

To
Professor Jim Devlin & Professor Dan Ladley

CC:
Professor Henrietta O'Connor
Caroline Johnson
Brigid M.C. Boucher

11.02.2021

Dear Professor Devlin,

Thank you for your response yesterday to some of our questions.

We note with interest the claim – new to us – that our publications, rather than merely our abstracts, have been read by yourself and Professor Ladley as part of the screening process. As we are sure you are aware, in order to be lawful, such a screening process must have been applied to all staff in the initial pool, not only the 16 who were selected following that process - it would otherwise appear as if the selection had been made before the screening took place. We will of course ask you to provide evidence, namely your notes on your readings of the approx. 300 academic outputs.

Whilst some of the issues you raise can be further probed within individual consultations, we feel we need to collectively respond the following statement:

If you do not feel you should have been placed at risk because you do not have primary research interests in CMS/PE and that your primary research interests align to School strategic priorities as outlined in the Case for Change, this is very much an issue to be discussed at the individual consultation meetings

We would remind you that in redundancy situations it is up to the employer to present an objective case as to why there is a ceasing or diminishing need for a certain type of work. It is not up to the employee to make a case for their continuing employment, which is the assumed state of affairs in the absence of a lawful argument to the contrary.

Either way, there are many complications created by your use of the phrase 'strategic priorities' – primarily for yourself in making a lawful case for redundancy but also for us in engaging with it. We note, for example that whilst the 16 people selected do not fit well within *any* of the selection criteria so far presented, a selection based on failure to align with the new 'strategic priorities' would result in a significantly different and significantly larger pool of people. Indeed, it would comprise the majority of academics currently working in the school.

Therefore, we ask you to clarify – Do you intend for us to understand 'priority' as indicating exclusivity? In other words, is it your argument that the 16 of us do not provide 'research in

strategy, international business and aspects of the business environment informed by quantitative approaches' but that *all* other academic staff in the School of Business do?

Because if this is *not* the case then either -

- a) Every other member of academic staff in the school who does not provide quantitatively informed research in these areas would also have to be under threat of redundancy for the case to be fair and objective

or

- b) The positive case you are attempting to make around our alleged research interest in CMS and/or PE is of relevance to a redundancy discussion, but the strategic priorities are not, and can therefore be set aside in future discussion

Please could you tell us which it is so that we can frame our further questions with greater precision and avoid wasting each other's time?

Finally, we will once again take the opportunity to stress that we are not waiving our right to individual consultation meetings and each look forward to taking this up with you further when those meetings take place.

Yours sincerely

Dr Gareth Brown, Professor Gibson Burrell, Dr Joseph Choonara, Dr Sam Dallyn, Dr Valerie Fournier, Dr Fabian Frenzel, Dr Chris Grocott, Dr Oz Gore, Dr Ronald Hartz, Dr David Harvie, Dr George Kokkinidis, Professor Hugo Letiche, Dr Geoff Lightfoot, Professor Simon Lilley, Dr Keir Milburn, Dr Martin Wood.