

- My starting point is that I fear that since Cardiff broke away from the University of Wales in 2004, it no longer considers itself to be a “Welsh University” in any meaningful sense. Has any consideration been given to the needs of Wales in this cost cutting exercise? Or to the education policies of the Welsh government? And if so, what decisions if any, were modified as a result?
- You may be aware of the journalist Will Hayward’s credible claim that the proposal to cut the School of Nursing is driven primarily by a desire to move up the Russell Group rankings (<https://willhaywardwales.substack.com/i/156232859/cardiff-uni-cuts-its-not-like-we-need-any-nurses-anyway-right>). Is this correct?
- I can’t help wondering if the inclusion of the School of Nursing is also something of a ‘straw man’, intended to attract the attention of the Welsh government, politicians, the press and the public whilst other cuts go under the radar. Concessions may already be being planned. I have already heard rumours that a somewhat reduced nursing school will be moved to USW. If so, is this a fig leaf or a serious alternative? Will it be as attractive even to Welsh students, let alone to non-Welsh and foreign students? Statistics show that students often stay in the area where they have taken their degrees, both in this, and other subjects. Will we lose some of our best students to other universities, probably in England?
- It seems likely that the current vice-chancellor was employed on the strength of her role in cost cutting at the University of Wellington in New Zealand. Here is an account of the cuts at Wellington University, published just after Wendy Lerner had moved on to her new post in Cardiff. <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/498474/devastated-victoria-university-axes-229-jobs-and-six-courses>.
- I understand that a similar methodology has been used to that implemented in Wellington, with departments being assessed under various criteria by a traffic light system. Were any of these criteria academic? If so, why were no academics included in the exercise? And, if not, is academic merit of no account in the university’s decision making? Out of curiosity, how many finance departments have been given a green light, despite the dire financial straits in which the university finds itself?

- I note also the tactic of divide and rule – It wasn't clear in Wellington exactly where the many cuts would fall – except for the internationally recognised geo-science courses (in a country that is prone to earthquakes) and languages. Other courses were put 'on probation'. Something similar is happening in Cardiff. Is the only certainty the closure of the School of Nursing? Or are many more jobs across multiple departments potentially at risk? University statements are ambiguous.
- This creates an atmosphere of uncertainty throughout the university, academics, students and would-be students alike. Can we expect that many scholars with an international reputation will now jump ship?
- I understand that in her address to staff at the university, the Vice Chancellor made no mention of the huge programme of building and refurbishment that would appear to be at the root of many of the university's financial problems.
- Finally I understand that the unions were given two weeks to come up with alternative proposals, but that when they requested access to detailed financial information they were told to submit a Freedom of Information request and that 'this could take up to 20 days' – in what way could this be said to be a meaningful negotiation?