



Manchester
Metropolitan
University

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY

Date: January 2011

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The University recognises that severe weather may occasionally influence or prevent staff attending work due to the circumstances of the employee, or as a result of disruption to travel or carer arrangements.
- 1.2 The purpose of this document is to clarify the responsibilities of managers and expectations of employees in the case of severe weather conditions.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees of Manchester Metropolitan University.

3. Aim of policy

- 3.1 The aim of this policy is to provide a structured and consistent framework for employees and managers on the University's expectations during periods of severe weather, which will assist in enabling the continued delivery of services with minimum disruption.

4. Principles

- 4.1 It is expected that every member of staff will attend work according to the terms of their contract. There is no automatic entitlement to payment for absence which is caused by adverse weather.
- 4.2 Where normal travel arrangements have broken down, all other alternatives must be explored, including train, bus and, if distance and health permit, walking. The University, however, recognises that the health and safety of staff is of paramount importance and that staff should not take any unnecessary or dangerous risks, which could compromise their health or safety.
- 4.3 In the case of an individual member of staff being unable to attend work, or being significantly delayed, he/she is personally required to inform his/her manager at the earliest possible opportunity to report an expected time of arrival.
- 4.4 In dealing with staff absence due to adverse weather conditions, managers are expected to use their discretion in accordance with the principles set out in this policy. Where necessary, managers should obtain advice from their HR Advisor.

5. Procedures when University remains open

- 5.1 The University aims to keep its buildings open and running, except in exceptional circumstances and to provide a normal service or reduced services in such exceptional circumstances.
- 5.2 If a member of staff is not able to attend their normal workplace the appropriate manager may authorise/require the individual to undertake work in another place, such as an alternative campus.
- 5.3 If appropriate, a manager may authorise an individual to undertake work at home. In such circumstances the required outputs must be specified in advance and must be met.
- 5.4 If an individual employee cannot attend work and the work cannot be undertaken elsewhere or at home, the line manager will determine how the absence is to be treated. The following options will be considered:

5.4.1 *Annual Leave*

In some instances it will be possible for the employee to be granted annual leave to cover the period of absence. If the employee has exhausted his/her holiday entitlement for the year, consideration may be given to allowing leave from the following holiday year to be brought forward.

5.4.2 *Repayment of Time*

Depending upon the nature of the individual's role it may be possible to agree that the time lost due to the absence can be repaid by working additional hours or days if operationally acceptable.

5.4.3 *Unpaid Leave*

If an employee does not wish to use annual leave, and no other options are considered appropriate, the time lost will be treated as a period of unpaid leave and an appropriate deduction will be made from normal salary.

5.4.4 *Special Leave*

A member of staff unable to attend work during severe adverse weather because of urgent domestic or personal circumstances may be eligible for leave under the terms of the University's Special Leave Policy.

Special leave may be appropriate in the following circumstances:

- An unexpected closure of a nursery, school, or the breakdown of normal care arrangements for an elderly relative or dependant where there is no one else available to provide care. If the problem persists for an extended period,

and the member of staff is unable to arrange alternative care arrangements, continued time off will be dealt with in accordance with paragraph 5.4.1 to 5.4.3 of this policy.

- A parent/carer who needs to request special leave should inform their line manager at the earliest opportunity, to ensure minimum disruption to the provision of normal University services.
- Where a disabled member of staff is unable to travel to work or use an alternative transport mode as a result of their disability, even though the site remains open

To ensure consistency of approach managers should seek advice on any requests for special leave from an HR Advisor, before approving any application.

- 5.5 If a member of staff is absent and does not contact his/her line manager, in accordance with the Absence Policy, the absence will be considered as unauthorised and pay will be withheld until the circumstances have been fully investigated.
- 5.6 In the advent of severe weather conditions, the University reserves the right to re-allocate the duties of staff who work outdoors or undertake driving duties to other tasks temporarily within reason, in line with their training and the grade of their job.

6. Procedures when University closes, or partially closes

- 6.1 The Director of Services is responsible for co-ordinating the decision to close, or partially close, the University due to travel for staff becoming dangerous or impossible.
- 6.2 If this closure takes place outside of normal office hours, communication with staff will take place in accordance with the communications plan set out in the Opening of MMU Campuses and Buildings in Severe Weather Policy and Procedure and is available on the MMU web site at <http://www.mmu.ac.uk/news/> Pay will not be deducted from staff who were scheduled to attend work during the period of the closure.

7. Lateness/ Absence caused by Travel Disruption

- 7.1 In the event that a member of staff arrives late during the severe weather, no action will be taken providing the manager is satisfied that all reasonable steps were taken to arrive on time.
- 7.2 Members of staff who have been delayed returning from annual leave due to severe weather are required to inform their line manager at the

earliest opportunity. Absence will be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 5.4.1 to 5.4.3.

8. Review of Policy

8.1 This policy will be reviewed after twelve months and every three years thereafter.

9. Impact Assessment

9.1 This policy has been subject to an EIA screening to identify any adverse impact on any staff group. Further data will be collected upon implementation of this policy, and a further screening will take place after twelve months of operation.