

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.

The counter-proposal focuses on a commitment from staff at risk in ULSB to no longer research in the areas identified for disinvestment of Political Economy and Critical Management Studies and instead to realign their future research with the strategic direction of the School.

The case for change outlines the new strategic direction of the School, which will include a shift of focus to new areas. The basis of the case for change is the rebalancing of research in the School. Having taking into account and thoroughly reviewed the information provided in the counter-proposal, our position is set out below:

The case for change is based on disinvestment from CMS and PE. The staff placed at risk of redundancy were assessed as conducting their research primarily in CMS and/or PE, using a basket of research indicators. We recognise that academic identities and reputation are built on the basis of long periods of training in disciplinary areas, informed by particular philosophical orientation(s), and reflect the outputs and research profile of the individual. While it may be possible for academics to reorient their research focus over a period of time, such a shift takes considerable time (years, not months), especially where there is a significant intellectual distance between the current focus and any new direction. The strategic priorities for the School are immediate and therefore academic staff with established reputations in the priority areas are required urgently, particularly to deliver research-led teaching in relevant areas.

The counter proposal lacks specificity as to how each individual would realign with research areas of future strategic focus. We therefore sought to explore possible realignment with the School's strategic direction in the second individual consultations. Unfortunately, there was insufficient evidence of an emergent, successful track record in the strategic priority areas to suggest that a change of focus would be feasible within a reasonable timeframe.

We also explored the question of training and development support that might be required to enable individuals to change research orientation. All at-risk staff were made aware of the retraining fund and applications to this were encouraged. No applications were received. The counter-proposal makes it clear that mentorship in the new areas would be required. However, appointments in the strategic priority areas are yet to be made and we are lacking the skill-base to provide mentorship.

In order to meet the new strategic aims, the case for change included six new posts that will support the new strategy. The JSF's require a sustained track record in the new strategic areas as an essential requirement for appointment. Only one member of staff at risk of redundancy made contact with us regarding one of these posts.

In summary, for the reasons set out above, we are not in a position to accept the counterproposal presented.