ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY

This policy document should be read in conjunction with the Frequently Asked Questions to be found at Annex A.

It is recognised that there may be times when it is problematic for staff to travel to work. This may be when normal modes of transport are not available due to inclement weather or when other circumstances occur which may be beyond staff members’ control.

There may be times when weather conditions are so adverse that some staff may either be prevented from attending work or will be later in arriving and/or require to leave early. On occasion, adverse weather conditions may require a decision to be made and communicated on College closure.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, adverse weather is defined as weather such as snow, ice, fog, floods and high winds which render travel by whatever means as extremely hazardous.

Closure means the closure of College buildings in the area affected by the adverse weather conditions. This does not necessarily mean the closure of all College buildings, only those affected by adverse weather or where adverse weather has been forecast.

Lews Castle College sites are designated as:

Lews Castle College, Stornoway Including An Cotan (Creche)
Lews Castle College, Benbecula
Lews Castle College, Barra
Lews Castle College at Taigh Chearsabhagh, North Uist

Responsibilities

Employees should not, put themselves at risk when severe weather warnings have been issued.

It is the duty of every employee to attend work and all staff have a responsibility to make every reasonable attempt to reach their normal place of employment.

When an employee is unable to work at their normal start time due to adverse weather conditions, they have a responsibility to notify Reception at Lews Castle College, Stornoway as soon as is reasonably practicable of their late attendance.

In exceptional circumstances, when an employee requires to finish work earlier than their normal finish time, to enable them to travel in adverse weather conditions, they have a responsibility to obtain the permission of their line manager and thereafter inform Reception at Lews Castle College, Stornoway that they have left their normal place of employment. They must at that time sign out at Reception.

The person in charge of the College on the day will be responsible for making a decision on College closure based on information from Police, local radio or the Met Office, and take into account reasonable operational requirements. The College Managers will be responsible for ensuring that notice of College closure is conveyed appropriately and timeously for staff and students.
When a College closure has been announced, all staff and students have a responsibility to leave the buildings designated for closure in reasonable time to allow the janitorial staff to lock and secure property without exposing themselves to danger.

Following a College closure, all staff and students have a responsibility to check for announcements of re-opening/resumption of normal College operations.

**Closure of College Buildings**

The decision to close College buildings affected by adverse weather will be made by the Principal, or in his absence, the person in charge of the College on the day. This will then be communicated to staff and students by email and other appropriate means.

Unless a decision to close College buildings has been communicated it should be presumed that the College will be open for business as normal.

Information on College closure will be publicly available through announcement on:

**Website:** URL: [http://www.lews.uhi.ac.uk](http://www.lews.uhi.ac.uk)

**Twitter:** Username: @lccuhi

**Facebook:** URL: [https://www.facebook.com/LewsCastleCollegeUHI](https://www.facebook.com/LewsCastleCollegeUHI)

Isles FM – Tel: 01851 703333 Fax: 01851 703322

Radio Highland/Radio nan Gàidheal – Tel: 01463 720720
Email: newsonlinescotland@bbc.co.uk

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar – Public Information Notices (via Faire Community Alarm Service) Tel: 01851 701702
Email: faire@cnesiar.gov.uk

An Cotan staff will inform individual parents of the intention to close the creche in time to enable them to collect their children in good time.

**Public Transport to Outlying Areas**

During adverse weather or when adverse weather is forecast, bus timetables to outlying areas may vary. Every effort must be made to release staff and students who require to use public transport as this may be their last opportunity to get home safely.

When appropriate, liaison may be required with schools to ensure that pupils are able to get home safely.

**College Re-Opening**

When it is deemed safe for the College to re-open announcements will be made through the same communication methods. All staff and students have a responsibility to check for announcements for College closure and re-opening.
Flow Chart – Adverse Weather Closure

The Principal or person in charge of the College and the H & S Adviser will monitor weather forecast for severe weather warnings for Western Isles area.

The Principal or the person in charge of the College on the day will take the decision when closure is deemed appropriate.

If this decision is made outwith College hours Estates and Maintenance team to be informed.

All staff and students will be informed of the intention to close College.

All staff and students will make arrangements to leave College premises by a pre designated time as soon as practicably possible.

An Cotan staff will advise parents to collect their children as soon as practicably possible.

When all staff and students have left, the Estates and Maintenance team will secure the premises and leave for home.

When the weather has improved, the College will return to normal work routine.

The College will send monthly emails to staff and students to remind them to check the College Adverse Weather Policy. This will be sent in November, December, January and February and at any other time deemed appropriate.

Duty Janitor Contact
Telephone Numbers

Other staff who normally work beyond the normal College hours such as cleaners and evening class tutors to be telephoned to ensure that they do not attempt to come to work.

Other Staff

All staff LE email
Website URL: http://www.lews.uhi.ac.uk
Twitter Username: @lccuhi
Facebook URL: https://www.facebook.com/LewsCastleCollegeUHI
Isles FM Tel: 01851 703333 Fax: 703322
Radio Highland/Radio nan Gàidheal:
Tel: 01463 720720
Email: newsonlinescotland@bbc.co.uk
CnES Public Information Notices (via Faire Community Alarm Service: Tel: 01851 701702 Email: faire@cnesiar.gov.uk
Frequently Asked Questions – Information for Students

FAQ 1: How will I know if the college is going to be closed?

A soon as a decision is made, the college will issue an announcement via its website, its Facebook page and its Twitter account. We will also try to make this information available via Isles FM, Radio Highland/Radio nan Gàidheal and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar – Public Information Notices (via Faire Community Alarm Service). It is your responsibility to check.

FAQ 2: If the schools are closed, does that mean the college is closed?

Not necessarily. You should check with the college, as described above. However, if the schools are closed, the college nursery – An Cotan – will always be closed.

FAQ 3 What happens if the weather worsens suddenly?

The person in charge of the College on the day will be responsible for making a decision on College closure based on information from Police, local radio or the Met Office, and taking into account reasonable operational requirements. The College Managers will be responsible for ensuring that notice of College closure is conveyed appropriately and timeously for staff and students.

An Cotan staff will inform individual parents of the intention to close the Creche in time to enable them to collect their children in good time.

FAQ 4 What happens if the weather is severe on Sunday and it seems likely the college will be closed on Monday?

The college will do its best to make an announcement as soon as possible. In these circumstances, this may mean that an announcement will be made at the weekend; however, we may wait until the morning.

FAQ 5: What if the WIEPCG say the schools are closed - will the college be closed?

Not necessarily. The decision about closing the college is made by the College Principal or the member of the senior management team in charge of the college.

FAQ 6 What if I have an exam or a video conference scheduled for a time when the college is closed to students but staff may be at work?

It is your decision whether or not to come to the College. But you should be aware that if staff are experiencing difficulty coming to College because of adverse weather then you may not be able to sit a planned exam. The college will make all reasonable efforts to make it possible for you to sit your exam. If you are unable to sit the exam, the college will help ensure that you do not suffer further disadvantage or inconvenience.

Similarly, if you attend college for a video conference class in these circumstances, then you may not be able to access the class.
FAQ 7 How will I know when the college has re-opened?

When it is deemed safe for the College to re-open announcements will be made through the same communication methods. All staff and students have a responsibility to check for announcements for College closure and re-opening.

FAQ 8 What if the college stays open but I need to leave to get home safely
During adverse weather or when adverse weather is forecast, bus timetables to outlying areas may vary. Every effort will be made to release staff and students who require to use public transport as this may be their last opportunity to get home safely.