

**Edinburgh Napier University**  
**Adverse Weather/Major Travel Disruption Guidance – December 2022**

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## **Introduction**

1. This guidance is intended to provide advice of a general nature to assist the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on how to manage adverse weather situations and general disruption to transport.
2. The guidance is also intended for all staff who would be expected to be in the workplace and for whom hybrid working is not normally an option. It outlines the process and options in the event of difficulties experienced in attending work due to adverse weather or general disruption to transport are outlined.
3. We recognise that staff may face difficulties travelling to and from the workplace during severe weather conditions, disruptions to public transport or when government guidance impacts transport/travel. If your normal mode of transport cannot be used to get to work, you should explore alternative means of safe transport.
4. Although we expect staff to make a reasonable effort to attend work in all circumstances, it is not our intention for staff to put themselves at unnecessary risk. However, the University has a responsibility to ensure business continuity during periods of major disruption. It is therefore necessary that plans are put in place to address situations where disruptions affect the ability of staff travelling to work.

## **Key Principles**

5. This guidance is based on the principle that staff have made a genuine effort to attend work. However, they should not attempt to travel if it is not safe to do so, and by doing so would put themselves or others at risk.
6. Managers may also have to consider individual requests from staff with caring responsibilities or a disability which may present an additional barrier to attend work in severe weather conditions, disruptions to public transport or when government guidance impacts transport/travel.
7. When adverse weather is anticipated and where the Met Office have issued a severe weather warning of amber or above, the Director of People & Services in liaison with the Director of Marketing & External Relations will take the decision to communicate this risk to staff and students.



8. Staff should assume that the University will be deemed to be open unless a specific email is publicised via the University website, or via an email from either the Director of People & Services or the Principal & Vice Chancellor. The decision to close the University (all or in part) will only ever be taken by either the Director of People & Services or the Principal & Vice Chancellor.
9. If, as the situation develops, it appears that the University may need to close, the Silver team as per the University's Crisis Response Plan (CRP) may wish to assemble to coordinate activity.

### **When will this apply?**

10. This policy will apply when there are severe weather conditions, major disruptions to public transport or when government guidance impacts transport/travel, and it makes it difficult for staff to travel safely to and from the workplace. This policy will not apply where a high volume of traffic causing delays or disruption to public transport is a normal or regular occurrence, or which can be reasonably anticipated.
11. Examples of circumstances where this guidance may be used include but are not limited to:
  - Severe snowfall, flooding or other extreme weather conditions, which make travelling hazardous or cause road closures
  - The use of transport, either public or private is severely affected by the weather
  - The use of public transport is severely affected due to strike action, national holidays or government guidance to stay at home e.g. pandemic

### **Risks**

12. The following risks will be considered in advance of implementing this guidance and will be actively monitored throughout the duration of the event:
  - Safety of staff and students
  - Availability of public transport
  - Safety of buildings and surrounds
  - Nursery/school closures
  - Availability of internal services
  - Ongoing weather forecast
  - Police travel/general advice
  - Government guidance
  - Intelligence or information received from social media



## **Health & Safety (Severe Weather)**

13. We have a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of all our staff. Staff also have a duty to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of any other person who may be affected by their actions or omissions This includes taking extra care when travelling to and from the workplace in severe weather conditions.

## **Travelling to and from Work**

14. If travel arrangements are affected by adverse weather or disruptions to public transport, then it is expected that staff will make every effort to attend work by making alternative arrangements. All possible travel options should be considered. For example:

- If public transport is still optional, then it would be expected that staff should use this mode of transport
- Altering their times of travel to allow for roads to be cleared
- Using alternative routes
- Car sharing with colleagues
- Working from home – please see guidance below

## **Hybrid/Remote Working**

15. Staff that are expected in the workplace should make a reasonable effort to attend. However, if it is not safe to do so, if they can, they should work from home. This decision should be shared with their manager at the earliest convenience. Where their line manager is satisfied that they have made every reasonable effort to attend work but have been unable to do so due to severe weather or transport disruptions, they will be required to work remotely until the situation has improved. If staff are in a role that does not facilitate hybrid/remote working, they should follow the guidance set out below.

## **Lateness**

16. If a member of staff is late arriving to work due to severe weather or disruptions to travel, they should contact their manager as soon as reasonably practical to inform them of the delay. If a genuine effort has been made to arrive to work on time and remain in contact, then there will be no deduction in pay for lost time.

## **Absence**

17. Where a line manager is satisfied that a member of staff has made every reasonable effort to attend work but have been unable to do so due to severe weather conditions or



public transport disruption, and they cannot work remotely, if they have contacted their manager as soon as possible to let them know that they will not be able to get to work, they will not have any time deducted.

### **Campus Closures**

18. In exceptional circumstances and under the direction of the Director of People & Services, a Campus of the University or the University as a whole may need to be closed. If it is not possible for staff to work remotely, paid leave for a maximum of three working days will be given. If the situation lasts more than three days, further instruction and guidance will be provided which could include where it is not possible to work at home or there is no requirement for further work at home, that accrued flexi-leave, annual leave or unpaid leave is utilised.

### **Early Release**

19. If the University is open and either the weather conditions deteriorate or there is major travel disruption expected, staff should only leave once approval has been sought from their Dean of School or Director, or when an announcement has been made by either the Director of People & Services or Principal & Vice Chancellor.

20. If staff are sent home early and assuming their manager agrees to this course of action, any loss of time will be managed by giving consideration to the policies noted above (flexitime, paid holiday, time-off-in-lieu or unpaid leave).

21. In the case of worsening weather, or particularly hazardous driving conditions, where an employee is concerned about travelling home, the Dean of School/Director should make a judgement call to allow staff to go home in advance of any announcement made.

### **School or Nursery Closures**

22. Where schools or nurseries close as a result of bad weather or major disruption, and staff are unexpectedly required to provide or arrange care for a dependent then the Time off for Dependents policy will apply.



### **Managers' Responsibilities**

23. The Director of People & Services will issue an email that this guidance will take effect. Managers should then ensure that their staff have been made aware as soon as possible, please be mindful of staff that do not have regular access to a PC/laptop.
  
24. Human Resources will monitor staffing levels across the University, so if there is a situation that substantially impacts on a specific school or service in one or more locations, managers should notify [humanresources@napier.ac.uk](mailto:humanresources@napier.ac.uk)