

Professor Eunice Simmons, Vice-Chancellor  
Professor Paul Johnson, Dean of the Faculty of Arts  
and Humanities

**xxx BY EMAIL xxx**

16<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Dear Professor Simmons and Professor Johnson,

**Re: Threats to teaching staff in the Department of History and Archaeology, University of Chester**

We have been made aware of the current threats to archaeology and heritage teaching and research at the University of Chester which has a long and proven track-record of excellence. We are writing to express our concern about these proposals on behalf of the wider archaeology community in the UK and to seek assurances that any decision will be based on a sound business plan and the reputational risk to the University and the study of archaeology and heritage in the UK.

Professional archaeology and heritage management in the UK depends on university degrees. They help underpin the heritage industry, which through tourism and development generates £31 billion a year to our economy. An archaeology degree course provides grounding in the sciences, scrupulous training in fieldwork and a feeling for the debates embracing our history. Archaeology and heritage staff at the University of Chester have developed a strong programme of study and research which is recognised nationally and internationally and have won multiple awards for both teaching and research. Furthermore, their work supports, promotes and helps to unlock the archaeology and heritage of Chester. This makes a key contribution by the University to the society and economy of Chester and its regions as well as contributing towards global debates and themes in archaeology and heritage studies. Post-COVID, UK society and economy needs trained archaeologists and heritage professionals like those provided by the University of Chester's programmes to aid our recovery and support the health and wellbeing of our communities.

We fully appreciate the difficult financial environment in which you operate but would like to emphasise the reputational damage to the University and to Chester by the loss of this small, dedicated archaeology and heritage team.

# Council for British Archaeology

We would welcome your assurance that any decision will be robustly tested against an open business plan and a clear understanding of the wider impact of this small but highly regarded department.

Yours Sincerely,



Neil Redfern BA (Hons) MPhil ACIfA FSA  
Executive Director

cc. Prof Meggen Gondek, Head of History & Archaeology; Professor of Archaeology

*As a dyslexic person, occasional English errors may pass me unnoticed.  
Please accept my apology if any appear in this letter.*

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