

Closure of the UTC – Procedures and Guidelines – Staff and Students

1. Closure before the Start of the UTC Day

The decision to close the UTC will normally rest with the Head of College or in her absence a member of the Senior Leadership Team and will be confirmed with the Chair of Governors or, if they are unavailable, the Vice Chair. The decision shall be made where possible before 7.00am and on the basis of information received from:

- a) The media about the weather, condition of the roads and paths and public transport
- b) On the spot observation, either personally or from staff members (e.g. Site Team) better placed to make such observations
- c) Through appropriate external agencies such as the Met Office

Factors involved in reaching the decision to close the UTC are likely to be:

- a) Access to the UTC, i.e. road conditions (obstructions, snow, ice, flooding etc.)
- b) Breakdown of essential services (heating, electrical services, water, storm damage etc.)
- c) Specific advice received from Police, etc.

The Head of College will advise staff and Governors by activating the emergency telephone cascade list. Parents /carers and students are recommended to check the UTC website also, Wigan Council at www.wigan.gov.uk where further information specific to the UTC will be made available. They can also check the UTC's social media channels.

The whole of the UTC community, including contractors, shall be made regularly aware of this procedure as incidents can occur with little or no warning.

2. During the UTC Day Closure Guidance

On occasions it may be necessary for the UTC to close during the normal working day i.e. if the weather is deteriorating and there is doubt as to whether students can be returned home later in the day. In such cases the UTC will ensure that:

- a) The UTC uses the text and e-mail service to parents/carers, advises local radio and uses the UTC website to inform of early closure
- b) Where possible students use their usual bus service to take them home
- c) Students who have no access to home remain at the UTC until either collected or until parents /carers contact the UTC with alternative arrangements

3. Staff Attendance

Although it is recognised that severe weather conditions make it difficult for some staff to get to and from work, the expectation is that staff will present themselves for work unless advised to the contrary by the Head of College. The Head of College, with the Leadership Team, will assess whether there are sufficient staff present in the UTC to be opened /remain open safely and for curriculum delivery to be maintained.

4. Clearance of Snow

Within the site, the UTC is responsible for snow clearance and the clearing of approach paths is the specific task of the Site Team. When severe weather is forecast, the Site Team will be tasked to lay salt and grit on arrival. The clearance of public roads is the responsibility of the Highways Department. If there is any question of students' safety being at risk, for instance if they are let out at break time and the site area is unsafe, the UTC has a responsibility in inclement weather to keep the students indoors.

5. Public Examinations

In the event that there is extreme weather during a public examination period the exam session will go ahead if there are sufficient members of staff / invigilators present so that the exam conditions comply with the regulations of the examination boards. If the UTC has suffered power or heating failure and / or conditions are such that to attempt to get into the UTC would be dangerous for both students and staff the exam session will not go ahead and the UTC will contact the appropriate examination board.

The UTC will endeavour to contact all affected students in the event of cancellation of the Public Examination. The UTC website will be maintained with emergency closure details and any alternative examination arrangements. Any students who are unable to attend an exam session due to adverse weather conditions must contact the UTC at the earliest opportunity to inform them of the absence.

6. In the Event of the UTC being closed

If the UTC is closed it is the responsibility of the Head of College to ensure that the following events happen:

- The decision is ratified with the Chair of Governors (or Vice Chair of Governors)
- The UTC website is updated
- The Emergency Closure Plan cascade list is activated via text message services
- The information is passed to relevant media agencies as soon as possible
- The UTC answerphone is amended to a short closure message
- Notices are placed on the UTC entrances advising visitors, parents/carers and students that the UTC is closed
- The Head of College is kept updated during the day of the condition of the site and the likely consequences for the next UTC day

These tasks do not all have to be completed by the Principal, although they have the overall responsibility for ensuring each has been carried out. The decision for the UTC to remain closed will be reviewed by the Head of College on a daily basis and agreed and communicated.

7. Emergency Contacts

Safe and speedy dismissal of students in the event of an emergency closure depends on the UTC and parents working in partnership. Parents should provide the UTC with any specific instructions in respect of their child should the UTC require to close during the day. Parents are required to give the UTC an emergency contact.

8. Precautions

It may be that a parent who collects his/her children offers to give shelter to other children. The agreement of the parents of these children should be sought before releasing students in this way. The provision of adequate supervision by members of teaching staff will be made for those students who cannot go home immediately and have therefore to remain at the UTC.

Version and Date	Action/Notes
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