



2 December 2018

The Vice Chancellor, Professor Susan Lea vc@hull.ac.uk ;
Pro-Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Professor Glenn
Burgess, p.g.burgess@hull.ac.uk;
University Registrar and Secretary, Jeannette Strachan, Jeanette.strachan@hull.ac.uk;
Interim Dean of the Faculty of Arts Cultures and Education, Professor Paul
Middleton, p.middleton@hull.ac.uk;
Human Resources Director, Kate O'Connell, k.oconnell@hull.ac.uk

Dear Professor Lea,

I am writing on behalf of the Society for French Studies (UK and Ireland) to express our dismay and horror at the news that Languages at Hull, and thus academic post in Languages, are once more under threat. We understand that the very existence of Modern Languages as an academic unit, offering degree provision in 5 modern languages, Translation Studies, and other languages in the IWLP programme, is at risk. This is particularly worrying for the picture for languages nationally, granted Hull's geographical location, and the enormous value of offering languages study in your area of the country. We are convinced that languages at Hull offers an excellent educational experience not only to local students but to those recruited nationally – borne out by outstanding NSS scores. The high reputation of colleagues at Hull is demonstrated by the fact that a team from Modern Languages won funding for one of the prestigious AHRC OWRI initiatives - which were brought in precisely to try to support and bolster the future of Modern Languages in the UK.

In the days when Brexit looms, the value of a degree in Modern Languages is all the greater, not only because of the language skills and high-level cultural competency

acquired, but because of the opening of the students' minds to the significance and value of an informed relationship with other nations. Linguists and cross-cultural experts are urgently needed nationally and internationally, now more than ever. If Hull pushes through its plans regardless of protests, it will in the medium and longer term do the UK a very great disservice. In the short term it will send a powerful and astonishingly ill-timed signal about the value of European languages and area studies.

Yours Sincerely,

Judith Still

Professor Judith Still BA MSc PhD FBA

President of the Society for French Studies www.sfs.ac.uk

Chair of French and Critical Theory

Mail to: Room B11, Trent Building,

University Park,

University of Nottingham UK

NG7 2RD

email: judith.still@nottingham.ac.uk