distance and who are fit and able, may be able to walk to work.

Where every effort has been made to attend work and an individual arrives after their normal starting time they will not be penalised. No deduction from pay will be made and they will not be required to make up the lost time.

Where the nature of the individual's work allows and where appropriate facilities are available, it may be possible for individuals, with the agreement of their manager, to work at home.

Alternatively, it may be possible to get to another suitable location where appropriate facilities are available to enable normal working.

Where it is clear that travel to work will be problematic, the member of staff must telephone his/her line manager at the earliest opportunity to advise them of the situation and discuss whether it is possible to undertake any work at home or at an alternative location.

Where attendance at work is not possible and work cannot be undertaken elsewhere, the individual should agree with their line manager how to treat the absence for payment purposes. The following options should be considered:

1) Annual Leave

In most instances a day's annual leave will be used, and, if the full year's leave entitlement has already been exhausted, it will be acceptable for a day to be brought forward from the next leave year.

2) Time in Lieu

Alternatively, the individual member of staff may elect to take the absence as time in lieu and make up any lost time on days/dates as agreed with their line manager.

3) Authorised Unpaid Leave

As an alternative to the above, and subject to the agreement of the line manager, the individual may elect to take the day as unpaid leave. The manager will notify payroll accordingly and an appropriate deduction will be made from normal salary.

4) Family Leave

Where attendance at work is not possible because of the unavailability of child/dependant care eg closure of a school, an individual may request family leave, subject to a maximum of 3 days in any one year. Such leave will not normally be granted on consecutive days and if the situation persists or family leave has been exhausted; option 1, 2 or 3 should be followed.

Records of the absence should be retained in line with normal reporting arrangements.

### **3.2 Severe weather conditions occurring during the working day**

Where severe weather conditions develop during the course of the working day, and it appears that staff may have difficulty in travelling home, it will be for the Vice-Chancellor (or a nominated deputy) to decide whether to send staff home early.

In making such a decision, due regard will be given to advice and information from appropriate sources, e.g. local radio, police and motoring organisations.

Where a decision is made to send staff home before the end of the normal working day no deduction from pay will be made.

Where the severe weather conditions persist until the next working day, the provisions at 3.1 above should be followed.