

UPDATE

for UCU Reps in the

North West Region



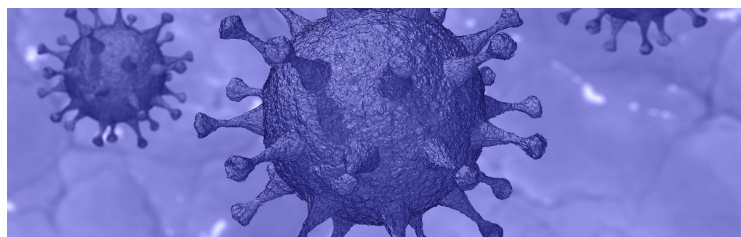
University and College Union

No.2

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Furlough

UCU have updated their Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) [guidance](#) in light of the newly published [DfE guidance](#) on the CJRS & “Furlough” for FE and HE. It is clear that most UCU members should not be furloughed as they will be undertaking jobs supported by public funding. However, we are supporting a number of branches where the employer is proposing to furlough staff. For the most part these instances relate to staff with roles that are not publically funded. We have also written Section 181 letters to all employers calling on them to disclose information on their furlough arrangements. **If your branch is contacted by the employer about furlough, please contact the Regional Office for support.**

Annual Leave News

A temporary amendment to [The Working Time Regulations 1998](#) now allows employees and workers to carry over up to 4 weeks’ paid holiday into their next two holiday leave years if it wasn’t ‘reasonably practicable’ to take it in the normal leave year due to Covid-19.

Scenarios in which this might apply include if staff are on a rota over the normal holiday periods or if staff are undertaking other work that makes it difficult to take leave during the pandemic. UCU has updated its guidance on annual leave accordingly and this is available [here](#). ACAS guidance is also available [here](#).

If the employer is seeking to change your annual leave scheme such as front loading or seeking reductions this is a different matter and should be one for collective bargaining.

If this is happening, please seek advice from the Regional Office.

Trade Union Organising

How to organise during the Coronavirus? Follow the link [here](#) to a recording of a TUC webinar on organising during the crisis.

Topics for UCU NW Webinars: Furlough? WFH? Online JNCs? Email us with your ideas. Webinars will begin in the coming weeks.

Working From Home (WFH) & Phone Calls to Students

We have received a number of safeguarding enquiries regarding making phone calls to students whilst working from home. Below are some key pieces of advice to consider. However, reps should contact Regional Office for more specific advice on this issue before engaging with the employer.

Equality Impact Assessment

An instruction to make telephone calls from home is likely to have an impact on members with protected characteristics and may have the effect of treating some less favourably – not everyone can make telephone calls, and some home environments may not be suitable. An equality impact assessment should be expected.

Health and Safety

Where there is ‘significant change’ an employer is under a duty to conduct a risk assessment [MHASAWR Reg 3](#), and the employer should consult with safety reps [HASAW S.2\(6\)](#). Risk assessments and consultation with safety reps should seek to address safeguarding issues by agreeing parameters for this work to be undertaken safely.

Branches should seek agreements from employers to ensure that members are **not required** to make calls to students whilst working from home.

Where members do agree to make calls:

- only voice calls should be made to students. No video calls.
- calls should only be made to 16yrs+ learners.
- the employer should provide every member making voice calls with a mobile handset and SIM card to maintain professional boundaries and to seek to ensure data security

UCU attacks cuts

UCU have attacked the University of Manchester for threatening staff with job losses and pay cuts in response to the Covid-19 crisis. Highlighting the hard work of staff, [UCU called upon the university](#) to collaborate with the union to secure financial support from the government. Click [here](#) for updates.

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UCU Employee Safety Checklist for Temporary Homeworking

We have received a number of safeguarding enquires from FE branches. To assist members in ensuring that the working environment is as safe as reasonably practicable, the following Employee Safety Checklist may be used in line with the adapted [HSE Home Working Guidance](#) and all other safety duties that still apply.

The completed document can be passed to the relevant line manager to assist in the monitoring of safety and to support any requests for additional resources that may be needed to assist home working for individual members.

For a PDF/printable version of this checklist, please follow the link [here](#).

Hazards	Yes/No	Controls
Workstation		
Workstation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the employers work equipment fit for purpose and maintained with the manufactures recommendations?
Display Screen Equipment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are you able to use the equipment and workstation to the required standards? <p><i>If you have special requirements such as a disability or are pregnant than a full risk DSE assessment should be completed</i></p>
Electrical Installations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out visual checks on electrical items before use Do not overload plug sockets Seek to ensure trailing cables do not cause trip hazards
Environment		
Lighting and Temperature		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek to ensure the lighting is sufficient around your work area Is your working area temperature suitable? Does it have adequate ventilation?
Slips & Trips		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure your work area is clear of slip & trip hazards
Access and Egress		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure your access and egress is maintained at all times to maintain fire routes
Welfare Facilities		
Welfare Facilities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure you take regular breaks Is the space available adequate for the tasks to be carried out?
Stress/Mental health		
Workload/Performance/Transfer to new methods of working		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek to ensure that the demands on your time are proportionate with the new way of working Has the employer identified who to contact if you have any concerns? Are your employer's mental health support policies and systems adequate for you? Consider whether a stand-alone stress risk assessment is required in your case

Identification of any problems/ Requests for support:

(Look to identify any outstanding resources or support that you may need here)

If you have any questions, about Employee safety, please contact the Regional Office for advice.