



The University of Manchester

Direct Line: 0161 275 2442
Email: karen.heaton@manchester.ac.uk

22 April 2020

Dr Adam Ozanne
UMUCU Branch Secretary

Directorate of Human Resources

The University of Manchester
John Owens Building
Oxford Road
Manchester
M13 9PL

Dear Adam

I am responding to the anonymous letter from 30 UCU members in the Faculty of Humanities, addressed to University "Senior Management" from the UMUCU Branch Secretary Adam Ozanne on 16 April 2020.

Our University, like many organisations all over the world, is facing a wholly unprecedented situation with a global pandemic that is a significant threat to life and wellbeing and is likely to result in a major recession and present real financial challenges in the coming months. We are facing huge uncertainty about the severity and duration of these impacts, both of which are likely to be significant. The Senior Leadership Team recognises that this is a difficult time for all our staff and especially for those colleagues whose roles rely upon external funding and those on fixed-term contracts which are due to end in the next few months. We are providing regular updates to all staff on a range of issues through our dedicated StaffNet coronavirus site, email newsletters, HR Partners and open staff meetings via Zoom.

We took the decision to suspend face-to-face teaching and close non-essential facilities on campus on Tuesday 17 March to ensure the safety, wellbeing and security of our staff and students. The safety and wellbeing of our staff and students continues to be our top priority and guides our decision making as a senior leadership team. However, we cannot ignore the fact that we are facing a major loss of income as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. We are already taking a financial hit in terms of income from our student residences, catering facilities and other commercial activities. More significantly, at the beginning of the academic year we, like many other comparable universities, will face the potential loss of significant numbers of international students and possibly also home and EU students as well as income from residences and catering services. All of these present a real financial challenge and it would be irresponsible to make future commitments or promises to staff and students that we may not be able to meet.

The measures we have taken to date have had to be considered and taken quickly reflecting the fast evolving situation we are faced with and have been made with the approval of the Board of Governors which has given the Senior Leadership Team delegated authority in recognition of the exceptional circumstances. We are holding fortnightly updates for the Board of Governors and Senate, as well as with Heads of Schools and the Trade Unions. The Senior Leadership Team is also holding a series of Zoom open meetings for staff which you are welcome to attend or view via the live stream on StaffNet.

Notwithstanding this uncertainty we are looking at likely scenarios for our financial future and the further potential mitigating actions that are likely to be necessary and these will be communicated to staff shortly. I am sure you will recognise and appreciate that the recent weeks have been exceptionally busy as we have dealt with the immediate impacts on staff and students of the Government's advice on staying at home and social distancing. We have also recently announced

that we are furloughing under the Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) at least 1,500 Professional Services staff. This has the potential to secure significant savings for the University and is at no detriment to the individuals in question as the University will make up their full salary. We are looking closely as to whether there are other staff who may be eligible for furlough leave.

We are not aware of the differences in how recent decisions have been implemented across the University, although there are variations in methods of working and in the proportions of internal and external funding. We would welcome examples of where you have observed these differences and where you consider them to be inappropriate.

Finally and on behalf of the Senior Leadership team I would like to reassure you that we are working very hard to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our staff whilst seeking to plan for and mitigate the financial impact of coronavirus on our University.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen Heaton', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Karen Heaton
Director of Human Resources