

Warwick UCU is participating in good faith with the Health and Safety Committee of the University of Warwick in the hope of securing the University's commitment to ensuring that any return of staff and students to campus is **safe, secure, and voluntary**.

At present, while some members are reporting pressures to return faster than they feel comfortable with, we are hopeful that the University will respond to our efforts to ensure that the reopening of campus is in line with the latest Health and Safety guidance and the University's statutory obligations for meaningful consultation with campus trades unions.

To this end, we have prepared the following 'Red Lines' that must not be crossed in order to ensure that the move to reopen campus occurs safely<sup>1</sup>. These will be presented to the University's Health and Safety Committee Meeting in June 2020.

**Note: We recognise that the situation is fluid, and that there have been conflicting messages about the University's plans, and so we reserve the right to update our Red Lines in accordance with new information or policy.**

## 5 Red Lines

### 1. Safe in society

- New cases of COVID-19 need to be low and falling, with a sustained downward trend and confidence that all new cases can be identified and responded to promptly. This applies at regional level, with reduced cases and a falling reproduction number or R value (below 1), confirmed region by region before decisions regarding reopening of university campuses are considered.
- In addition to routine testing, protocols are needed to ensure full coverage testing occurs promptly across university and other worksites following any case of Covid-19 being confirmed.

### 2. Safe on campus

- The relevant authorities (UK; Scottish; Welsh; and Northern Irish) must have coherent plans which include parameters for appropriate physical distancing and safe levels of social mixing, applicable to HE campuses/workplaces as well as any travel required to and from them.
- To help ensure physical distancing, all HE staff and students who can work and study from home should continue to do so.

<sup>1</sup> See also national UCU tests for safe returns to on-campus working  
[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10935/UCU-HE-on-campus-return-tests/pdf/ucu\\_covid19\\_hetests.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/10935/UCU-HE-on-campus-return-tests/pdf/ucu_covid19_hetests.pdf)

- In line with WHO guidance<sup>2</sup>, masks must be mandatory for on campus interactions, with the University to supply these where necessary and to provide a means to enforce their use.

### 3. Safe university buildings

- No teaching or other activity should take place indoors unless it is safe to do so in accordance with the state-of-the-art research regarding required levels of physical distancing and ventilation;
- Proper physical distancing must be maintained for all campus-based activities;
- Risk Assessments must be conducted with the recognised campus trades unions for all sites of work
- Staff must be given workload recognition for the time taken to complete Risk Assessments to allow them to do this properly.

### 4. Safe for *all* colleagues

- Equalities considerations given priority: the University must do more to protect the health and jobs of vulnerable workers or those who do not feel safe in coming to work;
- To follow best practice in avoiding the risk of discrimination and stigmatisation, there must be no forced disclosure of pre-existing health conditions<sup>3</sup>;
- Equalities Impact Assessments must be completed to ensure that the differential risks relating to BAME staff, disabled staff, older staff, and staff in other categories who may be more vulnerable to Covid-19, are fully considered.

### 5. Safer communication

- Full Transparency: Staff require clear and consistent communication *now* to allow for adequate and preparation for the next academic year;
- Staff need to be involved in any return to work planning;
- Workload: the University must better acknowledge the risks of increases to already burdensome workloads to avoid further negatively affecting the mental and physical health of staff members;
- The University must communicate how any additional-workload burdens relating to the Covid-19 crisis will be addressed and compensated for.

***Staff should be aware of Section 44 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 [see here](#) or [here](#) for more information and contact your local UCU representative if you have concerns about the safety of your workplace.***

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks>

<sup>3</sup> See <https://sites.google.com/view/accesscampusalliance>