COLLEGE CLOSURE PROCEDURE

(INCLEMENT WEATHER OR ANY OTHER EMERGENCY)

POLICY OWNER: Estates
AUTHOR: Andrew Crowter
DATE OF REVIEW: Jan 2018
DATE OF APPROVAL: Jan 2018
FOR APPROVAL BY: Exec
NEXT REVIEW DATE: October 2018
1. **Process Statement**
   Severe weather causes major disruption to normal College business. In severe weather conditions or other potential emergencies (power failure, heating breakdown, water supply cut off etc.) it may be necessary to close the College to students. If this decision is made by the Principal the following arrangements will apply. If the Principal is not available then the Deputy Principal will take his place in the decision making process.

2. **Purpose of Procedure**
   The purpose of the process is to foresee problems where possible and to have provision / control measures in place to deal with these problems, reduce accidents and ill health and to mitigate their effects to safeguard health and safety of all staff, students & visitors.

3. **Scope of Procedure**
   The Procedure applies to all staff and students, contractors & visitors.

4. **Overnight Fall of Snow**
   An overnight fall of snow will be monitored via the CCTV cameras by the CCTV Monitor based at Matthew Boulton College. If it is evident that snow has fallen to an extent that may jeopardise the safe opening of the College/s, the CCTV Monitor will contact the Heads of College and Director of Estates at 06:00hrs to raise an alert. If a sufficient assessment of weather conditions cannot be made via CCTV, the Heads of College will ask their nominated Snow Monitors to make local assessments and report their findings to the Head of College, who will inform the Director of Estates by 06:30hrs. The Director of Estates will then contact the Principal to discuss the matter at 06:30hrs. If the decision is made to close the College or campuses before students have arrived, notification of the College closure will be communicated by the following means:

   - Local Radio stations will be contacted with news of the closure:
     - Free Radio
     - Heart
     - Radio West Midlands
   - College website [www.bmet.ac.uk](http://www.bmet.ac.uk) where the information will be available and updated.
   - Through social media (including Facebook, Twitter, and Yammer)
   - Answer phone messages will be put in place on the main switchboards to inform student/staff/parents, in case they ring in and the reception is not staffed. The contact numbers for the main sites are 0121 446 4545 followed by the extension number:
     - Matthew Boulton - 8000
     - Sutton Coldfield – 5653
     - James Watt - 2026/2015
     - Erdington - 4101
5. **College Closure After Students Arrive**

If the College closes early due to deteriorating weather conditions or other emergency, notification will be made by the Principal via phone, email & Share Point. See Annex A.

Head of College (or their nominated deputies) will be responsible for reporting any deterioration of weather conditions within their area. If deemed necessary, the Head of College is to report the worsening conditions to the Duty Director, who will gather all the necessary information and discuss the matter with the Principal. The Principal will then make the decision whether to close or not.

Checks will be made with young students (under 18 years of age) and students with special needs to ascertain whether they can return safely home or to a suitable alternative. Where this is the case, they will either be allowed to make their own way if their home is within walking distance, or if they travel by service bus. Parents/carers of young/vulnerable students will be contacted by Student Services to make arrangements for collection.

**Visiting Schools** – The Head of College will direct the Schools Team to contact the Head Teacher(s) to inform the school of early closure and work with the school to ensure the safe return of the students.

**Transport** – Some areas of the Colleges use coaches to transport students between sites. It is the responsibility of the Head of College to request early pick up of the students if the College or campuses are to close early.

6. **Afternoon Assessment**

If a College has closed, the Director of Estates will join a conference call with the Principal and Director of Marketing and Communications at 15:30hrs on the afternoon of closure to agree opening / closure the following day or at any point after that up to 6.30hrs the following day.

7. **Weekend Snowfall**

If significant snow has fallen over a weekend, an assessment of the safety of opening the following Monday should be undertaken on Sunday afternoon. The Heads of College will ask their nominated Snow Monitors to make local
assessments and report back their findings. The Head of College will inform the Director of Estates by 14:30hrs on Sunday. The Director of Estates will then contact the Principal to discuss the matter at 15:30hrs. If the decision is made to close the College or campuses the following day, notification of the College closure will be communicated by the means previously described.

8. **Staff Action in the Event of College Closure**

In the event of the College or campuses closing to students due to inclement weather, all staff, with the exception of those in either the Estates or Welfare Officer teams are to follow the instructions given them by the Principal. Estates and Welfare Officers should report to the Director of Estates who will provide them with instructions.

9. **Staff Absence if College is Open**

If the College is operating normally during inclement weather, any member of staff unable to get to their normal place of work must inform their line manager as soon as possible and agree their course of action. Line managers need to be ensure they risk assess the situation before giving guidance.

10. **Individual Responsibilities**

   **Director of Marketing and Communications** – Deal with communications to staff, students and visitors in relation to whether College sites are open or closed in response to snow or other emergencies.

   **Director of Estates** - Assess the situation with the Head of College prior to opening the College:

   - In the event of over-night snow fall on a weekday, liaise with CCTV Monitor, Heads of College and discuss the situation with the Principal by 06:30hrs, prior to opening the College.
   - In the event of weekend snow fall, liaise with CCTV Monitor, Heads of College and discuss the situation with the Principal by 15:30hrs with regards to opening the College the following day.
   - If Colleges have closed because of snow, participate in a Conference call with the Principal and Director of Marketing and Communications at 15:30hrs to decide whether to open the following day.
   - If the closure to students is imminent, make arrangements through the Director of Marketing and Communications to contact radio stations and update College information on the College website.
   - Advise/instruct Estates Managers and Welfare Officers
   - Arrange for snow clearance and gritting, using external assistance if necessary
   - In the event of College closure, join a conference call with the Principal, Director of Marketing and Communications and Deputy Principal to decide whether on whether to open sites the following day

   **Estates Managers – Attend site as appropriate and:**

   - Carry out relevant risk assessments.
• Assess if it is safe for the estates staff to grit/clear pathways and car parks.
• Ensure that staff are working in pairs/teams to ensure safety.
• Provide appropriate equipment to clear snow/ice.
• Provide relevant information, instructions and training to Estates staff regarding the procedure/tasks e.g. gritting manually or using machinery, use of PPE etc.
• Provide personal protective equipment (PPE).
• Monitor the weather conditions & gritting processes etc. to ensure safety.

Health & Safety Manager /Health & Safety Advisor
• Advice and guidance.
• Review and update the process as and when necessary.

Estates Staff & Security
• Carry out tasks only if it is safe to do so.
• Use PPE provided according to instruction for health & safety.
• Use equipment provided safely according to information, instructions and training.
• Report any issues, accidents or incidents to the Estates or management

Other related policies and codes of practices
• Health & Safety Process
• Emergency/Fire Process
• Accidents and Accident Reporting
• Lone work
• Corporate Disaster Recovery Plan
ANNEX A

Snow/Adverse Weather Conditions

Procedures
When the College experiences adverse weather conditions (snow, in particular) which makes travelling to College difficult, please follow the procedures below to ensure communication and actions are clear. If students are unsure if the College is open or closed they should check the College website, official Facebook page and Twitter or tune into the following radio stations:

- Free Radio
- Heart
- Radio West Midlands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SNOW OVERNIGHT</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| • Roads blocked  
  • Transport delayed/cancelled  
  • Experiencing problems in getting to sites |
| Head of College(s) with the help of the CCTV Monitor or nominated deputies will assess their campus situation and notify the Director of Estates of weather conditions and advise if the College should be open or closed to students. This will be done at 06:00hrs and the information passed to the Director of Estates by 06:30hrs. This information will be passed to the Principal who will make the final decision to close the College or campuses. |

College website – [www.bmet.ac.uk](http://www.bmet.ac.uk)

to provide regular updates on the Home Page

Radio Stations will announce details throughout the day

**Free Radio**
0121 566 5200  
01902 461300  
news@freeradio.wm.co.uk

**Heart FM**
0121 226 5700  
news@heartfm.co.uk

**BBC WM**
0121 567 6055  
bbcwm@bbc.co.uk

Once the Principal has been informed of the weather conditions he will inform the Director of Marketing and Communications of the final decision, if the College/campuses are open or closed. The Director of Marketing and Communications will telephone the radio station(s) to advise whether the College is open or closed.

The Principal will advise Marketing & Communication to update the website homepage and relevant social media sites (Facebook and Twitter accounts) at 06:30hrs.

IT Directorate will update College answer phone(s) by 06:45hrs.

The Principal will contact Duty Director and the Executive team to inform them of the decision regarding opening or closure by 06:45hrs.

The Executive team will immediately cascade this information to the Head of Faculties, Directors and Department Managers who will inform their teams.

Front line staff/or staff operating the service to advise callers that the College is open or closed.
Updates to appear on the official Facebook page

www.facebook.

Birmingham Metropolitan College
BMet Black Country
Kidderminster Academy
Birmingham Metropolitan

Twitter pages:
twitter@bmetc
twitter@bmetbc
twitter@kidderminsterac

College telephone numbers:
0121 446 4545 followed by the extension number:
- Matthew Boulton – 8000
- Sutton Coldfield – 5653
- James Watt – 2026
- Erdington – 4101
- HRC – 3500
- Kidderminster – 5802
- ADC – 3700

Monitoring of the weather conditions during the day. Head of College(s) are to prepare a draft statement for the following day in the event of closure/re-opening.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Snow Monitor</th>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>Contact No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gill Coldicott</td>
<td>HRC</td>
<td>07967 679609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colin Talbot</td>
<td>ADC</td>
<td>07967 679628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Dennant</td>
<td>MB</td>
<td>07726 694450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Vaughan</td>
<td>JW</td>
<td>07985 975361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeanette Prole</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>07726 580134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Holder</td>
<td>Erdington</td>
<td>0794 7541688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessie Elbaz</td>
<td>Harborne</td>
<td>0746 9178658</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Andrew Crowter – Director of Estates
Mobile: 0771 240 7011
Home: 024 7673 0287
### SNOW DURING THE DAY

- Heavy snow forecast
- Heavy snow fall and icy conditions
- Conditions deteriorate
- Student/staff safety concerns

If snow falls during the working day, Heads of Colleges will assess their campus situation and notify the Duty Director. The Duty Director will gather the relevant information and discuss with the Principal. The Principal will make the final decision to close either the whole College or individual sites.

### Closure Actions:

- Staff and students will be advised of site closure by their Directors and Department Managers where appropriate. Due to the different needs of each Directorates staff and students, the Head of College will manage the evacuation of their campus and ensure safe travel arrangements are in place for all individuals. Directors and Managers on site who are not directly involved in the supervision of students should report to the Head of College and help manage the evacuation.

- The Principal will advise Marketing & Communication to update the website homepage and relevant social media sites.

- Where the College closes early to students, students attending evening classes will be contacted by the Student Services team and other support teams at the earliest opportunity to avoid unnecessary travel. Contact should be made via telephone, mobile, text and e-mail if possible.

- Monitoring of the weather conditions during the day. Head of Colleges are to prepare a draft statement for the following day in the event of closure/re-opening.

- The Director of Estates will ensure that they are on site to provide support until the College has been vacated. All sites are to be fit for use, ensuring that paths, ramps and walkways are suitably gritted to allow safe access and egress to the College.

### ACTIONS IN THE EVENT OF FORECAST SEVERE ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS i.e. Prior to potential closure

**Adverse weather forecast**

- Line managers should discuss with their teams which members of staff are within walking distance of a College site and can therefore travel safely to College in the event of severe weather.

- Staff should, where possible, take sufficient work home to allow working at home if they are unable to safely reach any College site.

- Teaching staff to ensure that students have sufficient work
to do in the event of College closure.

- Assignments, homework etc. should be made available on Moodle with clear instructions to access as appropriate.

**College is closed to students in the event of adverse weather**

- Staff should wait for the Principals instructions as to whether to come into College. If a request is made for staff to attend they should ensure it is safe for them to do so.

- Staff who are unable to safely access the College should contact their line manager to advise their position and confirm they will be working from home.