

DIARY CASE



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PREAMBLE

Meeting date/time	[REDACTED]
Who is the Minister meeting?	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Who requested the meeting?	[REDACTED]
Primary purpose	A discussion about the proposals recently announced by Cardiff University to reduce its workforce and course provision and to understand next steps in the process.
Is there an agreed agenda?	[REDACTED]
Which officials are supporting the Minister?	[REDACTED]
Where is the meeting?	[REDACTED]
Other practical considerations	

DIARY CASE BRIEFING

Purpose

On Wednesday 29 January Cardiff University announced a proposal for the restructuring of provision and closure of specific courses. The university has commenced a statutory consultation on redundancies of up to 400 staff (via voluntary and as a last resort compulsory redundancies), and the potential closure of specific courses. [REDACTED]

Since this announcement there has been a large amount of correspondence to Welsh Ministers from parents of current and prospective students, academic staff from both Cardiff University and other institutions, and other Ministers. There has also been local and national news coverage.

Three petitions have been set up with the Senedd Petitions committee:

Help Cardiff University to keep their Modern Languages degree courses (1,709 signatures)

Enable Cardiff University to keep the Nursing degree course (6,625 signatures)

Fund music education for future generations in the "land of song" (656 signatures)

Current position and issues to note

You are aware that the higher education sector in Wales is currently facing significant financial instability. [REDACTED]

Cardiff University is currently in financial deficit and over the past year has been openly engaging staff and stakeholders in considering their future strategy. Increasing costs and falling resource from international students has resulted in the university concluding significant strategic change is needed. The university has published its strategic plan for change – Our future, together, Our path to 2035.

Wendy Lerner notified officials that the university was planning to launch proposals for restructuring the workforce, reducing the headcount by up to 400 and ceasing several academic courses. The university notes that it wants to focus on better outcomes with improved academic and financial stability.

The Children, Young People and Education Committee has written to Wendy Lerner to invite her to give evidence to the Senedd Committee on the proposals. The committee wants to discuss what led to the proposals, the concerns around them and final plans.

Course closures

The proposals announced by Cardiff University identifies the following provision for closure:

- Nursing (excluding Midwifery)
- Ancient History
- Modern Foreign Languages

- Music
- Religion and Theology

The university has advised that where programmes are closed as a result of these proposals, teach-out plans will be developed to protect and support students, ensuring that all students continue to receive a high-quality student experience. There will be consultation with students and staff to inform the development of teach-out plans. A Discontinuation of Programmes Oversight Group – chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) will provide oversight on the appropriateness of the teach-out plans, the delivery of these plans, impact on students, and the mitigation of risks.

Nursing

The proposals outline the intention to continue the nursing courses for current students, with a final intake for 2025-2026, although the proposals are still subject to consultation. The university has confirmed it is proposing to keep midwifery, Allied Health Professions and other medical courses in place and would work to improve their other medical provision.

Health officials are working closely with Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) to ensure that, if following the consultation, a decision is made to proceed with the closure of the Nursing provision, there are plans in place to ensure continuation of provision at the same level through alternative providers in the same region.

Modern Foreign Languages

Cardiff University currently leads the MFL Mentoring Programme, which places undergraduates into schools to mentor year 8 and 9 learners.

Should the university lose its capacity to deliver this programme, we will consider alternative mechanisms to continue international languages support to schools and continue to meet this Programme for Government commitment such as a more direct relationship with other universities.

Music

We received a large amount of correspondence about Music provision in Wales following the plans by the Royal Welsh college of Music and Drama to stop its Junior music and drama provision. While the RWCMD still continues to provide a higher education programme, this is not the same provision as currently offered by Cardiff University. The Conservatoire

provision offered by the RWCMD is focussed on practical training and performance while the courses offered by Cardiff University also include a broader range of academic theory and research.

Staff Redundancies

[REDACTED] The university will consider VES and opportunities for deployment and staff transfers, as it develops its Trans-National Education offer, more flexible lifelong learning provision and enhancing pedagogy.

The UCU is balloting members on possible industrial action.

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