

Dr. Chris Grocott
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15 March 2021

Dear Professor Burke,

We, the undersigned members of the School of Business, wrote to you between 17 February and 1 March, to exercise our right to appeal against the continuation of the redundancy process currently proceeding against us on the grounds that it breached our right to academic freedom. The redundancy ordinance recognises the seriousness of the dismissal of academic staff where such a dismissal constitutes undue interference, or suppression, of a scholar's responsibility and right to research, publish and communicate on what they see fit, subject to nationally and internationally recognized professional principles of intellectual rigour, scientific inquiry and research ethics. We recognise that such protection does not extend to cases where the university is making staff redundant for economic reasons. Nevertheless, in the business case presented to us we were informed that the case for change was not based upon economic necessity but rather upon a decision to disinvest from our research specifically. To be clear, the case for change states that the move to redundancy is not based upon our teaching or academic management profiles, but specifically upon the type of research we undertake. Recognising the seriousness of an infringement of academic freedom, the redundancy ordinance required us to lodge our appeal with five days of the first individual consultation which we undertook with our relevant manager. Yet, some three weeks later we still await the outcome of our appeal. This week our second collective consultation will take place. We do not see that this meeting can represent a genuine consultation given that this important issue of the infringement of academic freedom raised directly after the first consultation has not been addressed. We therefore request the outcome of our appeals before the second consultation. If the outcome is not provided we will not consider the redundancy ordinance to have been properly followed and will keep a note for our records for use in future employment tribunals or other legal redress against the university and its management.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Gareth Brown, Dr. Sam Dallyn, Dr. Valerie Fournier, Dr. Fabian Frenzel,
Dr. Chris Grocott, Dr. Ronald Hartz, Dr. David Harvey, Dr. George Kokkinidis,
Prof. Simon Lilley, Dr. Keir Milburn.