

17 November 2025

Professor Nishan Canagarajah. Vice-Chancellor
Professor Henrietta O'Connor, Provost
Professor Teela Sanders, Head of College
University of Leicester

Dear Professors Canagarajah, O'Connor and Sanders,

We are writing to follow up on our letter of 3 August 2025 (attached) where we voiced alarm, on behalf of the over fifty learned societies and scholarly associations that make up the Arts and Humanities Alliance UK, in relation to your strategic review and its pre-change consultations on the closure of programmes in Modern Languages and Film Studies, and potential job losses in the Department of History.

We are aware that staff concerned have now been notified of the impending closure of their courses and departments and of how this will impact their jobs. We of course recognise that any decisions will not have been made lightly and that university leaders are having to make unenviable choices across the sector. However, we would also like to reiterate the value of arts and humanities disciplines to society and thus the importance of their continuing to be available for study at the nation's universities. Furthermore, in the light of the University of Nottingham's recent announcement of a pause in recruitment for all Modern Languages programmes, we are very concerned about the increasing emergence of cold spots for arts and humanities subjects in the East Midlands and the consequent impact that has on equality of opportunity for students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds in your region.

We would very much like to meet with you and other senior managers at the University of Leicester to help think through potential solutions to the current situation that avoid the loss of whole disciplines and hope that you are able to take us up on this offer.

Yours sincerely,

Professors Emma Cayley and Thea Pitman
Co-chairs, Arts and Humanities Alliance

On behalf of the affiliates of the Arts and Humanities Alliance:

African Studies Association of the UK
African Theatre Association
Anglo-Catalan Society
Architectural Humanities Research Association
Association of Adaptation Studies
Association for Art History
Association for German Studies
Association for Publishing Education
Association of Hispanists of Great Britain and Ireland
Association of University Professors and Heads of French
British Association for American Studies
British Association for Applied Linguistics
British Association for Canadian Studies
British Association for Chinese Studies
British Association for Jewish Studies
British Association for Korean Studies
British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies
British Association for the Study of Religions
British Society for the History of Science
British Society for Middle Eastern Studies
British Philosophical Association
Council for British Archaeology
Council of University Classics Departments
Drama HE
Economic History Society
English Association
Henry Sweet Society for the History of Linguistic Ideas
History UK
Linguistics Association of Great Britain
Music Mark – the UK Association for Music Education
National Association of Writers in Education
Oral History Society

Philological Society of Great Britain
Political Studies Association
Royal Geographical Society
Royal Historical Society
Royal Musical Association
Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies
Society for French Studies
Society for Italian Studies
Society for Latin American Studies
Society for Neo-Latin Studies
Society for Old Testament Study
Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies
Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies
Theology and Religious Studies UK
TROPO UK: The Association of Teachers and Researchers of Portuguese Language in the UK
UK Association for Language Testing and Assessment
University Archaeology UK
University Council For Languages
University English
Women in Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies

And with thanks to Professor Jennifer Richards for research in relation to the value of arts and humanities disciplines.

<https://www.artsandhumanitiesalliance.org/>