

# Lampeter Campus

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 10 Mawrth 2025  
Petitions Committee | 10 March 2025

Reference: SR25/10747

**Petition Number:** P-06-1507

**Petition title:** We call on UWTSD and the Welsh Government to create a viable, sustainable plan for the long-term future of Lampeter campus

**Text of petition:** The University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) has announced a plan to end all undergraduate teaching at its Lampeter campus by September 2025, a decision that would sever nearly 200 years of Lampeter's role as a centre of higher education and devastate the local community. As alumni, students, and supporters, we call upon UWTSD and the Welsh Government to protect Lampeter's legacy and commit to a sustainable future for this historic campus.

Lampeter is not only Wales's oldest university institution but a pillar of its educational and cultural history. By allowing undergraduate teaching to end, UWTSD would undermine the very essence of Lampeter's mission, weaken the local economy, and sever its historic role as a centre of learning. The town of Lampeter, the alumni community, and the people of Wales deserve better.

**Our Goal:** We urge UWTSD and the Welsh Government to halt the planned end of undergraduate teaching at Lampeter and instead work with all stakeholders to create a viable, sustainable plan for the campus. This must include a serious investment in new courses, marketing, and student



recruitment efforts to ensure Lampeter's relevance and appeal for future generations.

## 1. Background

The University of Wales Lampeter was founded in 1822 as St David's College. In 1996 the name was changed to the University of Wales Lampeter. In 2010 there was a merger with Trinity University College in Carmarthen to create the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD). In 2013, Swansea Metropolitan University merged with the UWSTD. The three campuses in Lampeter, Carmarthen and Swansea make up UWTSD.

On 23 January 2025, the UWTSD announced that it would be moving the Humanities courses from Lampeter to the Carmarthen campus. This would take effect from September 2025. There will be no taught provision remaining on the Lampeter Campus, and students will complete their programme in Carmarthen.

The National Union of Students state that around 1,250 full-time on-campus students would be needed to sustain a delivery on the scale of the Lampeter campus. Lampeter has 92 on-campus humanities students.

## 2. Welsh Government action

On 4 December, the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Vikki Howells MS, said in Plenary that she recognises "the concern that this announcement may have a negative impact on the local economy, particularly the town centre of Lampeter, and Welsh Ministers [...] will remain in regular contact with the university as plans progress".

The Minister also noted that "universities in Wales are autonomous institutions, and it wouldn't be appropriate for Welsh Ministers to intervene in their academic matters, such as course delivery and campus location". She added that the university is "responding strategically to challenges to safeguard the study of humanities at their institution" and that "the number of full-time undergraduates at Lampeter now stands at 92, which is smaller than most primary schools in Wales, so we need to be realistic about the situation facing the university".

In answer to a question in Plenary on 19 February 2025, the Minister for Further and Higher Education said:

Reform in Wales is already under way with new legislation in place and the creation of Medr [the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research], and I want to make the most of this significant opportunity to transform the sector by talking to as many people as possible. I've invited all vice-chancellors to a round-table meeting in the week after recess for more discussions about the current challenges facing the sector.

In a Written Statement on 18 February 2025, the Minister announced:

To support our universities, I have already increased the tuition fee cap for 2025/26, providing up to £21.9m in additional income to universities, and I have also provided an additional £10m in grant funding to the sector. In recognition of the significant financial challenges facing higher education, I am pleased to announce today a further £18.5m capital funding this financial year. This additional funding will support universities with estate maintenance and digital projects to reduce operating costs, while also improving environmental sustainability and ensuring that facilities continue to be suitable for providing a high-quality student experience and delivering world-leading research. I have also asked Medr to report back to me on how this funding has been maximised to make future savings to ease the current financial challenges.

### 3. Other Higher Education Institutions in Wales

A number of other universities in Wales are in the process of consulting on reductions in staff and courses in the context of increasing financial pressures.

On 28 January 2025, Cardiff University began a consultation on proposed reduction of 400 (Full Time Equivalent) academic staff (7 per cent of the total workforce) and the possibility of School and subject closures and School mergers. Their proposals include:

- ceasing subjects and programmes in Ancient History, Modern Languages and Translation, Music, Nursing, and Religion and Theology;
- increasing student and staff ratios across the University, and revising approaches to learning, teaching and assessment, and simplifying bureaucratic processes; and

- The creation of the Schools of Natural Sciences; Data Science, Computing and Mathematics; Human and Social Sciences; and Global Humanities through merging various current courses.

On 19 February 2025, the University of South Wales announced a consultation on closing a 'small number' of their courses after all current students have completed their studies and a reduction of around 90 roles (around 3 per cent of the total workforce). Further details about affected areas are not currently available.

Also on 19 February 2025, Bangor University told staff in an email that it aims to cut around 200 jobs (around 10 per cent of the total workforce) to make savings of £15m.

## 4. Welsh Parliament Action

There are currently two open Petitions relating to cuts to universities in Wales, both relate to Cardiff University and both have passed the number of signatures required to be considered by the Petitions Committee:

- Help Cardiff University to keep their Modern Languages degree courses
- Enable Cardiff University to keep the Nursing degree course

On 17 February 2025, the Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee wrote to the President and Vice-Chancellor of Cardiff University, Professor Wendy Lerner, inviting her to give oral evidence to the Committee once the consultation on restructuring has closed.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.