**Guidance on supporting the wellbeing of staff wellbeing returning from furlough**

People managers play a critical role in supporting employee well-being and mental health; staff returning from furlough leave may have particular wellbeing support needs.

1. **Contact staff pre-return.** Staff may have a range of concerns about returning from furlough leave. Please contact them prior to their return date to discuss any concerns, provide relevant information about returning and identify any necessary support. Be sure to ask them if there are any particular issues you need to be aware of, such as health conditions or caring responsibilities, and check what they are most worried about.
2. **Provide practical information.** For staff returning to campus, provide information about safety and hygiene procedures to allay concerns. The latest information is published on StaffNet [here](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/campus-reopening-corporate-support/). Also be sure to provide any departmental or team specific information about returning to work.
3. **Be Aware.** Some of your people may be finding the return to campus / work more difficult than others; some may even be experiencing mental health difficulties. Make sure that you are aware of the signs and symptoms of poor mental health. Check out the training and guidance available to all people managers via SL&D to help you with this.
4. **Check in with your team on a regular basis.**  Returning from furlough isn’t just about the first day – concerns and anxieties may last for some time. Make sure to have regular contact with your team, whether they are on campus, working from home or a mixture of both. This will help you to be alert to signs that someone needs support or help. This [video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79luEoEtZy4) can help you have a conversation about mental health and wellbeing.
5. **Update people.** Make sure to build in time to update staff returning from furlough on what has taken place during their absence, including any changed priorities or team objectives and plans. Depending on the nature of the role or changes that have taken place in their absence consider if any re-training is required. These actions will help to build people’s self-confidence.
6. **Signpost to support services**. Make sure that your team are aware of the support services available to them through the University should they be needed. 24/7 online mental health support is available through the [Big White Wall.](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/wellbeing/big-white-wall/) Support is also available via our [internal counselling service](http://www.counsellingservice.manchester.ac.uk/).
7. **Re-connect people**.  Many people have felt isolated during lockdown, and a lack of social connection can have a detrimental impact on wellbeing. This might have had a particular impact for people who have been on furlough. Following all guidance on social distancing, find ways to reconnect your team with each other.
8. **Review workloads and update objectives**. It will be helpful for staff to understand your expectations and what may have changed as a result of the current situation. Discuss workloads, duties and targets, and update formal objectives where necessary. This will also help to build self-confidence and help people to re-establish their sense of purpose and meaning – an important part of wellbeing.
9. **Have wellbeing conversations and promote wellbeing activities.** The University is offering a wide range of wellbeing activities to support them whilst working from home and during the return to campus / from furlough.  Encourage people to take part and promote them to your team. You can find the latest wellbeing news and information [here](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/wellbeing/news/). Talk about wellbeing in your 121s and team meetings too.
10. **Also remember to look after your own wellbeing.** There is an often used quote in resilience training: you cannot pour from an empty cup. Please also take care of your own wellbeing and take advantage of our wellbeing resources if you can.