

Policy on adverse weather conditions affecting Higher Education Review visits

This policy is designed to protect the integrity of the review method while also minimising the disruption to all parties which might be caused by a delay to, or postponement of, the review visit. Any alternative arrangements entered into owing to adverse weather conditions will be by mutual agreement of QAA and the provider.

Attendance at the review visit by the QAA officer

If adverse weather conditions prevent, or appear likely to prevent, the QAA officer from arriving at the provider at the scheduled start time of the review visit then the officer should contact the facilitator and the review team immediately to discuss alternative arrangements, as follows.

- If the officer's arrival is likely to be delayed by 24 hours or less, then the review team should carry on with the scheduled review activities without officer support.
- If the officer's arrival is likely to be delayed by more than 24 hours, or if the review visit is scheduled for one day only, then QAA will attempt to arrange for an alternative officer to attend the review visit. If that is not possible, then QAA would propose to delay the start of the review visit (for example by starting a three-day visit on the Tuesday instead of the scheduled Monday) or to postpone the review visit to a later date.

Attendance at the review visit by reviewers

If adverse weather conditions prevent, or appear likely to prevent, reviewers from arriving at the provider at the scheduled start time of the review visit then the officer should contact the facilitator and the review team immediately to discuss alternative arrangements, as follows.

- If half of the review team or less is likely to be delayed by 24 hours or less, then the remaining reviewers should carry on with the scheduled review activities.
- If half of the review team or less is likely to be delayed by more than 24 hours, or if the review visit is scheduled for one day only, then QAA would propose to delay the start of the review visit (for example by starting a three-day visit on the Tuesday instead of the scheduled Monday) or to postpone the review visit to a later date.
- If more than half of the review team is likely to be delayed by 24 hours or less, then QAA would propose to shorten the review visit or delay the start of the review visit (for example by starting and finishing the review visit half-a-day later than scheduled).
- If more than half of the review team is likely to be delayed by more than 24 hours, or if the review visit is scheduled for one day only, then QAA would propose to delay the start of the review visit or to postpone the review visit to a later date.

Attendance at the review visit by staff and students

If adverse weather conditions prevent, or appear likely to prevent, staff and/or students from attending meetings with the review team, then the provider should contact the QAA officer immediately to discuss alternative arrangements. We envisage that the absence of one or two staff and/or students would not normally affect the review schedule: either the remaining staff and/or students could field the reviewers' questions, or the provider could nominate alternative attendees. However, if a significant number of staff and/or students are unavailable to meet the team, then QAA would propose to reschedule the meetings to a later part of the review visit, to delay the start of the review visit, or to postpone the review visit to a later date.

Attendance at the review visit by the lead student representative and/or facilitator

If adverse weather conditions prevent, or appear likely to prevent, the lead student representative (LSR) and/or facilitator from arriving at the provider for their first scheduled interaction with the review team, then the provider should contact the QAA officer immediately to discuss alternative arrangements, as follows.

- If the LSR's and/or facilitator's arrival is likely to be delayed by 24 hours or less, then the review team should carry on with the scheduled review activities.
- If the LSR's and/or facilitator's arrival is likely to be delayed by more than 24 hours, or if the review visit is scheduled for one day only, then the LSR and/or facilitator would be expected to nominate a substitute to fulfil their role(s).

Closure of the provider

If adverse weather conditions mean that the provider's premises are closed, then the provider should contact the QAA officer immediately to discuss alternative arrangements, as follows.

- If the closure is likely to last for 24 hours or less, then QAA would propose to shorten the review visit or delay the start of the review visit.
- If the closure is likely to last for more than 24 hours, or if the review visit is scheduled for one day only, then QAA would propose to delay the start of the review visit or postpone the review visit to a later date.