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Professor David Green
Vice Chancellor
University of Worcester

August 24th 2021

Dear Professor Green (by email, d.green@worc.ac.uk)

Re Department of Archaeology

I am writing with regard to your Department of Archaeology, and the decision to close it. I urge you to reconsider your decision and retain the department. My reasons for urging this derive from the fundamental purpose of Archaeology. It is an extremely rich discipline, both an art and a science, requiring understanding of, for instance, biology, physics, chemistry as well as anthropology and diverse theoretical principles.

It teaches a wide range of transferable skills. However, its study provides a profound understanding of human evolution, race, societal and cultural development. No-one involved in archaeology fails to grasp the importance of human gender and race relationships, increasingly important in our fragmented and contentious world.

Moreover, archaeology is an applied discipline – over 5000 archaeologists are employed in commercial archaeology in the UK, underpinning planning and development. Several thousand more are employed in other professional areas within heritage, including curating museums and historic sites which underpin tourism to the UK. The vast majority of these professionals have at least one degree in archaeology and this workforce is largely supplied from British university departments. I understand your graduates have a high employment rate and clearly are extremely well trained, another reason to maintain the excellence of your teaching and retain the department.

The quality of your staff has been demonstrated in their response to addressing issues of recruitment. I cannot understand why they have not been allowed to present their new course proposals and receive a fair hearing. Furthermore, this news of closure at Worcester comes weeks after the Secretary for State's announcement that Archaeology would retain its STEM funding. During the pandemic, moreover, archaeologists working in the commercial sector have been classified as essential workers. With such government support and recognition for the subject your archaeologists fully deserve your backing.

I am aware of the very difficult circumstances of the past year but know how hard the departmental staff have worked to ensure the students have been supported, fulfilling their teaching and research obligations. I urge you to continue to value the importance of teaching and researching our global past and send graduates out into the world to share their deep understanding of what makes us human.

Yours faithfully

Professor Clive Gamble FBA
President

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Cc Professor Peter Seville, Professor Sarah Greer, Dr John Wilson

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