

Emailed to the Vice Chancellor on the 14 September 2026

Dear Steve,

We are writing to you in good faith to build upon your recent communication following the tragic passing of Professor Jason Arday. While we appreciated your initial statement, the severity of the current climate requires us to work together on stronger, more tangible commitments to protect and support our community.

Many staff across UWE currently express deep concern regarding their safety and professional standing. The public campaigns and false allegations of plagiarism faced by Professor Arday—driven by figures associated with far-right agendas and pseudoscientific eugenics—highlight a real vulnerability for academics from the Global Majority. Coupled with recent far-right violence across the UK, the sense of unease among our staff is palpable.

This environment directly impacts staff experience and retention. Internal data indicates that attrition for Global Majority staff at UWE averages just two and a half years, alongside lower probation pass rates. This suggests that existing frameworks are falling short of delivering systemic change or providing adequate protection against higher standards of scrutiny.

To address these challenges collaboratively and safeguard our workplace, we invite you to take the following clear actions:

- **Direct Staff Communication:** Issue a comprehensive message to all employees outlining UWE's concrete measures to protect staff from racial harassment, bad-faith public attacks, and targeted professional discrediting.
- **Institutional Stance on Pseudoscientific Hate:** Use your platform to publicly reject eugenics and associated pseudoscientific ideologies that target marginalised academics.
- **Safety Protocols & Risk Assessment:** Clarify what immediate safeguarding measures and formal risk assessments are available for vulnerable or targeted staff members.
- **Structural Review of Equity Strategies:** Outline specific, measurable steps beyond the current anti-racist strategy to address systemic disparities in probation and retention rates.
- **Addressing Institutional Associations:** Reconsider your membership with the Society of Merchant Venturers in light of its ongoing impact on community trust. If you choose to maintain your membership, provide a clear rationale to staff and students explaining how this aligns with UWE's core values.

In the spirit of transparency, we will be sharing this letter with our members. We welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss these steps and work together toward a safer, more equitable university community.

Your sincerely

UCU Exec, UWE