

Closure of the University or a Campus in abnormal circumstances

I. Introduction

- 1.1 On occasion adverse weather conditions or other emergency situations may make it difficult for the University or parts of the University to open or remain open and for staff and students to travel to the various campuses. This policy details the different responsibilities and communication arrangements that will apply in such circumstances.
- 1.2 All within the University community are asked to familiarise themselves with this procedure, advise fellow staff and students of the key points and raise any initial queries with Deans of School or Directors/Heads of Departments. They must ensure that appropriate lines of communication are established and responsibilities understood.
- 1.3 All staff and students should at all times assume the University and its campuses remain open unless advised otherwise, as outlined in this policy.
- 1.4 This policy is in three parts:
 - a. campus closure during normal working hours;
 - b. communicating decisions taken outside normal working hours; and
 - c. arrangements that apply when a campus is open.

A. CAMPUS CLOSURE DURING NORMAL WORKING HOURS

2. Decision to close

- 2.1 The decision about the closure of a campus or the University in general will be made by the Vice-Chancellor or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor(s) having been advised of local weather conditions or emergency circumstances by individual Campus Operations Managers and/or the Assistant Director of Estates and Facilities (Operations).
- 2.2 In the absence of the Vice-Chancellor and the Deputy Vice Chancellor(s) the person designated as the Acting Vice-Chancellor will take the decision.

3. Notification to staff

- 3.1 If a decision is taken to close the University or a Campus during normal working hours, staff will be advised by their Dean of School or Director/Head of Department. Information will also normally be communicated in an all staff email and posted on the University's website at www.wlv.ac.uk, Wolf and e-Vision.

4. Responsibilities of staff

- 4.1 Senior Managers are responsible for ensuring that all staff and students are made aware of the decision to close the University or a Campus and should remind them of their responsibility to access the University website and/or listen to local radio stations for further information about continuing closure once they have left the University. (See 'Communicating decisions taken outside office hours' and 'Notification to students' sections' below).
- 4.2 Should the University or a Campus be closed on any one day, staff should assume that it will be open on the following day unless they are informed otherwise by means of the University's website, local radio or directly by their Dean of School or Director/Head of Department.

5. Notification to students

- 5.1 Deans are required to make appropriate and robust local arrangements to notify students of classes affected by a member of academic staff being unable to attend, even though the University Campus is open. This should be undertaken without delay to avoid unnecessary inconvenience to students. Methods of communication may therefore vary between Schools but should include the use of SMS texting messaging (via Registry) and notices displayed on appropriate notice boards which will be seen by students and by posting information on Wolf, e-Vision and the University's website.
- 5.2 Deans should also ensure that the appropriate Campus Operations staff, i.e. reception staff, have been informed of the arrangements that have been made for students to enable them to respond appropriately to subsequent enquiries.

B. COMMUNICATING DECISIONS TAKEN OUTSIDE NORMAL WORKING HOURS

6. Decision to close

- 6.1 Where severe weather or a major emergency requires a decision to be taken outside normal working hours responsibility for making the decision remains the same as in section 2 above. Information about the closure of the University or any of its Campuses will be communicated by the placement of a notice on the University's website at www.wlv.ac.uk and on Wolf and e-vision. Wherever possible the information will be made available on local radio stations.
- 6.2 Campus Operations Managers will liaise with the Assistant Director of Facilities (Operations) who will advise the Vice-Chancellor (or deputy) of the weather conditions or emergency circumstances at their Campuses. The Vice Chancellor will inform the Director of Marketing and Communications immediately about the decision to close the University or a campus. The Director of Marketing and Communications will in turn contact the Web Administrator and the Press Officer, to enable notices to be posted on the University's website and to ensure the local radio stations are advised of the closure.

7 Responsibilities of Staff

7.1 As information about continuing closure and subsequent re-opening will be obtainable from University website, Wolf and e-Vision. Staff should access the website and/or listen to the local radio stations for further information about continuing closure once they have left the University, or in the event of severe weather or a major emergency occurring outside normal working hours.

7.2 Staff who are unable to access the Internet, or if access to the internet has been interrupted by the weather, should listen to one or more of the following radio stations on which information about the closure of any of the University's Campuses may be broadcast:

Beacon Radio - 97.2 fm
Wolf - 107.7 fm
Heart - 100.7 fm
Radio WM - 95.6 fm
BBC Radio Shropshire - 96 fm

7.3 Staff should note that the University can only request that radio broadcasting stations transmit a Campus closure message, the stations may, however, choose not to do so. Staff should, therefore, try to access different local stations to receive any message that may be broadcast.

7.4 No message will be displayed or broadcast if the University is expected to be open at normal hours and staff will be expected to attend as usual.

7.5 Staff who do not have access to the Internet, or who are unable to receive the local radio stations, may telephone **Wolverhampton (01902) 51 88 51** for information. With this single exception, staff are asked not to telephone the University to make enquiries since a large number of calls will block the switchboard.

C. ARRANGEMENTS THAT APPLY WHEN THE UNIVERSITY OR A CAMPUS IS OPEN

8. Responsibilities of staff to attend for work

8.1 Where a Campus is open, employees are expected to make every effort to attend and should not assume that early morning travel disruptions will prevail throughout the day, as difficulties with travel routes and public transport are likely to improve as the day progresses. Staff should, therefore, make continued efforts to attend for work which may mean not relying on their usual travel routes or modes of transport.

8.2 Employees who are unable to attend for work at their normal starting time because of localised conditions, should telephone their line manager as soon as possible and normally within one hour of their usual starting time, advising when they might arrive at work. This requirement particularly important for those responsible for front line delivery to students where not being able to attend could lead to the cancellation of classes (see 5.1 and 5.2 above).

8.3 When, despite repeated attempts to get to work, staff are unable to do so due to continued bad weather and transport difficulties, they should contact their line manager to agree an appropriate course of action. These may include:

- taking annual leave;
- using flexi time/ time in lieu;
- taking unpaid leave; and
- working from home.

8.4 Where members of staff are unable to contact the relevant line manager, they should seek to contact a lead contact in their school or service department e.g. School Manager, to seek advice on appropriate action..

8.5 Sympathetic consideration should be given to requests from staff who have attended work to leave early because they have a long journey, or have to collect children from a school that has been closed.

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