

UPDATE

for UCU Reps in the

North West Region



University and College Union

No.5

13 JUNE 2020

 @ucunorthwest

 @ucU



FE reps: updated guidance for risk assessments

NEXT STEPS FOR UCU FE REPS RESPONDING TO RISK ASSESSMENTS THAT ARE 'NOT SUITABLE OR SUFFICIENT'

STAGE ONE

Last week a number of UCU branches across the North West wrote to employers whose risk assessments were 'not suitable or sufficient.' UCU also wrote to members to update them of the union's response to institutional risk assessments which were 'not suitable or sufficient' providing advice for individuals who wished to remain working remotely due to concerns over a return to on-site working at present.

Most employers have responded to UCU by requesting emergency meetings and JNCs to discuss the problems the union had identified with existing risk assessments. At this stage, UCU still has a number of concerns regarding the latest employer responses.

STAGE TWO

i) A UCU MODEL RISK ASSESSMENT

To support reps in addressing the existing risk assessments with are 'not suitable or sufficient', UCU NW is now producing a model risk assessment template. This document will support your negotiations with the employer. The document will be ready by the end of this week.

ii) ARRANGING JNCs TO DISCUSS THE UCU MODEL RISK ASSESSMENT

In the meanwhile, we advise you to: a) inform the employer that UCU is producing a model risk assessment to address the union's concerns over the employer's existing proposals; and b) to arrange JNCs and meetings with the employer for the start of w/c 22 June where the UCU proposals can be discussed. UCU NW Regional Office can provide guidance for reps entering negotiations with the employer. and if you require support in these talks then please liaise with the office over a suitable time and date.

iii) COMMUNICATIONS TO MEMBERS

We advise that you update your members of the current steps being taken by your branch negotiators. The UCU advice for members concerned about returning to on-site work communicated last week remains the same. If any member who has communicated their wish to remain working remotely to a manager if faced with any pressure, then please contact UCU NW Regional Office immediately: fenorthwest@UCU.ORG.UK

Fund the future: build the campaign in your branch

UCU launches campaign with message to prime minister that universities and colleges desperately need a clear and coherent plan from government if the UK is to avoid losing educational capacity at a time when it will be needed most.

In a [letter to Boris Johnson](#) to launch the union's '[Fund the Future' campaign](#), UCU general secretary Jo Grady said the government's limited actions so far had failed to meet the challenges further and higher education face and called for financial intervention to stop thousands of teachers, researchers and professional support staff losing their jobs.

As well as writing to the Prime Minister, the union has urged its members and the public to use the [new campaign website](#) to contact their local MP to make the case for more funding and support. UCU has also launched a new [campaign video](#) and the [campaign resources pack for branches](#). A number of UCU branches in the North West have already begun to develop their campaigns and organise planning meetings. Please keep us informed of any proposals your employer tables which impacts on jobs, pay and terms and conditions. UCU has also produced new bargaining advice here to help you develop a response. If you need advice and support with your branch campaign and negotiation strategies, please email henorthwest@ucu.org.uk

UCU NW online events: Wednesdays & Fridays

UCU NW now hosts weekly online events to support reps during the current Covid-19 pandemic.

On Wednesdays at 12:30 the Regional Office hosts a webinar for local reps dealing with key bargaining issues and campaigns. The Wednesday webinar runs on a two-week rotation: there is an FE reps webinar on one week, followed by a HE reps webinar the next week after.

On Fridays we host a more informal "drop-in" surgery from 12:30-13:30. This gives reps for FE and HE a further opportunity to receive immediate guidance members of the Regional Office team. Invitations and details of these sessions are emailed to branch secretaries and chairs weekly—please enquire with your senior branch officers for access details.

 fenorthwest@UCU.ORG.UK

 henorthwest@UCU.ORG.UK