

Weather Plan Policy and Guidelines

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| Last Modified | June 2016 |
| Review Date | September 2018 |
| Approval Authority | Vice-Chancellor |
| Contact Person | UC Incident Controller |

This policy is currently under review. Please contact the Contact Person.

Introduction

This University of Canterbury Weather Plan Policy provides guidelines and establishes protocols for an organised response to a severe weather event. It addresses pre-storm preparation and post-storm recovery, as well as management of the campus during a storm. It sits as an addendum to the [UC Emergency Response Plan \(PDF, 2.76MB, University Emergency Management website\)](#). The primary objectives of the plan are as follows:

- safety and security of staff, students and visitors;
- mitigation of damage; and
- restoration of business and academic operations as quickly as possible.

Although relatively rare, the Canterbury region does experience significant weather events so it is important that we have a contingency plan and communication process in place should a major weather event occur.

Definitions

Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) – The University location where the Incident Management Team gathers to manage the response to a critical incident/planned event. *Note: this may be the University’s dedicated EOC, backup EOC (UC Security and Campus Community Support Centre), or an alternative space, depending on the nature/severity/location of the incident.*

Incident Controller (IC) – the person who leads the Incident Management Team and has delegated operational responsibility for any significant incident affecting the University. The IC leads a coordinated response leading up to, and during, an emergency event and operates in conjunction with, and under the authority of, the Chair of the Strategic Emergency Management Group.

Incident Management Team (IMT) – the group of personnel tasked with carrying out the functions of incident control, operations, security, planning and intelligence, logistics and welfare, under the direction of the Incident Controller.

Severe Weather Warning – the Met-Service will issue a Severe Weather Warning whenever there is an expectation that any of the following weather conditions will occur within the next 24 hours:

- Widespread* rainfall greater than 50 mm within 6 hours or 100 mm within 24 hours.
- Widespread* snowfall below 1000 metres on the North Island or 500 metres on the South Island with a snow depth of 10 centimetres within 6 hours or 25 centimetres within 24 hours.
- Widespread* severe gales with a minimum mean speed of 90 km/hr or frequent gusts exceeding 110 km/hr.

*"Widespread" means over an area of 1,000 square kilometres or more.

Special Weather Advisory – the Met-Service will issue a Special Weather Advisory whenever a weather event is likely to cause significant disruption to the general public or specific industry groups within the next 48 hours, **but** the weather is not expected to deteriorate to an extent that would require the issue of a Severe Weather Warning. The Met-Service may also issue a Special Weather Advisory following a severe storm that causes widespread disruption and damage in order to assist with any post-storm operations.

UC Rescue – a dedicated team of trained volunteer staff and students on campus who will provide initial and ongoing rescue assistance in the event of an unplanned or unforeseen event at the University. UC Rescue team members are likely to be amongst the first responders and will continue to provide support as required once other agencies arrive. UC Rescue operates under the direction of the Incident Management Team and is operationally tasked by the UC Security Services Team Leader.

Policy Statement

The primary objectives of the weather plan are the safety and security of the University community, successful mitigation of damage, and restoration of core activities. In order to ensure that these objectives are met as quickly as possible, there is an expectation that the following guidelines will be adhered to by all staff, students and visitors to the University during a weather emergency.

Section I: General Information and Planning Guidelines

Purpose of the Plan

The weather plan is designed as a guideline to coordinate and control the University's weather preparation and response steps. The timing and implementation of any or all

steps may be altered based upon the facts and circumstances surrounding any individual weather event.

The plan document includes sections on preparation, response during a storm, and recovery activities post event.

Section II – Preparation and Response

Preparation

When potentially hazardous conditions occur, the Manager – UC Security & Campus Community Support will monitor the situation and if necessary activate the weather plan.

If conditions continue to deteriorate and the decision is made to activate the weather plan, the Incident Controller (IC) will be advised. If the IC makes the decision that the University's Incident Management Team (IMT) is required to activate, selected members of the IMT will be advised to assemble at the University's Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) or alternative location as decided.

Response

Immediately following the activation of the plan, the IC will advise the University's Vice-Chancellor (VC), or delegate, of the current situation and of the activation of the weather plan.

Communications

Upon direction from the VC, the Director, Student Services and Communications, or other designated staff member, will issue a severe weather warning to the University community, advising of the potential for suspension of classes and reminding students and employees to make travel plans in the event of a University closure.

Storm updates will be made available to the wider University community via the [UC Emergency website \(University Emergency Management website\)](#) and the [University's official social media channels \(University Communications website\)](#). Updates will include:

- official University instructions regarding class cancellation and university closure;
- links to information on progress and tracking of the storm;
- links to city advisories, etc.; and
- the projected reopening of the University and resumption of classes after a storm.

University Shelter in Place or Closure

If the weather deteriorates to such an extent that it is unsafe to venture outside, the IC will issue a shelter in place warning for all persons on campus, including contractors. This will be undertaken by multiple channels including the Campus Wide Area Broadcast Network. The VC, or delegate, will make any decision to close the University in consultation with the IC. Any closure decision will be promulgated widely through every available communications channel.

Condition 1 – Serious Weather Conditions Suspension of Normal Activity – Campus Remains Open for Access

If conditions warrant it, scheduled on-campus events may be cancelled. Staff will be advised if normal activity is suspended and advised to make decisions about travel home in conjunction with their managers. Students will be advised if classes are suspended and advised to consider homeward travel.

Advice will be provided on road conditions, public transport notifications and of any areas on campus where there are safety concerns, as regularly as possible. These will be available on the [UC Emergency website \(University Emergency Management website\)](#).

Condition 2 – Severe Weather Conditions – Shelter in Place

If the weather conditions are so severe that leaving the campus is not a safe option, the University will be officially closed, and shelter in place notifications will be given. All persons on campus will be advised to remain inside the buildings until advised otherwise and the following actions are recommended:

- move all people away from windows;
- close all curtains, drapes and blinds where possible;
- shelter in strongest part of building (e.g. central corridors); and
- clear large areas with glass atriums or glass roofs.

Notification to the campus community will be achieved in the following manner:

- Wide Area Broadcast; and
- all staff & all student email.

The following people will be advised directly:

- all Colleges and Schools (PVC or Manager);
- all Service Unit Directors;
- UCSA (President or Manager);
- Security Services (Coordinator or Duty Controller); and
- Childcare Centre Managers.

Condition 3 – Exceptional Weather Conditions Campus Closure / Evacuation

If the University closes due to an emergency, all scheduled on-campus events will be cancelled. Staff will be requested to secure work areas, relocate equipment if flooding is expected, and then to leave the campus if they are able to do so safely.

Advice will be provided on road conditions, public transport notifications and of any areas on campus where there are safety concerns as regularly as possible. These will be available on the [UC Emergency website \(University Emergency Management website\)](#).

When the University is closed, students and non-storm personnel (staff) are officially requested to leave the University. If any staff member is unable to leave or chooses to stay on campus, they are required to notify the Security Control Centre (6888) of their location and intended departure time. If a full evacuation is ordered, **ALL** non-essential staff will be required to leave the University. If necessary a welfare centre will be established to accommodate any staff member, student or visitor who is unable to travel home. **When the University is officially closed, students are not permitted to remain on campus.**

UC Security Services, Maintenance Staff and UC Rescue Personnel will ensure that buildings are clear of personnel and secure.

Students are responsible for securing their own lodging and transportation arrangements; however, any staff member or student unable to leave due to genuine safety concerns will be supported by the UC IMT welfare staff.

UC Security Personnel, Maintenance Staff and UC Rescue personnel will secure any dangerous areas to the best of their ability and provide either manned locations or notification in some form advising all persons of danger.

**If security tape and or barriers have been erected
DO NOT ENTER THE AREA AFFECTED.**

UC Security personnel will also patrol the campus informing and assisting where possible.

During a Campus Closedown due to severe weather conditions, if any person must urgently leave the campus, call Security Services on Ext 6111 for assistance.

Contact details for all emergency contacts are detailed in appendix A.

Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)

The IC will direct all activity on campus during a severe weather event under the authority of the VC.

During a severe weather event, the EOC may be activated; however, weather events may be managed from the UC Security Centre as directed by the IC.

Non-essential personnel and students will not be permitted access to the EOC during the period it is activated.

Evacuation – Locking Down Campus

Employees other than those assigned to the EOC or other critical personnel identified by the IC are prohibited from occupying campus facilities during a University closure, if a full evacuation is ordered.

After a full evacuation order is in effect, all buildings will be searched by UC Security, Maintenance Staff or UC Rescue personnel and then secured against key or card access by disabling card readers and using special locks or other devices.

Essential Employees and First Responders

Employees directed to work before, during, or after a weather event when other employees have been released are designated as essential employees. Essential employees not required to remain on campus will be required to call in after the storm has passed to determine their work assignments (see “Expectations for Staff after a Storm”). Work assignments may vary as necessary, from a staff member’s normal responsibilities.

As deemed necessary, the University will establish a team of first responders who will be available to return quickly to campus to begin University asset protection, if necessary, after a storm.

Section III – During a Storm

Unless otherwise announced, only those persons required by the administration to conduct emergency operations during a severe weather event may remain on campus during a storm if the full evacuation order has been given.

Campus buildings may only be used as emergency weather shelters if conditions are so severe that this is required and authorised. Road access into the campus grounds may be blocked by Security and/or maintenance staff.

If the University is being used as a shelter, all persons on campus (with the exception of emergency staff) are required to remain in safe locations inside the buildings until advised otherwise.

Section IV – After a Storm

General Guidelines for Recovery

The timeline for recovery after a weather event will vary depending upon the severity of storm damage sustained on campus. Immediate recovery activities will be determined and directed by the IC in consultation with the VC, or delegate, until such time as this responsibility is passed to the Director of Learning Resources.

The VC, or delegate, in consultation with the IC will determine when the University will reopen and when campus services will be reinstated.

Normal campus services will resume as soon as it is safe and practicable. All decisions will be communicated via the [UC Home Page \(University of Canterbury website\)](#), [UC Emergency website \(University Emergency Management website\)](#) and the [University's official social media channels \(University Communications website\)](#) or by contacting UC Security on (03) 364 2888.

Expectations for Staff after a Storm

In cases of University closure, the following mechanisms will be used to contact staff and provide information about University activities after a storm:

- All staff will be required to check in with their supervisors within a reasonable amount of time after the storm.
- Staff must annually provide contact telephone numbers and alternative (private) email addresses to their supervisors. They may be used in case the UC email system becomes inoperable.
- Staff will be required to report for duty as soon as practicable after they are requested to return to work.
- During a period of recovery, staff will be expected to perform duties as requested by their supervisor even if those duties are not part of their regular job descriptions.

Expectations for Students after a Storm

In cases of University closure, the following mechanisms will be used to contact students and to provide information about University activities after a storm:

- The University will provide information via the [UC Home Page \(University of Canterbury website\)](#).
- The University may also communicate with students via their UC email addresses and the [University's official social media channels \(University Communications website\)](#).

Related Documents and Information

- [UC Emergency Response Plan \(PDF, 2.76MB, University Emergency Management website\)](#)
- [UC Emergency website \(University Emergency Management website\)](#)
- [UC's official social media channels \(University Communications website\)](#)

Appendices

- Appendix A: Telephone Numbers and Contact Information

| Document History and Version Control Table | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Version | Action | Approval Authority | Action Date |
| <i>For document history and versioning prior to 2013 contact ucpolicy@canterbury.ac.nz</i> | | | |
| 1.00 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of document and conversion into new format. • Minor changes to position titles to reflect UC organisational changes. • Updated information around conditions, contacts and EOC. | Policy Unit | Jun 2013 |
| 2.00 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of document. • Updating and changes to text and structure to reflect acquired knowledge. | Policy Unit | Sep 2015 |
| 2.01 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metadata updated. | Policy Unit | Sep 2015 |
| 2.02 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Faculty' references changed to 'staff' to reflect College-Faculty merger. | Policy Unit | Jun 2016 |

Appendix A

Telephone Numbers and Contact Information

University of Canterbury Emergency Contact Information

[Emergency Website](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/emergency) www.canterbury.ac.nz/emergency

UC Security Control Centre (03) 364 2111

UC Emergency Lines

On Campus

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|-------------|-------------|
| Emergencies | 6111 |
| Enquiries | 6888 |

Off Campus

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| By cell phone | (0800) 823 637 (UC EMERG) (03) 364 2111 |
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| POLICE | 111 |
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| FIRE | 111 |
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| AMBULANCE | 111 |
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NZ Police General Inquiries

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| Central | 363 7400 |
| Hornby | 344 1800 |
| Riccarton | 348 6640 |
| Sydenham | 363 2546 |

UC Health Centre

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| Non-emergency | 364 2402 |
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