

UCML Executive

Friday, 26th May, 2023

Updates from Professor Nick Selby, UK Council for Area Studies

Associations (UKCASA):

I have been talking (in capacity as UKCASA President, and as someone at UEA) with the Arts and Humanities alliance about the likelihood of compulsory redundancies at UEA. Of especial concern is not just the effect upon the Faculties of Arts and Humanities and of Social Sciences at UEA, and upon the world-leading interdisciplinary Area Studies work done here (which, of course, includes Language based Area Studies), but also what this presages for the sector more widely.

Tony Chafer (UKCASA Vice President) has written, on behalf of UKCASA, to the UEA Vice Chancellor protesting against the proposed cuts and pointing out the importance of the work being done at UEA in Area Studies in terms of research (in the previous REFs) and in terms of its shaping of the interdisciplinary ethos and intellectual climate at UEA that has driven the university's reputation over its sixty-year history.

The UKCASA executive have also been in contact with AHRC and we are currently seeking ways to ensure that Area Studies is properly represented and valued at and by the AHRC (which is the research council into whose remit we fall). These discussions are continuing. We have also had a meeting with colleagues at the British Academy, to reinvigorate collaborative work between us (that is UKCASA and / or its constituent member organisations) and the BA. Again, these discussions are ongoing, and they have been very fruitful so far with a potential 'deep-dive' next year by the BA into the state of the subject area in the UK and some potential workshops on Area Studies research organised jointly by the BA and UKCASA.

Normally held in June, the next UKCASA AGM will now take place in September. Please look out for notice of this AGM and any requests for nominations to positions on the Executive in due course.