

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 It is recognised that severe weather conditions, particularly snow and ice, can make it difficult for people to travel. Although, following the pandemic, mechanisms are now in place to enable remote working and learning, as a residential campus, even during severe weather conditions, the University's aim is to remain operational wherever it is safe and possible to do so. As a result, all colleagues are expected to make their best endeavours to be available for work.
- 1.2 The road and path network across the University Campus is privately owned by Keele University and is therefore classed as an un-adopted network, which is not included within the Local Authority's maintenance schedules. It is therefore the University's responsibility to maintain the entire network and its supporting car parks.
- 1.3 As the owner of the site, the University has a duty of care for the wellbeing of all users of the campus, including Students, Staff, Science Park Tenants, Residents and visitors. This requires the University, as part of its maintenance regime, to undertake reasonable endeavours to maintain the road and path network in a safe and passable condition.
- 1.4 This plan outlines the actions the University will take to manage and co-ordinate the maintenance of the road and path network during periods of severe weather, primarily Snow and Ice.

## 2.0 Keele University Campus Gritting and Snow Management Plan (KUCGSMP)

- 2.1 The Snow and Severe Weather Management Plan (SSWMP) is supported by the Keele University Campus Gritting and Snow Management Plan (KUCGSMP), which is an implementation plan covering all roads and pathways across campus. Each year this plan is reviewed prioritising areas of the campus to ensure that, in the event of severe weather conditions, resources are deployed to the highest priority/risk areas.
- 2.2 The prioritisation of the routes is applied on the principle of deploying resources, over a 24 hour period, in such a way that maximises accessibility to all areas, with the priority being to keep "Priority 1" areas accessible to all. These priorities are reviewed and agreed annually and feature within the KUCGSMP. Priority 1 areas generally include the main campus access roads, which allow a safe entry and exit from campus, with Priority 2 and 3, covering the side roads, car parks and pathways.

## 3.0 Context

- 3.1 The SSWMP provides an outline of the management procedures which will be applied during severe weather conditions. Severe weather can occasionally make travel to and from the campus difficult. As a result, the University acknowledges that at times individuals may find it difficult to attend the University or be anxious to leave earlier than normal if weather conditions appear to be deteriorating.

The University also recognises that it is not practical to establish a single campus wide set of rules in terms of attendance. However, it is essential that services on the campus are sustained to support those that are on campus, and indeed, those who are residents.

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## 4.0 Procedure

4.1 The management procedure, which is led by the Director of Estate and Campus Services (or their nominated Deputy) and will involve consultation with the Chief Operating Officer (or their nominated Deputy), will differ depending upon the time of day and also the time of year, but it is important that all decisions regarding the availability of services and attendance at work are managed by members of the University Senior Leadership Group, primarily Deans and Directors. In all eventualities, Estate & Campus Services (ECS), working through the Keele University Campus Gritting and Snow Management Plan (KUCGSMP), will deploy resources throughout a 24 hour period to minimise disruption on campus.

4.2 **Within Normal Working Hours** (*When severe weather conditions occur during the course of the working day*):

- An early warning of severe weather and/or conditions is often brought to the University's attention via national television and radio, but, during periods of risk, Estate & Campus Services (ECS) monitors local and national weather forecasts and ground conditions during the day to establish the presence and severity of a potential risk of severe weather. This process enables the Management Team to make informed judgements about when inclement weather is likely to arrive, thus enabling the re-scheduling of resources to prepare the Estate prior to adverse weather conditions arriving.
- Estate & Campus Services (ECS) will liaise with the Chief Operating Officer (COO), or their nominated Deputy, to keep them apprised of the prevailing conditions and the status of the road networks on the campus and within the immediate vicinity (mainly the A525 and the Motorway).
- Should the condition on campus continue to deteriorate, following consultation between ECS and the COO (or their nominated Deputy) and the VC's Office, the VC's Office will contact University Executive Committee (UEC) members and the University Leadership Group (ULG) with hourly updates, and if necessary, guidance on allowing individuals to leave the campus. This messaging will be agreed with Strategic Communications and Brand (SBC) and circulated as required, using existing communications media.
- Again, it is recognised that there will need to be some scope for local discretion, but it is likely that any suggestions of early departure will be phased. This will enable preventive works to be continued on the campus road to ensure that they allow safe passage. The phasing will vary, depending upon the prevailing conditions and the activities of the day, but in general terms:
  - Phase 1 – Will look to focus on those with a significant distance to travel, have a difficult route or have needs/commitments away from campus requiring them to leave.
  - Phase 2 – Will focus on ensuring the safe egress from campus of those remaining on campus following Phase 1.
- Managers, in responding to these communications, will need to work with their teams to ensure that sufficient resources are retained to keep essential services open to support those needing to be on campus.

## 4.3 Outside Normal Hours *(When severe weather conditions prevail between 4.30PM and 08.00 AM - before start of the normal working day):*

- Keele University Campus Gritting and Snow Management Plan (KUCGSMP)  
The conditions on the campus are monitored by the 24 Hour Campus Safety Team and a series of Temperature Sensors on campus. When needed, the Campus Safety Team will refer to the KUCGSMP, “Winter Call Out Rota” for staff to attend site and to deploy the appropriate staff and equipment to deal with the prevailing weather conditions.
- It is expected that members of staff required to be working on campus will make all reasonable effort to get to work, including on foot where practicable and safe.
- If, however, the severity of the weather and the condition of the road infrastructure external to Keele prevents a member of staff from reaching work, they must contact their Line Manager via phone, email, or other locally agreed means of notifying their line manager of an absence from work, at the earliest opportunity to inform them of their difficulties and to agree arrangements for that day in line with paragraph 8.0.
- If Estate & Campus Services (ECS) is unable to maintain the access roads (Priority 1) on campus, thus preventing access to the site, ECS will review the situation with the Incident Management on Call Silver and Gold. The VC’s office will then inform Strategic Communications & Brand who will endeavour to make this situation known to users of the campus via phone, e-mail group announcements, the website and social media and, if possible, via local radio stations.

## 5.0 Events

- 5.1 Any events or activities running on campus will also need to be managed during severe weather, whether it is providing special facilities or managing arrival to or departure from the site. In the event of severe weather, the event organisers or hosts are asked to:
- a) Ensure that the Head of Campus Safety and the Head of Building and External Maintenance and/or Grounds Co-ordinator are aware of the event, its nature, location and the numbers involved.
  - b) Ensure that, in consultation with the Head of Campus Safety, the Head of Building and External Maintenance and/or Ground Co-ordinator and Strategic Communications and Brand (SCB), appropriate resources are available to manage the event, any supplementary communications and actions agreed.

## 6.0 Essential Services

- 6.1 Essential services are those services and facilities that the University will seek to maintain regardless of the prevailing weather conditions. During adverse weather conditions, or indeed due to the type and duration of the inclement weather conditions, these services, pattern of delivery/access may differ from the normal published patterns of delivery/access times. Essential services include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Halls of Residence

- Library.
- Exam Locations.
- Social and communal areas.
- Catering Outlets.
- Campus Shop.
- Nursery – whilst children are still in occupancy.
- Heat, Light and Power.
- Emergency maintenance services of buildings and their services.
- Campus Safety.
- Reception (Switchboard).

6.2 Each Faculty and Directorate should assess, for each eventuality, any services that need to be kept operational and ensure that they are resourced accordingly.

## 7.0 Examinations

- 7.1 All centrally timetabled University Examinations are categorised as an essential service, therefore, the University will take every step to ensure that all examinations are able to continue, even if specific venues have to be amended due to the impact of severe weather. Any enquiries relating to the sitting of University Examinations during this period should be directed to the Exams Team at: [exams@keele.ac.uk](mailto:exams@keele.ac.uk) or 01782 734000.
- 7.2 In the event of non-essential services being closed due to severe weather, all students who live on campus will be expected to attend their examination(s) as timetabled.
- 7.3 Students who do not live on campus are advised to attend examinations only if they feel safe to do so. Information relating to the status of the University Campus during severe weather conditions will be made available on [www.keele.ac.uk/snow](http://www.keele.ac.uk/snow).
- 7.4 Students who do not live on campus, who are unable to attend an examination on a day when non-essential services have been closed, will need to register their absence on that day via e-vision. Those registering their absence will be automatically awarded a further first attempt to sit the examination at the next available opportunity.
- 7.5 Students who live on campus who do not attend an examination and students who do not live on campus who fail to register their absence, will on a day when non-essential services are closed, be required to follow the standard University procedures and submit an exceptional circumstances form using e:vision, accompanied by the appropriate evidence.

Information can be found at:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/students/academiclife/examinations/examinationpoliciesandcodeofpractice>

**8.0 GUIDANCE NOTES**

- 8.1 Agile working enables staff to work from home and therefore, it is not envisaged that Severe Weather will interrupt most people’s ability to fulfil their role. However, there are some activities and services on campus that will need to continue being delivered. These may be to ensure compliance with Statutory Obligations, to maintain a safe and compliant area of operation or activity or to provide essential welfare ad support for those living and/or needing to be on campus.
  
- 8.2 Those roles which are essential for compliance, safety or welfare reasons will be identified in local operational plans. Roleholders will be expected to make every effort to attend campus to fulfil critical duties. The University will support colleagues in their attendance. Depending on the weather situation this may include support for travel arrangements or making arrangements for colleagues to stay on campus.
  
- 8.3 If, despite such support arrangements, colleagues who have critical roles are unable to attend for work the following arrangements apply:
  - 8.3.1 Firstly, the individual must contact their Line Manager as early as possible to enable alternative arrangements to be put in place, and
  
  - 8.3.2 Secondly, Line Management will need to make arrangements to ensure the services or obligations continue to be provided
  
  - 8.3.3 If colleagues are unable to work during severe weather, they will be asked to take annual leave or unpaid leave. The University’s Emergency Leave for the Care of Dependants may also apply. Flexible Working Policy and Procedure - Keele University:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/media/keeleuniversity/policyzone20/humanresources/Flexible%20Working%20Policy%20and%20Procedure.pdf>

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