

Guidance on keeping in touch with staff on furlough

Staff who are on furlough are not able to undertake work for the University. They remain valuable colleagues and are still legally employed. Staff on furlough are able to undertake training and they can still access all of our resources. This guidance provides information on keeping in touch with staff during furlough. More information is available on our FAQs [here](#).

- 1. Check in with your team on a regular basis.** Although a member of staff is on furlough leave it is still important to keep in touch and check in with them, especially to check on their wellbeing. It would be a good idea to ask the individual how they would best like to do this – for example, would they like to catch up with you via phone or Zoom or would they just like an email or text. This ongoing contact will help people to still feel connected to the University and help them make a successful return in the future. Where possible, try and make contact on a weekly basis.
- 2. Share information.** Although staff on furlough should not be undertaking any work, you can still include them in team emails and updates for the purposes of keeping in touch – please make sure that the individual is aware that these are being sent for information only and that they do not have to respond or take any action. Staff can still log onto their laptops as long as they are not undertaking work.
- 3. Promote wellbeing.** Staff on furlough may still use any of the wellbeing resources that we are providing and attend any online activity. Ensure that staff on furlough leave are aware of this and if you share wellbeing messages with your team continue to include them. Where you believe that anyone is experiencing mental health difficulties signpost to our support services. 24/7 online mental health support is available through the [Big White Wall](#). Support is also available via our [internal counselling service](#).
- 4. Connect socially.** Some teams are undertaking social and connecting activities such as Zoom lunches or coffee catch ups. You may still invite furloughed staff to attend these activities as long as they do not involve undertaking any work. It is up to the individual if they wish to attend. If you already have groups or platforms that you are using to keep in touch such as a Slack or Yammer group, staff on furlough leave can still be included and we could encourage them to do so.

5. **Promote Learning.** Some people may wish to spend time thinking about their learning and development or refreshing their skills whilst on furlough. Although this shouldn't be compulsory, direct people to our [Staff Learning and Development](#) online resources and activities.

When furlough leave ends we will provide further guidance on supporting staff with their return to work.