

School of Business Case for Change Counter-Proposal

Dear Professors O'Connor, Devlin, and Ladley,

We write to you to present a counter proposal to the current Case for Change in the School of Business. The Case for Change, shared with us on January 26th, contains the key recommendation that it is desirable to 'disinvest from research and scholarship in critical management studies and political economy'.

Although we have previously attempted to contest the justification for this recommendation, we accept that our argumentation is at odds with the School's strategy. We have therefore crafted our counter proposal to align with the future direction for the School that you have mapped out. Our proposal is simple in its essence.

All those of us remaining in scope for redundancy commit to ending any provision of research within the areas of PE and CMS as described in your 'Points of Clarification' document. We further commit to reorient research activities instead towards mainstream approaches to the areas – or at least some of the areas – where mainstream provision is seen as currently lacking.

As you know, *none of us is contracted to conduct research specifically within CMS or PE, none of us is a member of a group, division, or cluster that compels research within these areas, and no group, division, or cluster that any of us is a part of is proposed for closure.* Research, both in the explicitly stated organising principles of our department and under Academic Freedom legislation, is self-directed. In this counter-proposal we are committing to self-direct our research in the directions we have been told will not result in risk to our jobs. We are sure you will agree that with this commitment there is no need, nor case, for any redundancies.

The details of our proposal are hardly more complicated. These details concern the way this commitment is realised for each of the individuals who remain at risk.

1. In the one or two cases in which staff in scope already have commitments to projects receiving external funding that may fall within the areas targeted for disinvestment, we would suggest the school meets our pragmatic position with one of its own and allows for these to be completed in order to maintain good standing with the relevant funding bodies.
2. We believe all of us remaining in scope are in possession of skills and competencies that qualify us to conduct research in the priority areas that you have identified in your Case for Change. We believe that with sympathetic and competent management our research can be directed towards these areas. We would suggest that the allocation of mentors from the more mainstream sections of the School's research community would assist in the transition, as would more explicit steer from the School's leadership as to what to research in order to sit safely within the parameters of the new strategy - as yet unseen by us or the majority of our colleagues.
3. Finally, we recognise that membership of the Centre for Philosophy and Political Economy, currently located within ULSB, was one of the indicators included in your basket. We should point out that the directorship of the CPPE is not currently held by any of the individuals at risk of redundancy. But we commit to resigning our membership of the CPPE and proposing to its director and other members that this Centre should either be dissolved or else asked to seek a new home.

We are confident that this proposal satisfies the requirements of the School's new strategic direction whilst obviating the necessity of redundancies, which is surely an outcome that all parties would find desirable.

We look forwards to your response and to discussing your suggestions for our future research in our second individual consultation meetings.

Gareth Brown, Gibson Burrell, Sam Dallyn, Valerie Fournier, Fabian Frenzel, Chris Grocott, David Harvie, Ronald Hartz, George Kokkinidis, Geoff Lightfoot, Simon Lilley