

Vikki Howells AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Addysg Bellach ac Uwch
Minister for Further and Higher Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Your ref P-06-1507
Our ref VH/00053/25

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair - Petitions committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

25 February 2025

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your letter of 3 February to the Cabinet Secretary for Education regarding Petition P-06-1507 in respect of the plans by the University of Wales Trinity St David (UWTSD) to relocate its Humanities provision from its Lampeter campus to its Carmarthen campus. I am responding as this matter falls within my portfolio.

This is a difficult time for the higher education sector in Wales and indeed across the UK, with higher education institutions facing financial pressures and needing to find ways to respond to these challenges.

In November 2024, the UWTSD announced proposals to reshape its provision at its Lampeter campus. These proposals involved moving the University's Humanities provision to its Carmarthen campus. The University's view is that the Lampeter provision is not sustainable. The move to Carmarthen is deemed to be strategic, allowing for a mix of humanities with other disciplines (with the intention of reinvigorating the humanities portfolio), and offering a more vibrant student experience.

The Vice Chancellor of the UWTSD, Professor Elwen Evans KC, wrote to me on 23 January to confirm that, following a formal consultation with trade unions and affected staff, the University has approved the proposal to relocate its Humanities provision from Lampeter to Carmarthen. I have been advised that the University is commencing preparations and practical considerations for this forthcoming change, to enable a smooth transition for Humanities to begin the academic year at its new Carmarthen home in September 2025.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Vikki.Howells@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Vikki.Howells@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I recognise the impact these plans may have on staff and students. However, as an autonomous institution, the UWTSD is responsible for its own academic affairs, including strategic management of its estate. It would not be appropriate for Welsh Ministers to intervene in matters such as course delivery and campus location.

I understand staff and students are being supported and I expect to see the principles of social partnership applied as well as support for students based in Lampeter to continue their studies with minimum disruption while these plans are implemented. The University has support services in place for affected staff and students to raise their concerns directly.

I also recognise the concern that this announcement may have a negative impact on the local economy, particularly the town centre of Lampeter. I acknowledge that the University has been at Lampeter for more than 200 years, having been founded in 1822, and has played an important role in the economic, cultural, social and educational fabric of the town for many years. The university is clear that it is not closing the Lampeter campus and states that it is committed to retaining the main Lampeter campus estate. I am aware that a period of engagement with stakeholders and with the local community in Lampeter has now begun, to identify sustainable education-related activities for the future of the campus.

I intend to remain in contact with the university as plans progress.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'V. Howells', with a long, sweeping underline stroke extending to the left and right.

Vikki Howells AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Addysg Bellach ac Uwch
Minister for Further and Higher Education