

[Date]

Dear xxxx

Covid-19 and Prison Education Members

I am writing to you on behalf of our members who deliver prison education.

It is clear that the current situation presents significant challenges to all of the members that UCU represents but for prison educators in particular given the environment that they have to work in.

Our specific and we believe reasonable request is that if there is a case or suspected case of coronavirus within a prison establishment that all prison education staff should not be required to attend site as a precaution and provided work to do remotely. This is in order to protect the health and safety of our members.

In all instances, special leave should be paid including to those staff on casual/sessional contracts on a no detriment basis.

We have had reports that some prison governors as part of contingency planning have suggested that our members could be asked to undertake other duties such as delivering medication or meals. Our position is that this is completely unacceptable and under no circumstances should our members be involved in any other duties than delivering education.

Following successful lobbying by UCU and other Justice Unions, Grahame Morris MP has secured a Westminster Hall debate for next Wednesday (18th) from 9.30am on Health & Safety for Prison Staff.

Rest assured, UCU will be raising questions at the Westminster Hall debate via MP's next week on how the Government is responding to particular challenges that Covid-19 presents to non-directly employed staff working in prisons. Including assurances that there will be no penalties by HMPPS for non-delivery of teaching hours during any education shut-down.

I look forward to hearing from you.



Jo Grady
General Secretary