

**Guidelines for managers and staff:
Advice on handling coronavirus (Covid-19) whilst working on
campus and/or from home**

Updated as at: 8 April 2020

Dear colleagues,

I am conscious that whenever I update our questions and answers the details may be out of date by the time I share this document with you, but it is timely to update now – 8 April 2020 – as during the past few days there have been several questions raised about annual leave commitments; the government's coronavirus job retention scheme where 'furlough' arrangements apply; and car parking arrangements on campus. All of these questions are contained within this document and for ease of reference answers can be found where indicated at point 6 (pages 5-7), point 7 (pages 7-8) and point 16 (pages 9-10).

As ever, do let me know if you have a particular question you feel may be useful to share and/or you would like me to raise within this document. We will continue to monitor the current situation and national advice and communicate with you all where this advice changes.

Whilst writing, we have developed some online networking opportunities for you to participate in:

We recognise the importance of colleagues still being able to communicate with each other whilst you are working remotely and others remain on campus. The chat on the way to the office or on your way to teaching after parking the car, or the ad-hoc catch up with someone you see on the way to the canteen are important to forming our community, and so we still want to provide opportunities to get together (virtually) and chat with other colleagues. We therefore invite you to join us for a tea (or coffee) at 10am on Thursdays for a chance to catch up with colleagues over Skype. '**Chi Tea@10am**' will be a casual half hour catch-up anyone can join from across the University. If you would be interested in joining us this Thursday 9 April (or any Thursday whilst colleagues are working remotely), please just let us know via response to staffdevelopment@chi.ac.uk and we will send you joining details.

We are also looking into online social networking opportunities to act as a way to keep in touch with each other whilst working remotely and when back on campus too. More information about this will be sent out soon.

To help us settle into our 'new normal', we have developed a page of resources to help with working from home: <http://wordpress.chi.ac.uk/staffdevelopment/working->

[from-home/](#). There are also articles on managing your team remotely, setting up your workspace and ways to look after your mental health while working from home.

Karen Hobbs, Exercise and Health Co-ordinator in Tudor Hale, is also creating some great exercise videos and further wellbeing resources on, for example, nutrition and meditation you can participate in at home. These can be found on their Facebook and Instagram pages @TudorHaleCentreforSport and of course the IT team continue to offer a range of online training.

Some of our face-to-face training sessions will now be taking place virtually through online interactive seminars. These will be facilitated by the original trainers who we are working closely with to ensure they are just as interactive and effective as usual. More information on these virtual sessions will be sent out soon.

In the meantime, the essential online training links can be found here:

<http://wordpress.chi.ac.uk/staffdevelopment/essential-training/>

I sincerely wish you and your families all the very best during this Easter weekend.

With my best wishes,

Lissie

Frequently asked questions

1. As an employee am I required to follow University advice on coronavirus?

Yes. All staff are encouraged to regularly check advice available on the University's home page and in regular email updates/questions and answers and to follow the guidance indicated. The health and wellbeing of our students, staff and our community is of utmost importance.

2. What are my health and safety obligations?

The University has a duty to protect the health and safety of employees. Employees also have a duty to take reasonable care for the health and safety of both themselves and others who may be affected by their acts (or indeed omissions) at work. The safety and wellbeing of staff and students is paramount, and the University is continuously monitoring the situation as government guidance is received.

It remains important for everyone to adopt good hygiene measures and for staff to follow the guidance provided, whether working on campus or working from home.

3. I am a manager supporting staff working from home. What should I be considering?

Some teams and individuals can work from home (or a location remote from the University) relatively easily and will be doing so already. As such they are more likely to have suitable IT equipment in place already and experience of accessing University software and services whilst at home.

All managers are encouraged to support remote working options with their staff and consider government advice, agreeing working from home arrangements wherever possible, even if they have not thought it possible to work from home before. The views and concerns of the individual carrying out a particular role should be considered. As a guideline (and there will be exceptions to these examples):

- Working from home should be considered for the following:
 - Those who already do so successfully.
 - Those who can do so without significant detriment to their role i.e. with some minor adaptations or changes in expectation.
 - Those who have the equipment and suitable environment to do so.
 - Those who fulfill the above and are at higher risk by virtue of age or health condition.
- The principles of home working should be followed to take into consideration personal circumstances. Such requests may be due to the following examples:
 - Being a part-time carer for an elderly and/or vulnerable adult.

- Living with a child or other adult who has a severe and chronic health condition.
- Supporting a partner who has an underlying health condition and whose external networks of support have been closed due to the coronavirus outbreak.
- The use of public transport to commute where this becomes unavailable.

Colleagues in IT have provided helpful guidance for us all to refer to:

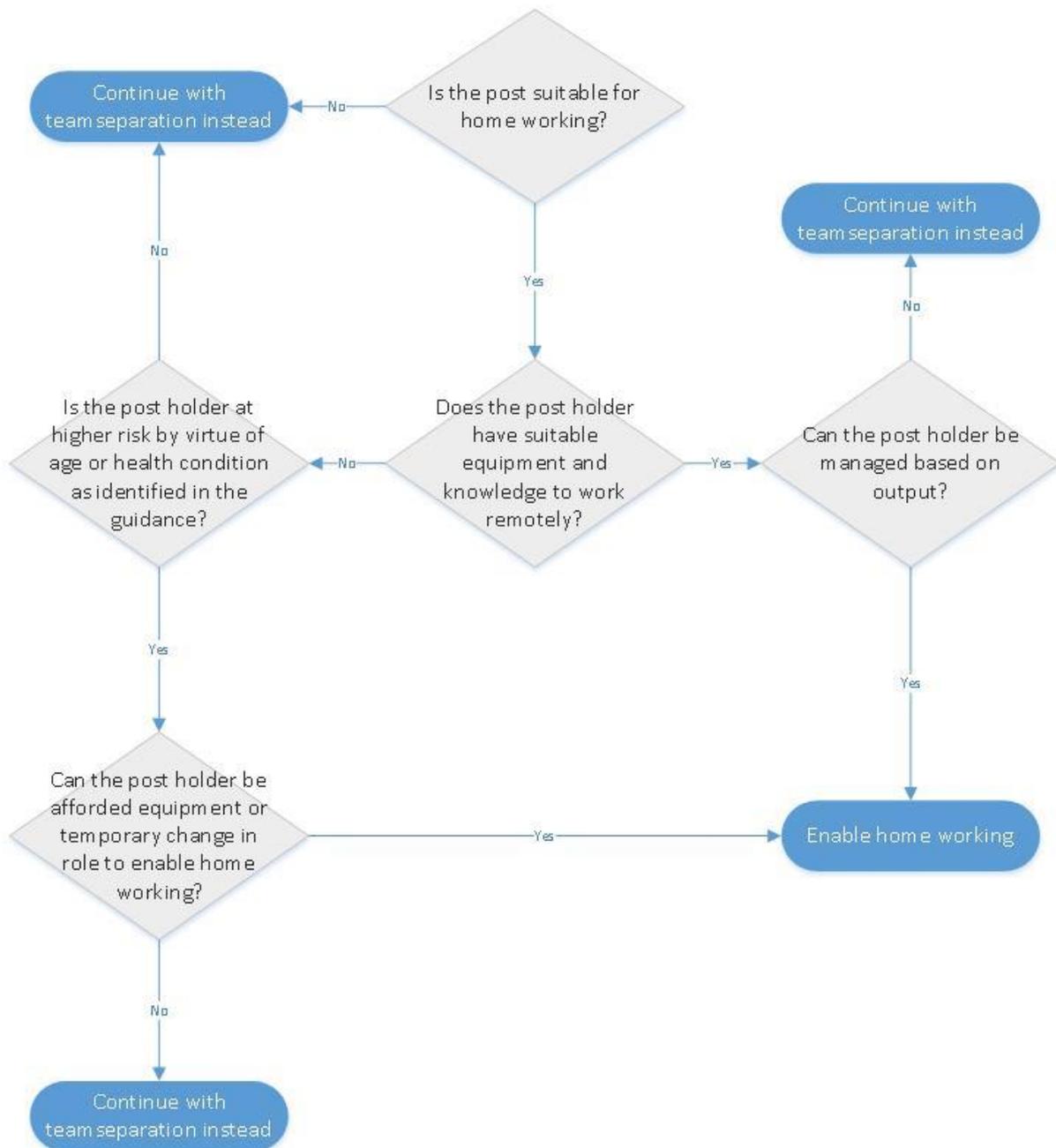
- [Working from home](#)
 - Useful links
 - Accessing University systems from a personal device
 - Using a University device off-campus
 - Making my first Skype for Business call
- [Learning and Teaching online:](#)
 - Moving my first lecture online
 - Hosting my first tutorial or meeting online
 - Live demonstrations and Q&A opportunities

There will however be some teams and individuals for whom home working is more challenging, for example some professional service roles. The starting point therefore is that not all individuals or teams will be able to do so currently for a number of reasons, not least of which is the need for them to be physically on campus to carry out their role and/or to continue supporting students who remain on campus. Where working from home is not feasible currently then the use of team separation should be implemented to reduce the risk of whole team infection at the same time – this will mean locating staff in different areas of the department or office to allow for social distancing and/or relocating members of the team to a different location on campus.

- Team separation should be considered for the following:
 - Those who cannot work from home for whatever reason currently.
 - Those who prefer to physically stay on site.
 - Those who have mental health conditions who may benefit from being with others.

In certain circumstances, it may be possible for those identified as vulnerable due to age or health condition to be allocated alternative work but if the work cannot be avoided, then a risk assessment should be carried out to ensure suitable PPE (personal protective equipment) is provided to protect the user against health and safety risks at work. A full risk assessment should be undertaken – please note the flowchart below:

Risk Assessment Process



4. Principles of working from home

Staff working from home are continuing to work and deliver the outputs required in their role. Although some adaptations may be required, including some flexibility in working times to support caring responsibilities (e.g. for children who are usually in school), Heads and Directors of Department/Institute will be able to provide advice in relation to individual workload responsibilities and the types of activities staff can focus on whilst the temporary working at home arrangements continue. The intention

will be to ensure fair treatment and consistency of approach and to provide a framework for reporting and monitoring in line with departmental/university requirements. This will include a requirement for all staff to keep in regular contact with their manager by email, Skype or telephone. All staff should ensure their manager is provided with up-to-date contact details. If contact is required at specific times during the working day, colleagues must ensure they are contactable at these times (as would be the case during a normal working day on campus).

5. Will I receive my normal pay whilst working at home?

Yes. You will continue to receive your normal pay if you are able to work from home and fulfil the responsibilities of your role. Your terms and conditions of employment continue to apply. As a number of queries have been raised on this, to clarify, this includes members of our part-time community including, for example, Associate Lecturers and Associate Link Tutors who are currently contracted to carry out work for the University. Support for our students will continue during this temporary closure period, albeit some of our delivery will be online.

6. What is the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme?

The Government has introduced a Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to support employers to retain employees during the coronavirus crisis.

The Scheme applies to all employers, except public sector employers providing services responding to the Coronavirus crisis. The Scheme also applies to the University of Chichester. The Scheme is currently open until 31 May 2020.

Employers participating in the Scheme will designate employees as being on 'furlough' for a temporary period. It is important to strongly emphasise that employees on furlough remain employees: furlough is NOT about making someone redundant or giving them unpaid leave. Furlough is rather like putting a post holder on 'stand by' until such time as the employer is able to operate normally again.

6.1. Will furlough apply to some of our University staff?

The activity on our campuses has been scaled back considerably as students are now studying remotely. The University has closed several buildings and the majority of staff who are able to, can work from home. There are however a number of post holders who will be maintaining a presence on campus to provide on-going support for our students who remain living with us. Social distancing and health and safety considerations apply where staff continue to work on campus (as in point 3, pages 3-4).

Strong guidance from government indicates that furlough is not appropriate for academic staff as they are covered by tuition fee funding and it would be equivalent to double-counting. Academic staff continue to provide support for our students as they study remotely. There are however a number of professional service roles at the University, all of which are extremely valuable during normal operations, but which are very difficult to carry out when we have been asked to work from home if we can as a result of the coronavirus situation.

The University will prioritise eligible roles based on operational need where work cannot be undertaken at home due to the nature of role responsibilities. The University will also consider furlough where there is a need for a post holder to self-isolate (known as 'shielding') for 12 weeks, but only where the post holder is unable to work at home.

6.2. How long will furlough last for?

The minimum amount of time someone can be furloughed is three weeks. Currently the Government Scheme is operating until 31 May 2020, unless extended further at that time.

6.3. How will I know if I am going to be furloughed and what will this mean?

The decision to furlough a post holder is not in any way related to the value placed on you or your role by the University and is for a temporary period only.

- *Furlough will be discussed with you as a first step:* Face-to-face communications are always preferable, but given the current circumstances, this may not be possible. Therefore, you will be communicated with via telephone and/or skype and email as soon as a decision on furlough has been agreed.
- *Your discussion will be followed up in writing:* Your letter will detail the timeframe involved outlining the date furlough will commence and the date it will cease. Depending on operational requirements, this will be for a minimum period of three weeks or for a longer period – the Scheme is operating until 31 May 2020, so you may be furloughed until this date.
- *You will continue to receive your full pay:* The Government's Scheme provides a grant of 80 per cent of salary costs for employees who are on furlough, however, the University will ensure you will continue to receive your full-pay, i.e. 100 per cent of salary during a period of furlough.
- *Your pension contributions will continue to be paid:* Both employer and employee pension contributions continue during furlough.
- *You will take your accrued annual leave entitlement:* During a period of furlough your annual leave entitlement continues to accrue and you should arrange to take your accrued annual leave during the timeframe indicated.
- *You will be kept informed of any changes:* Your manager will update you as soon as any changes occur, for example, the period of furlough may end earlier and/or may be extended further (to a maximum of 31 May 2020, currently).

6.4. Can I undertake work at the University whilst I am on furlough?

No, you cannot. No work can be administered by an employee whilst on furlough but the employee can undertake training or become a volunteer. During a period of furlough, your continuous employment is unaffected and at all times you will remain employed by the University. This means obligations on you as an employee (for example, confidentiality) continue to apply.

6.5 I have two part-time jobs at the University – can I be furloughed from each job?

If you have two jobs (i.e. both are part-time), each job is separate and furlough might apply to each job separately.

6.6. Does a record of furlough stay on file?

Communications confirming furlough arrangements are retained in line with Data Protection requirements to ensure accurate evidence is retained for the Scheme requirements and for HMRC purposes.

6.7. Can I work for someone else whilst I am furloughed?

While staff are furloughed an employment relationship still exists, so you should not be working for anyone else during your contract of employment when you are continuing to receive full pay.

If at a weekend an employee wanted to work or volunteer somewhere else, e.g. a grocery store, when the employee returns to work after furlough they would have to ensure that the Working Time Regulations aren't being breached and they oblige by their University contractual hours and get enough rest. This situation would apply to employment at the University during normal circumstances.

6.8. Can I still access my emails during furlough?

We recognise that some people occasionally use work email for personal matters and therefore you will still be able to access your emails during furlough. However, you must NOT send or respond to any work-related emails while you are furloughed.

6.9. Can I contact work colleagues during furlough?

Yes. You can continue to have social contact with work colleagues during a period of furlough (restrictions as advised by the Government will of course continue to apply on social distancing arrangements).

6.10. What happens when my period of furlough ends?

When your period of furlough comes to an end you will be expected to return to work on your contracted hours and existing working pattern when requested to do so. Your manager can request you to return to work with very little notice. Your manager will support your return to work and update you on any operational matters to ensure you are welcomed back into your role. When you return to work you are no longer on furlough.

6.11. Are the unions aware of furlough arrangements?

Yes. The Government's Coronavirus Job Protection Scheme was discussed with union representatives during a meeting of the Joint Consultative Group held on 6 April 2020. The meeting was helpful in clarifying the arrangements for furlough and how the process will be managed. UCU and UNISON Representatives provided helpful views and support throughout the meeting. The JCG agreed to brief all staff on furlough via our Questions and Answers (this document).

6.12. Are Heads and Directors of Department/Institute aware of furlough arrangements?

Yes. Arrangements for furlough, and how this applies, were discussed with members of the Senior Management Team on 8 April 2020. Heads and Directors will communicate with staff who will be furloughed. Our Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Professor Catherine Harper) will also support communications as necessary.

6.13 Who do I contact if I have a question on furlough?

You can contact the following colleagues in Human Resources:

- Helen Girling at Girling@chi.ac.uk
- Charlotte Meneely at C.Meneely@chi.ac.uk
- Kevin Botto at Botto@chi.ac.uk
- Lissie Whitaker at E.Whitaker@chi.ac.uk

7. Car Parking: I pay for a monthly car parking permit but I am working from home and therefore not using it. Has the University considered this?

Yes. All campus car parking charges will be waived from 1 April 2020 until further notice. This means that if you make payments for car parking via payroll, payments will be cancelled for the time being. The Vice-Chancellor's Group will monitor the situation, providing an update on the timings when car parking charges will be reapplied.

8. I have an outstanding pay/expenses claim. How do I process this whilst managers/staff are working at home?

If you have outstanding pay claims, please submit your claim on a Fin029/Fin004 form to your line manager for authorisation and copy in payroll_queries@chi.ac.uk.

An email confirming authorisation to payroll from your line manager will be accepted currently.

Word versions of the appropriate forms are available from payroll_queries@chi.ac.uk and should be submitted electronically.

9. I am a manager/Head/Director and a member of my team has an outstanding pay/expenses claim what should I do?

Upon receipt of the relevant claim or expenses form please email the form confirming authorisation for payment to payroll_queries@chi.ac.uk

10. Are there any health and safety implications when temporarily working at home?

Most of the work staff would undertake at home is paper-based work or work carried out on a computer, and in general such work is not high risk. It is expected staff will

adopt the same principles as used on campus with regard to setting up their workstation and taking breaks. You should seek further advice from your manager and/or a member of the Health and Safety Team.

11. Can I have a University laptop whilst I am working at home?

A limited stock of laptops and tablets will be available to support business critical requirements should these need to be used. Requests for access to these will need to be supported by Heads/Directors of Departments/Institutes as members of the senior management team, and will be prioritised.

12. What happens if I find myself in a situation where I am required to self-isolate or quarantine whilst working at home?

If you develop symptoms requiring you to self-isolate whilst working at home, please notify your manager and a member of the Human Resources team:

- Helen Girling, H.Girling@chi.ac.uk, 01243 816120
- Charlotte Meneely, C.Meneely@chi.ac.uk, 01243 816320
- Kevin Botto, K.Botto@chi.ac.uk, 01243 816047
- Elisabeth Whitaker, E.Whitaker@chi.ac.uk, 01243 816119

Please provide your name, dates and circumstances. This will help the University to closely monitor incidences and take the most appropriate actions.

13. What can managers/Heads/Directors/staff communicate about an employee with coronavirus?

Under UK data protection law, personal data concerning health is 'special category data'. This means that the University needs to ensure that any communication does not include any data about the individual who is unwell. For example, while it would be fine to let employees know that there has been a confirmed coronavirus case within its workforce, it would not be appropriate to provide any details from which the individual might be identified. Therefore, all managers/staff are required to remain discrete and to respond sensitively to the individual concerned whilst respecting the individual's privacy and UK data protection law requirements.

14. Will the University's Sickness Absence policy apply if someone has coronavirus?

Yes. The University's sickness absence policy will apply if a member of staff is unwell due to coronavirus <https://staffnet.chi.ac.uk/human-resources/content/sickness-absence-guidance>.

The sickness absence procedures indicated will adapt accordingly to take account of working at home arrangements (e.g. where meetings with managers may be required as these may be carried out online or by telephone) but it is important employees who are unwell/have been unwell due to coronavirus report this to their manager (in the usual way they would do if they were working on campus). An employee who is following official medical guidance to self-isolate and who has flu-

like symptoms may be unable to obtain a Fitness for Work note – for example, because their local GP will not see anyone with coronavirus symptoms.

Absence from work whilst working at home should be recorded in the usual way via HR self-service as sickness absence.

15. Can the University take steps to prevent an employee who has refused to self-isolate from coming onto campus or coming into contact with other employees and students?

Yes. The University must bear in mind the duties that they owe other employees or students under UK health and safety law. If the University knowingly allows an individual who has been advised to self-isolate to attend their premises or come into contact with other employees, they may be in breach of those duties, particularly where other employees and/or students are more vulnerable to infection – for example, pregnant employees, those with long-term health conditions.

16. Annual leave: I have booked annual leave during the period I am working at home. Can I still take this period of annual leave or rearrange it within this annual leave year?

It won't have escaped your notice that Coronavirus has had an enormous impact on all aspects of life. One of these is the effect that travel restrictions have had on holiday plans. Whilst this is sad news for the individuals whose plans have had to change, since there is no telling when the ability to travel will be back to normal, there is a risk that we may end up with accrued holiday if we do not take our annual leave entitlement during this annual leave year.

It is good for everyone's wellbeing to switch off and take a rest from work. This is particularly important when so many of us are working from home, where it is easy for the division between work and home to become blurred. Therefore, you are encouraged to take regular breaks from your work, including by taking your annual leave entitlement.

The annual leave year runs from 1 September to 31 August and your contractual annual leave entitlement continues to apply. You should continue to take your planned periods of annual leave as agreed with your manager. You will be able to confirm arrangements in the usual way via HR Employee self-service, including where you wish to rearrange a period of annual leave within the current annual leave year.

To avoid any confusion, the government's latest announcement on carrying over annual leave entitlement applies to the basic statutory (four weeks') annual leave entitlement whereas University employees receive enhanced contractual leave entitlement in addition to eight Bank Holidays and University closure days (i.e. those between Christmas and New Year – usually 4 additional days per annum).

As a gesture of good will, and recognising that the current situation may cause some difficulty in relation to taking annual leave entitlement for some staff, you will be able to carry forward five annual leave days (pro-rata for part-time staff) into the next annual leave year, to be taken as agreed with your manager. Employee self-service

will reflect the carry over of 5 days (or pro-rata days) for staff who are unable to take all of their annual leave entitlement by 31 August 2020.

17. How long will I be required to work from home?

Unfortunately, it is not currently possible to indicate how long the current situation will apply. The University will continue to monitor all external advice and will update all staff where further advice is received. We currently don't yet know whether this period of 'lockdown' will be extended further until advised by the Government to the contrary.

18. Where can I find further information?

Public Health England provide this data publicly and the website link is here:

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/opsoashboard/index.html#/f94c3c90da5b4e9f9a0b19484dd4bb14>)

Public Health England advice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

Government Foreign Travel Advice: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>

19. Where will this document be available?

Advice on handling coronavirus at work will be updated as soon as possible after new and/or changing information is received and it will be published on the University's homepage and the Human Resources page of the Intranet.