



British Philosophical Association

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31 January 2010

Dear Professor Trainor and Lord Douro

I am writing to you on behalf of the British Philosophical Association and the learned societies listed below to register our dismay at the proposed redundancies in the Philosophy Department at KCL.

The KCL Philosophy Department has an outstanding international reputation. As you will be aware, in RAE2008 it was placed third in the Times Higher Education league tables, with an average score of 3.05 and 35% of submitted work rated at 4*. In addition, the Department was ranked 6th in the English-speaking world, outside the USA, in the 2009 'Leiter Report' rankings of philosophy graduate programmes.

The proposed redundancies of two members of staff – Prof. Lappin and Dr. Meyer-Viol – will have an immediate and serious effect on the Department's and the College's international standing, as will the proposal to, in effect, force all staff to reapply for their jobs.

First, these two members of staff contribute significantly to the teaching and research of the Department in the areas of logic and philosophy of language. The loss of these staff members, and the threatened redundancy of others, will have an immediate and direct impact both on the research reputation of the Department and its postgraduate recruitment. (The situation at KCL has been widely publicised and there is already evidence of prospective students with offers from KCL thinking seriously about taking up places elsewhere.)

Second, the long-term effects of the University's approach may well prove to be even more harmful. Few people are happy to work in an institution that treats its staff in this way, and the College may find that some of its best philosophers seek employment elsewhere; and

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of course recruitment of world-class staff in the future may also prove to be difficult.

In short, the College's actions will not only severely damage its reputation as an employer, but seriously risks damaging the outstanding international reputation for teaching and research that the Philosophy Department currently enjoys.

We appreciate that institutions undergoing financial difficulties are forced to make difficult decisions. However, it is in the long-term interests of KCL if such decisions are made as a result of a fair and transparent process and are justified by legitimate academic as well as financial considerations. We therefore urge you to reconsider the recent decisions and proposed course of action with regard to the Philosophy Department and instead to conduct a full review, with input from external academics, of your provision in the humanities.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Beebee
Director, British Philosophical Association

<u>And on behalf of:</u>	<u>representing:</u>
Dr Michael Brady	Scots Philosophical Association
Prof Antony Duff & Prof David Papineau	Mind Association
Prof Simon Blackburn	Aristotelian Society
Dr Natasha Alechina	British Logic Colloquium
Prof Jennifer Saul	Society for Women in Philosophy
Prof Peter Jones	Association for Legal and Social Philosophy

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Prof Alan Montefiore	Forum for European Philosophy
Dr Diarmuid Costello	British Society for Aesthetics
Prof David Archard	Society for Applied Philosophy
Prof Richard Smith	Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain
Prof Graham Bird	UK Kant Society
Prof Martin Bell	British Society for the History of Philosophy
Dr John Preston	British Wittgenstein Society
Dr Simon Kirchin	British Society for Ethical Theory

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