

# UPDATE

for UCU members in the

## North West Region

# UCU

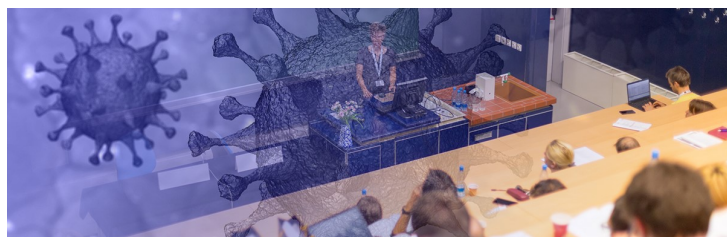
University and College Union

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## University of Manchester under fire for job loss plans

- Email to staff threatens cuts and job losses due to pandemic
- Threats come as UCU calls for government intervention to address a potential £2.5bn 'black hole' in UK HE

UCU have attacked the University of Manchester for threatening staff with job losses and pay cuts in response to the Covid-19 crisis. In an [email to staff](#), the university said it is considering a range of cost-cutting measures to address a projected £270 million shortfall from reduced student numbers in 2020/21.

Highlighting the hard work of staff, including their swift transition to online learning, [UCU called upon the university](#) to collaborate with the union to secure financial support from the government to address the impact of the crisis and to ensure that HE plays a leading role in the recovery.

The University of Manchester's announcement came as a [UCU commissioned report warned that the UK HE sector faced a £2.5 billion loss](#) from the Covid-19 pandemic and ensuing recession. The estimated £2.5 billion loss is based upon the projection of 111,000 fewer UK and 121,000 fewer international first year students attending UK universities this year.

The report warns that, without government intervention, an estimated 30,000 university jobs are at risk, with a further 32,000 jobs under threat throughout the wider economy. The total economic cost to the country from the reduced direct and indirect economic activity generated by universities due to the loss in income is estimated at more than £6bn.

UCU is now calling on the government to guarantee the £2.5bn in lost tuition fees, pointing out that doing so would offset greater economic hardship overall. UCU General Secretary Jo Grady has also [called for a re-evaluation of the funding mechanisms](#) that have left the [HE sector particularly exposed](#) in this current crisis.

For the latest updates from the UCU branch University of Manchester, follow the branch on [twitter](#) and [facebook](#).

## Support the UCU Campaign: urge your MP to protect post-16 Education

- Write to your local MP and support our call for the government to support post-16 Education by underwriting lost income.
- Build your local branch

As well as the obvious health implications, the current Covid-19 crisis is creating huge financial uncertainty for staff and students in post-16 education. UCU has [written to the secretary of state for education](#) calling for urgent action to mitigate the risk of losing vital academic capacity across the system at just the time when it will be needed most.

UCU is calling on all members to write to their MP and call for urgent action to mitigate the risk of losing vital academic capacity across colleges and universities at just the time when it will be needed most. UCU has designed [a template letter for you to write to your MP](#) and ask them to support our demands.

UCU branches across the North West are also re-structuring their organizational efforts in light of the lockdown. Many branches are now hosting online meetings. If you're not normally accustomed to taking part in meetings of your UCU branch, now is the time to start. You will hear from colleagues in similar positions and together you can decide what your collective response should be. For your local branch contact, click [here](#).

## Your annual leave

**Contact your local branch for advice on any changes**  
UCU has updated its [guidance on annual leave](#) in light of temporary changes to [The Working Time Regulations 1998](#). However, if your employer or line manager is seeking to change your annual leave scheme or if you have concerns over a request for annual leave, then **contact your local UCU reps immediately**.

 [fenorthwest@UCU.ORG.UK](mailto:fenorthwest@UCU.ORG.UK)

 [henorthwest@UCU.ORG.UK](mailto:henorthwest@UCU.ORG.UK)

## UCU forces a back down on 'business as usual' approach

- **Trafford College Group delays merger**
- **Pressure from UCU**

The world is in the grip of a global pandemic, Britain is on lockdown, Glastonbury takes a fallow year and the Olympics are postponed. But it seemed that nothing could stop the march of Trafford College Group as it sought to pursue a business as usual approach. The College had recently announced plans for a 30 day 'public consultation' on its proposed merger with Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College.

When first pushed by UCU to postpone the consultation until after the lockdown, the College insisted that business could continue as usual on this front. However, after concerted pressure from the local UCU branch and NW Regional Office, the college has now postponed the merger.

## Working From Home (WFH) and online teaching

- **Online and recorded material should be subject to a 'lecture capture' agreement between UCU and the employer**
- **Contact your local UCU reps for safeguarding enquires regarding online meetings or calls with students**

Since the crisis began, UCU members have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to their students in a rapid transition to online teaching. To support you, UCU has provided guidance on [Working From Home and Online Teaching available here](#).

We have recently received a number of enquiries regarding the delivery and recording of online classes. Online video conferencing platforms have well documented [privacy issues](#). Before any recording takes place, you should check with your local UCU branch regarding existing agreements with the employer to allow the archiving of any recording.

Any requests for staff to undertake online meetings or classes with students, should be subject to negotiation with the local UCU branch. **If you are asked to undertake online meetings or classes with students or to record lecture material, then contact your UCU branch for advice.**

## Disciplinary Hearings

- **Keep in touch with your rep if you have a case**

UCU's view is that other than for exceptional reasons employers should suspend procedures and postpone meetings or hearings under discipline/grievance/capability and other such procedures. Members should be entitled to request that any formal hearings are postponed and conducted in person at a later date.

## Update on furlough in FE

- **UCU Further Education Committee issues Covid-19 statement**
- **UCU and AoC agree joint statement on job retention scheme**

UCU's further education committee met on Friday 24 April 2020 and agreed a statement on the Covid-19 crisis, [which can be read here](#).

The statement includes information on UCU's participation in consultation is with Ofqual on assessments and grading. It also discusses funding and furloughing in FE, Adult Education and Prison Education. Importantly it notes that government 'funding for adults is mostly secured and 16-18 is guaranteed throughout the crisis.' This means furloughing does not apply to those whose wages are directly financed by government funding.

UCU has also agreed a [statement](#) with the Association of Colleges (AoC) on the Job Retention scheme. The statement includes an aim to furlough staff whose wages are not covered by government funding and where possible to top up staff salaries to 100%.

**If you are contacted by your employer about furlough, please contact your local UCU reps immediately.**

## Managing Anxiety during the Covid-19 crisis

- **New materials available from Education Support Partnership**
- [Education Support Partnership](#) works with UCU to support the health and wellbeing of educators in the UK. They are hearing from educators about the difficulties they are facing during the coronavirus crisis. In response they are producing [a series of new mental health resources](#) for teachers, lecturers and support staff, the first of which looks at [managing anxiety](#).

Please share these with your colleagues, friends and family working in education.

## Rise in NW membership

- **Branch activity remains vital**
- **Membership growth continues**

UCU membership across the North West continues to grow during the pandemic. Manchester Metropolitan University UCU witnessed a 5% membership growth in the month of April alone. It is at moments of crisis when unions are of vital importance. To support local branches, UCU has produced guidance on branch democracy and the crisis [here](#).

