

Estates & Facilities – Greenwich Campus

Winter Weather Policy

January 2024

It is the policy of Estates & Facilities Operations at Greenwich Campus to maintain safe pathways and roadways within the campus during the autumn / winter months, as far as practicable and as resources allow.

The following areas are maintained by the University of Greenwich

- Queen Anne courtyard
- Dreadnought and Stephen Lawrence grounds
- Hamilton House service yard and grounds
- Stockwell Street rear service yard and roof gardens
- Cooper Building grounds and car park
- Bounty House entrance, walkways and fire exit routes
- Devonport House grounds and car park
- Daniel Defoe and Cutty Sark accommodation entrances and walkways

All other areas on campus (the Old Royal Naval College grounds) are maintained by our landlord, the Greenwich Foundation. Close liaison with the Foundation is necessary to ensure the safety of building users in the event of adverse weather conditions.

Responsibilities

The University's facilities management service provider, Sodexo and their specialist subcontractor will:

- Maintain a five-day weather rolling forecast from November of April using the BBC weather or Met Office forecasts.
- If reports predict that temperatures will fall to 0°C or below, schedule gritting of roads, carparks, and footpaths.
- Use best endeavours to ensure that gritting takes place before predicted severe weather over a weekend or other non-working period, the ability to do so will depend on the availability of staff.
- If there is more than 2cm of snow on the ground at the time of the subcontractor visit, manually clear this from the main access routes.
- If local forecasts predict 5cm or more of snow due to fall in the period between 12.00pm and 06.00am the following day, mechanical snow clearance will be activated by midday on the day. This will include snow clearance of the UoG delivery areas, access roads and car parking spaces (where under UoG management).
- Contact the Estates & Facilities Site Manager to advise them of these actions.
- Instruct grounds and portering teams to assist in minimising the impact of severe weather by manually gritting building entrances and exits.

- Provide priority gritting plans for each campus annually to UoG for approval.
- Check stores of salt regularly and ensure that the salt bins are full and salt stock levels are appropriate for the prevailing weather conditions. An order for the salt should be placed when stocks are diminished by one third when gritting is taking place. Stocks of salt should be brought up to full capacity in the summer months.
- Maintain the appropriate supply of gritting/snow clearance equipment for use by the portering staff.

The Estates & Facilities Site Manager will:

- Liaise accordingly with senior staff if serious adverse weather conditions are forecast.
- Be responsible for periodically reviewing the policy considering changing circumstances or other relevant guidance.

Preventative Measures

Preventative gritting will be carried out when frost, ice or snow is forecast for the following day or when walkways are likely to be damp or wet and the floor temperatures are predicted to be below freezing. Such gritting will be undertaken during the afternoon as necessary to the priority areas identified below, under the direction of the Sodexo Service Delivery Manager. The exception will be when heavy rain is also forecast as any grit/salt is likely to be washed away.

To avoid stock being diminished too quickly during preventative gritting, only a light scattering of grit will be laid. Grit will not be left in clumps as this could be a trip hazard.

Although Sodexo will do their best to ensure that gritting takes place before predicted severe weather, over a weekend or other non-working period, the ability to do so will depend on the availability of staff.

Reactive Measures

Following particularly heavy snowfall, it may be necessary to undertake further gritting during the day as detailed above. At such times, portering staff will carry out as a priority, and consequently their normal duties will be suspended or delayed. As gritting is less effective on compacted snow, snow shovels will need to be used to clear snow before further grit is applied. Such treatment will continue as required until weather conditions improve.

Priority Areas

Gritting and ice/snow clearance will be undertaken to the following areas in order of priority:

- All building entrances
- All external steps (to Dreadnought grounds, Queen Anne Courtyard, Queen Mary side door, Hamilton House entrance, Stockwell Street fire escape stairs, Cooper Building front entrance)
- Key routes in Dreadnought grounds, Queen Anne Courtyard and Stockwell Street fire escape, Bounty House walkways and fire escape, Devonport House grounds
- Liaison with the Greenwich Foundation for key routes between buildings and to car parks and bus stops.

General Health & Safety Guidance

The presence of snow and ice does present Health & Safety risks as the potential for slips, trips and falls increases significantly. It is worth noting that the application of grit to pathways and roads will not immediately guarantee areas are free from ice/snow as it does not work instantly; it needs sufficient time to dissolve into the moisture on the surface. Furthermore, in severely cold weather (below -8°C) even salt will not prevent roads and paths from icing up. Be aware that if there is fresh snowfall overnight on areas that have been gritted and the temperature drops below freezing there could be ice under the fresh snow.

It is therefore important that all persons on site adhere to common-sense protocols such as:

- Take due care, do not expect areas to have been cleared, you have a duty to yourself and to others to act responsibly.
- Walk, do not run.
- Wear sensible footwear with non-slip soles.
- Try where possible to leave hands free to aid balance and/or in the event of a fall you will be better able to minimise effects of a slip, trip or fall.
- Allow more time for your journey.
- Be mindful of slipping whilst walking and using ramps and steps.
- If driving be mindful of skidding when leaving car parks as they are not gritted.
- Comply with any reductions in speed limits on site.

Reporting Hazardous Conditions:

Hazardous conditions should be reported immediately by calling the 24/7 Helpdesk on 020 8331 7779