



Chairman: Andrew Moss  
Secretary: Will Smith  
email: [ws103@cam.ac.uk](mailto:ws103@cam.ac.uk)  
Tel: 01223 334444

## Cambridge University Branch 0775M *Working to protect staff in Cambridge University*

### Bulletin – 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – Covid-19 Update

**Furlough** [*A furlough (/ˈfɜːrləʊ/; from Dutch: verlof, "leave of absence") is a temporary leave of employees due to special needs of a company or employer, which may be due to economic conditions at the specific employer or in the economy as a whole.*]

During the current COVID-19 crisis the Government has introduced a furlough scheme whereby employers can apply for a grant to cover a proportion of their employees' wages where the employees are unable to carry out their work. To access the scheme employers have to furlough affected staff. Below is a brief summary of FAQs that the University have produced to explain their position on the furlough scheme.

**Why is the University furloughing staff?** – Some University roles are difficult to carry out from home, and there has also been a temporary reduction in some activities. To claim back the cost of employing people unable to work, the University will need to furlough affected staff.

**Why has my post been furloughed and how has the University decided who should be furloughed and who shouldn't** – Roles to be furloughed have been determined by whether the work can be carried out at home, and the source of funding. Where there is room for discretion, e.g. a skeleton staff is required, other factors will be considered.

**What happens if I don't want to be furloughed?** – Decisions on which roles to furlough is driven by operational need, where there is room for discretion then individual circumstances will be taken into account as much as possible.

**What does this mean for my employment with the University?** - Your continuous service is unaffected and at all times you will remain employed by the University, and obligations placed on you as an employee continue to apply.

**Does this mean that my role is redundant and does it mean I'm more likely to be made redundant in the future?** No. The decision to furlough roles is a short-term measure. Any decisions on redundancy will be made on the future needs of the University and not on whether a role was furloughed.

**Can I do any work while I'm furloughed and can I access my emails and work on my laptop?** – While furloughed you will not be able to do any work for the University. You will be able to use email for personal matters only, not for anything work related. You can use your laptop but not for work related matters.

**Can I get in touch with my work colleagues?** – Yes, maintaining social contacts with work colleagues is fine.

**How long will furlough last for and what happens when furlough ends?** – The minimum amount of furlough is three weeks, but could end earlier. You will return to your normal working pattern – line managers will organise re-inductions.

**What happens to my annual leave while I'm furloughed?** – You will continue to accrue leave, pre-booked leave will not be cancelled.

**What happens to my pay, will I still pay tax and NI, and what happens to my pension while furloughed?** – Pay will be unaffected, and will be subject to the usual deductions. Pension contributions will continue as normal.

**Who pays me while I'm on furlough, the University or the Government?** The University.

**Do I have to be available for work while I'm furloughed and what notice will you give me to return to work?** – You don't need to be available for work, but you may need to return to work at short notice.

**How do you stay in touch with me while I am on furlough?** – Your manager will maintain contact with you.

**Are the Unions aware of these arrangements?** – Yes.