



Bad Weather Policy

1. Purpose

This policy sets out Stanfords Training's approach to managing severe or adverse weather so as to protect the health, safety and welfare of learners, staff, visitors and contractors, and to preserve the integrity of training and assessment activities. It explains how the organisation will prepare for predictable seasonal risks, how decisions will be made about opening, closing or operating on a reduced basis, how communications will be handled, and what specific contingency actions apply to scheduled assessments and examinations.

2. Scope

The policy applies to every Stanfords Training site, to staff, to learners and to third parties acting on the company's behalf. It covers all in-person training and assessment activity, practical assessments and examinations run at Stanfords sites, remote or online invigilated assessments where weather affects local access or infrastructure, and work-based or off-site assessment visits.

3. Principles and Duties

Stanfords Training accepts a duty of care to its learners and staff. Decisions will be driven by an assessment of risk to safety, the practicality of running sessions or assessments, and the guidance of awarding organisations where examinations are affected. Wherever possible the company will favour reasonable accommodation (for example remote working, rescheduling or alternate venues) rather than automatic cancellation, provided that safety and regulatory integrity are not compromised.

4. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, "bad weather" or "severe weather" refers to meteorological conditions that materially increase the risk of harm or disruption, including but not limited to heavy snow, freezing ice, widespread flooding, high winds or storms, and extreme heat that creates health risks in working environments. "Assessments" includes any formal, summative examinations and tests administered under the rules of an awarding organisation.

5. Preparedness and Risk Assessment

Stanfords Training will maintain current arrangements to mitigate weather risks. The Operations & Compliance Manager is responsible for ensuring that site risk assessments include foreseeable weather hazards and appropriate control measures. Sites will hold up-to-date contact lists for staff, learners and awarding organisations, and maintain simple contingency plans for relocation, secure storage and transportation of exam materials, and for providing welfare to learners affected by travel disruption. Managers will carry out dynamic, event-specific risk assessments whenever weather threatens normal operations, documenting findings and control measures.

6. Decision-Making on Opening, Reduced Service or Closure

Decisions about opening, operating a reduced service or closing premises because of weather will be taken by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) in consultation with the Operations & Compliance Manager and the local centre manager. The decision will be based on an assessment of current local weather warnings, the physical condition of the site (for example access routes, walkways and parking), the availability of required staff and invigilators, the safety of learners and staff travelling to the site, and any scheduled high-stakes assessments. The SLT will record the time of the decision, the information considered and the names of those involved. Where possible decisions will be made early to give staff and learners sufficient notice, but safety and practical considerations will be paramount.

7. Staff Attendance, Pay and Flexible Working

Where the centre remains open but an individual member of staff cannot safely travel, managers should consider remote working, flexible start and finish times, or use of annual leave in line with contract terms. There is no automatic statutory entitlement to pay for non-attendance solely because of adverse weather; the organisation will follow contractual obligations and existing HR policy and will apply them consistently. Managers should treat staff sympathetically and reasonably, balancing operational needs with personal safety.

8. Health, Safety and Welfare Measures by Weather Type

When cold weather, snow or ice is forecast or present, Stanfords Training will prioritise clearing and gritting main pedestrian routes and car parks where it is safe and practical to do so, post clear signage for hazardous areas, and restrict access to any unsafe external areas. Personnel will not be asked to undertake high-risk outdoor tasks alone. During flooding incidents, staff will not attempt to move people through floodwater; instead they will follow local guidance and evacuate to a safe, higher location if required. In the event of storm or high winds, staff should secure or remove loose outdoor items and suspend use of exposed structures if structural safety is in doubt. During heatwaves the organisation will take reasonable steps to reduce indoor temperatures and the risk of heat stress: adjusting timetables, providing drinking water and rest breaks, and allowing relaxed dress codes consistent with health and safety requirements. In all weather conditions the safety of vulnerable learners will be a primary consideration and Designated Safeguarding Leads must be available or on-call if required.

9. Examination and Assessment Contingency

Stanfords Training recognises the particular regulatory requirements that apply to formal assessments and examinations. The centre will maintain a written exam contingency plan that addresses centre closure, candidate non-attendance, venue evacuation, loss of ICT or platform failure for remote invigilation, and the secure transportation of exam materials. If weather threatens an assessment day, centre staff will contact the awarding organisation immediately to notify them of the situation and to obtain their guidance on relocation, deferral or transfer of candidates. Any alternative venue used for examinations must meet awarding body rules on security and invigilation and must be approved by the awarding organisation where required. If remote assessments are interrupted by local internet or power failures, the centre will log the failure, gather supporting evidence and follow awarding body instructions on re-runs or special consideration. Where a

candidate's performance may have been affected by weather or travel disruption, the centre will apply for special consideration in line with the awarding organisation's process and retain supporting evidence.

10. Communications

When bad weather affects operations, communications will be clear, prompt and recorded. The centre will use a combination of email, SMS and phone to notify affected learners and staff of decisions about opening, closure or changes to assessment arrangements, and will update the website and voicemail greeting. Initial messages will be brief and factual, setting out the decision and where further information can be found. Detailed follow-up communications will explain arrangements for assessments, alternative provision if available, how learners should contact the centre, and any welfare support available. Communications with awarding organisations will be logged in full and will include the names of contacts spoken to and any instructions given.

11. Safeguarding and Duty of Care

Stanfords Training will ensure that safeguarding arrangements remain effective during weather events. If a learner is unable to travel home safely, staff will follow safeguarding procedures to ensure the learner's welfare, including contacting emergency or social services where appropriate and notifying parents, carers or emergency contacts. The centre will ensure that at least one senior staff member with safeguarding responsibility is available or on-call during severe weather events.

12. Record-Keeping

The centre will maintain comprehensive records of weather-related incidents and actions taken. Records will include copies of weather warnings, photographs of site conditions where relevant, the log of decisions and the rationale for them, copies of communications sent to staff, learners and awarding organisations, and any evidence submitted in support of special consideration requests. Such records will be retained in accordance with the organisation's retention schedule and will be made available for inspection by awarding organisations or regulators if requested.

13. Training, Testing and Review

All staff involved in planning, delivery and administration of assessments will receive training on this policy and on the centre's exam contingency procedures. The centre will test its contingency arrangements at least annually, using table-top exercises or practical drills, and will review and update the policy after any weather-related activation or at least once each year.

14. Roles and Responsibilities

Overall authority for the activation and communication of this policy rests with the Senior Leadership Team. The Operations & Compliance Manager is responsible for maintaining and reviewing the policy, for ensuring risk assessments are in place, and for holding current contact details for awarding organisations. Centre managers will conduct local site checks, coordinate immediate mitigations and enact the local communications plan. Trainers, assessors and invigilators must comply with instructions from centre managers and complete required records. All staff are

expected to familiarise themselves with the policy and to follow the guidance issued during bad weather incidents.

15. Quick Operational Checklist

When severe weather threatens or occurs, managers should:

- Check official weather warnings and local authority guidance immediately.
- Conduct a rapid site inspection to confirm whether access and facilities are safe.
- Decide whether to open, to operate a reduced service or to close, and record the decision and rationale.
- Notify staff, learners and awarding organisations as required.
- Put in place mitigation measures such as gritting, relocation of assessments or arrangement of alternative provision.
- Log all communications and preserve evidence required for special consideration or regulator queries.

16. Templates and Appendices

The centre will maintain template communications (brief SMS alert, full email to learners, voicemail script and awarding organisation notification template) and an appendix containing contact details for awarding organisations used by Stanfords Training. The appendix will be kept up to date by the Operations & Compliance Manager.

Policy Date: 01/11/2025

Next Review Date: 31/10/2026



Signature: