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**Severe Weather Response Plan**

**Version 2.7**

**February 2019**

1. **Introduction**

The purpose of this plan is to co-ordinate the University response to any instances of severe weather. Current warnings can be found at the following link: [http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/warnings/](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/warnings/#?regionName=ta&tab=warnings&map=Warnings&zoom=5&lon=-3.50&lat=55.50&fcTime=1457568000)

1. **Activation**

This plan will be activated during working hours, wherever possible, and any out-of-hours conference call arrangements agreed.

Should a future red/ amber warning be issued, where possible, a decision will be made and communicated the night before. This will allow both staff and students to be better prepared.

The plan is activated by either:

* A Met Office red warning being issued for the Central, Tayside & Fife region. Warnings concerning neighbouring regions, where students and staff may travel from, should also be considered.
* An escalation of the University Emergency procedures (e.g. severe ice on campus; lightning strike on campus)

Consideration will also be given to activating the plan if an amber warning is issued.

1. **Major Incident Response Team (MIRT)**

Details can be found in the Major Incident Response Plan. This plan is available to the Core MIRT via S:\Business Continuity Management. The Severe Weather plan can also be found in this folder.

1. **MIRT Objectives**

* Meet (via conference call[[1]](#footnote-1) (xxxx xxxxx; passcode xxxx when this is most practical) at set times before and during the period of severe weather to ensure the group remains up to date with the situation
* Consider advice from The Met Office [www.metoffice.gov.uk](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk), [www.readyscotland.org](http://www.readyscotland.org/), on campus conditions, observations by Security/Grounds staff and any other relevant sources of information
* Liaise with Faculties & Service Areas as required, in order to understand the potential impact
* Assess the conditions and decide on any actions which may need to be undertaken and implement these
* Coordinate any messages the University is releasing to students, staff and other stakeholders via the Communications representative
* Debrief once the MIRT has been stood-down to review the positives and negatives of the University’s response and amend policy, procedures etc. where required.

1. **Action Levels**

The extent to which severe weather affects the University will influence what level of action (1, 2 or 3) and communication are required. The MIRT will assess the conditions and any potential impacts before agreeing on appropriate actions and communications.

Level 1

* + - * Severe weather forecast
      * The University is expecting to operate / is currently operating as normal with only very minor disruption to services, teaching, exams or events
* There may be some travel disruption for some staff and students
* Staff, students and visitors will be advised to continue to monitor the University website homepage[[2]](#footnote-2) for further news if the situation changes or escalates.

Level 2

* Severe weather being experienced
* The University is expecting to operate but with some potential disruption to services, exams, teaching or events
* Due to the widespread travel difficulties, non-essential staff may consider working from home, taking annual leave, taking unpaid leave or making time up
* Consideration should be given to requirements of key staff e.g accommodation over night and the resources which are required.
* Staff, students and visitors will be advised to continue to monitor the University website homepage for further news if the situation changes or escalates.

Level 3

* Severe weather being experienced
* The University has decided2 to close some services, exams, teaching or events due to safety concerns and/or widespread disruption to travel
* Consideration should be given to requirements of key staff e.g accommodation over night and the key resources which are required.
* Due to widespread travel difficulties, non-essential staff may consider working from home, taking annual leave, taking unpaid leave or making time up
* Staff, students and visitors will be advised to continue to monitor the University website homepage for further news if the situation changes or escalates.

(Note: Levels 1, 2 & 3 will not necessarily correspond with Met Office Yellow, Amber & Red Alerts).

1. **Communications**

The MIRT will continue to monitor the situation, meet (via conference call when this is most practical) and agree the actions and communications required throughout the period of severe weather.

**Conference Calls**

a) At the start of the meeting, dial into the Conference xxxx xxxxxx and follow the voice prompts.

b) Enter the passcode, **\*xxxxxx**

The Digital team, working with the Communications team will place relevant updates on the University website homepage – and on stir.ac.uk/alerts, which contains **staff**, **student** and **visitor** information – throughout the period of severe weather, based on the decisions of the MIRT. Where applicable, links will be provided to useful external organisations such as the Met Office and Police Scotland. Where relevant, reference may be made to University staff and student policies, e.g. the [Weather Policy](https://www.stir.ac.uk/media/stirling/services/internal/hr/documents-moved/Weather.doc), [HR policies](https://www.stir.ac.uk/hr-od/policies-and-guidance/), [Exams](http://www.stir.ac.uk/registry/studentinformation/exams/deferredexams/) guidance.

Updates will also be:

* placed on the staff and student Portals
* issued on social media

Based on MIRT guidance, all-staff and all-student emails may also be issued, from the “University Announcement” email account.

1. **Faculty/Exam Information**

Any information regarding Faculties or exams should be passed from the relevant faculty to the Student, Academic & Corporate Services office for ratification. The message will then be passed to the MIRT to take a view on any resulting communications actions.

1. **Stand down**

The MIRT will stand down once the Met Office red warning has expired, although may consider remaining active when an amber warning is still in effect, or when severe weather is still affecting the University.

1. **Debrief**

The MIRT will meet to debrief after the Met Office red warning has expired. The purpose of this meeting will be to review the University’s response to the incident and make recommendations for improvement where required.

1. Conference Calls

   a) At the start of the meeting, dial into the Conference xxxxx xxxxx and follow the voice prompts.

   b) Enter the passcode, **\* xxxxx** [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 2 Decision must be authorised by the University Secretary, Deputy Secretary or Principal [↑](#footnote-ref-2)