

Dear Friends,

A few weeks ago, senior management at the University of Roehampton informed 226 of our academic staff (across the Schools of Arts, Education, Humanities and Social Sciences, Life and Health Sciences, and Psychology) that they will lose their job. They can choose between applying for voluntary redundancy, or competing against colleagues for a much lower number of jobs that will remain.

What senior management are proposing is a callous fire-and-rehire strategy that must be forcefully opposed. Furthermore, these proposals were cynically announced shortly after the publication of the latest REF (Research Excellence Framework) results: in other words, senior management are willing to simultaneously reap the efforts of our excellent academic staff, while claiming their jobs are no longer needed.

As many of you will be aware, Roehampton has been at the forefront of teaching and research in the fields of translation, audiovisual translation and media accessibility. It was the first university in the UK to offer audiovisual translation at Master's level. The MA in Audiovisual Translation is part of the network of European Master's in Translation and is recognised by the European Commission as a course of excellence. Its alumni are part of a global community of professionals in the accessibility and localization sectors, as well as in broadcasting and the videogame industry, and many of today's leading scholars in these fields have passed through Roehampton, either as staff or students.

These cuts are another brutal attack on the university as a place of learning and opportunity. In 2020, the translation studies department at Roehampton already lost most of its senior academic staff due to a series of cuts targeted specifically at the Arts and Humanities. Today, half of its academic staff stand to lose their jobs and livelihoods. Remaining staff will be facing higher academic workloads and teaching hours, with negative implications for morale and well-being, and therefore for teaching and research quality.

All of this is happening despite outstanding accomplishments (most notably its 'world-leading' classification in both the 2016 and 2022 REF results) and in spite of our staff's continued commitment to us as students, in particular during the pandemic, at a time when they were already overworked and undervalued by their employers.

Senior management attempts to justify these cuts by referring to falling student numbers yet refuses to cite any concrete figures. They claim to want to prioritise vocational, skills-led courses closely linked to the world of work in the creative industries, yet they are willing to jeopardise the quality of provision in a field that is highly vocational, ancillary to the screen industries, and experiencing unprecedented growth in demand.

Roehampton UCU (who have published more information [here](#)) are fighting to protect our staff, but we are calling on colleagues and friends, former Roehampton students and lecturers, to stand with us in opposition to these brutal cuts. You can:

- Sign and share the petition for Roehampton alumni and friends: <https://forms.gle/38C4yUKUd6jQS9oM8>
- Sign and share the general petition: <https://chnge.it/jnHQkHy7z7>
- Write to the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Jean-Noël Ezingard, to voice your opposition to these cuts: jn.ezingard@roehampton.ac.uk
- Spread the word on social media, tagging these accounts (hashtag: #RoeStoptheCuts): [@RoeSSAH](#) (Roehampton student collective); [@ProtestUoR](#) (Roehampton student protest movement); [@VRoehampton](#) (Vision for Roehampton grassroots movement for fair pay); [@RoehamptonUni](#) (Roehampton University); [@RoehamptonSU](#) (Roehampton Student Union); [@RoehamptonUCU](#) (Roehampton UCU)