

Professor David Smythe vs. University of Glasgow

Timeline of events and correspondence

Abbreviations

CA	Compromise Agreement between Prof David Smythe and GU signed 4 Nov 1998
CGeol	Chartered Geologist [title held by DS 1990-1996]
DN	David Newall, Secretary to the Court, University of Glasgow
DS	Professor David Smythe
DW	Dr Dorothy Welch, deputy secretary to DN, Court Office, GU
FOI	Freedom of Information legislation
GES	School of Geographical & Earth Sciences
GSL	Geological Society of London
GU	Glasgow University
ITS	IT Services, GU
JC	Professor John Chapman, Head of College of Science and Engineering in 2014
JM	Professor John Marsh. Head of School of Engineering
LCC	Lancashire County Council
MC	Professor Muffy Calder, Vice-principal and Head of College of Science & Engineering
ML	Professor Martin Lee, Head of School fo geographical & Earth Sciences, GU
PY	Professor Paul Younger
RW	Dr Rob Westaway, senior research fellow at GU
SAR	Subject Access Request (under Data Protection Act)
VP	Vice Principal (incl. Prof. Neal Juster, Prof. Muffy Calder)

01 Jan 1988	DS appointed to Chair of Geophysics, GU.
01 Sep 1988	Merger of departments of geology at Dundee, Strathclyde and Glasgow into new Department of Geology & Applied Geology at GU.
29 Apr 1990	DS made a Fellow of the GSL ‘with validation’ as member of the Institution of Geologists.
10 May 1991	DS becomes CGeol on transfer of IG validation to GSL.
4 Dec 1996	CGeol status of DS expires (unknown to DS).
01 Oct 1998	Department of Geology & Applied Geology closed; most of the best staff dispensed with; ongoing teaching commitments taken over by rump staff in a new Division of Earth Sciences within the Geography Department;
04 Nov 1998	Compromise Agreement between Prof David Smythe and GU signed. DS issued with new email address dks1e@udcf.gla.ac.uk , replacing dks@geology.gla.ac.uk .

- March 2009 Issue of staff number by GU to DS to enable use of remote online access by virtual private network.
- 31 Aug 2012 ‘Normal retirement date’ for DS, after which his rights under the CA revert to those of an Honorary Senior Research Fellow.
- 18 Feb 2014 Precognition by DS for Dart Energy planning appeal, Falkirk. CV states “*My professional qualifications are: BSc Geology (Glasgow 1970), PhD Geophysics (Glasgow 1987), Chartered Geologist.*”
- 04 Mar 2014 Rebuttal by DS for Dart Energy planning appeal, Falkirk. CV repeated as above.
- 01 Jul 2014 PY sends DS abusive and defamatory email, copied to BBC Scotland, about DS broadcast interview on BBC *Morning Call*.
- 04 Jul 2014 DS emails JC to correct comments in PY email; reiterates that he is a CGeol.
JC to DW, PW +1 – he will simply acknowledge Smythe message.
PY to JC – Smythe ‘misrepresenting Royal Society (2012) report’; no record of Smythe having been a Cgeol [this was later proved wrong].
- 16 Jul 2014 DN writes (via DW) to DS expressing concern about his published/broadcast views on fracking (the ‘cease-and-desist’ letter).
- 17 Jul 2014 GSL President letter to DS pointing out that right to use title CGeol ceased on lapse of Fellowship of GSL on 4 Dec 1996 because subscription fees not paid.
- 22 Jul 2014 ClickGreen website article re DS evidence to West Sussex CC; comment by PY - “*Long-retired Prof Smythe is not in any way associated with the current research team at the Univ of Glasgow, who regard his claims as false*”.
- 23 Jul 2014 PY to JC – according to GSL, no record Smythe was ever a CGeol; “*he lied in his letter to you*”.
DW to PY – have sent ‘cease-and-desist’ letter; withdrawal of Smythe email access difficult in view of CA; “*if he continued to bring the University into dispute we could escalate the situation*”.
JC email to DN +3; the “*Smythe problem*”.
PY to DN, JC, DW +1 - “*Various industrial research partners*” suggestion.
- 29 Jul 2014 DS replies to DN letter commenting on PY; assures DN that he only represents himself and not the views of GU.
- 30 Jul 2014 PY email to DN and 10 others – accusing Smythe in national press of ‘misrepresenting’, ‘untruthful’, ‘misleading’.
- 01 Aug 2014 *The Times* article - “*Fracking row scientists lied about his credentials*” quoting PY saying “*He falsely claims to be a chartered geologist. That’s fraudulent. It’s wilful untruth*”.
Mail Online – cannibalisation of Times article, plus extra info from DS website.
The Telegraph – repeats PY allegation.
- 13 Aug 2014 DS letter to DN *re* defamatory comments by PY in national press.
- 15 Aug 2014 Several internal GU emails: PY email to DN attaching copy of Dart Energy QC summary of DS testimony at Falkirk planning inquiry of March 2014, and an opinion from a JP sent to GSL re CGeol.

- 25 Aug 2014 First email from RW/PY to Cuadrilla [correspondence continued till at least June 2015].
- 10 Oct 2014 DS letter to GSL in reply to 17 July letter; his claim CGeol status in 2014 was made in ignorance, and will no longer do so.
- 13 Oct 2014 Several emails: LCC email to PY asking for comment on DS submissions to LCC on Cuadrilla fracking applications.
PY email to DN attaching request from LCC to comment on DS submissions. Reply from DN saying “*we do not intend to make public statements about him*”.
- 14 Oct 2014 DN letter to DS in response to 13 August letter; defends PY, denying that his published comments were defamatory.
PY responds to LCC request with critique of DS, saying “*The University recently wrote to D K Smythe requesting that he desist from giving the impression he is actively affiliated with us. He never responded, but it would appear he does not intend to respect this request.*”
- 05 Nov 2014 PY email to DN with attachment from Media Office re Canterbury Times; DS “*is clearly not in any way honouring the request we made that he cease from quoting his Glasgow affiliation*”.
- 17 Dec 2014 RW email to LCC - attaching PY/RW comment on DS submissions to LCC about Cuadrilla.
- 06 Feb 2015 RW email to Cuadrilla providing information about noise and traffic levels [the reasons given for LCC to reject Cuadrilla’s planning applications], to be used in a public lecture by RW.
- 15 May 2015 Cuadrilla email to RW proposing meeting in Glasgow.
- 15 May 2015 Emails between 15 May and 3 June, planning meeting between PY/RW and Cuadrilla.
- 09 Jun 2015 Meeting at GU between Cuadrilla and PY/RW.
- 10 Jun 2015 RW/PY Cuadrilla emails confirming that meeting had taken place.
- 03 Jul 2015 Emails between DS and ITS; new email a/c David.Smythe@glasgow.ac.uk created to replace dks1e@udcf.gla.ac.uk.
- 27 Jan 2016. Publication online of research article ‘Hydraulic fracturing in thick shale basins: problems in identifying faults in the Bowland and Weald Basins, UK’ in *Solid Earth Discussions*.
- 29 Jan 2016 DN email to ITS instructing termination of DS email account.
- 02 Feb 2016 Internal ITS email request to forward attached email from DN to DS [NB this email was never sent].
- 03 Feb 2016 ITS email to DS – awaiting information [on email access problem].
- 04 Feb 2016 ML to DN “*just got a message from the journal saying that Smythe’s e-mal [sic] address is still active*”.
DN to ML and ITS – ITS has deactivated the email account “*having received a request via HR from the School*” “*I expect Profesoor Smythe will challenge this, and will argue that, as an Emeritus Professor, he has a right to an email account. But I am comfortable with the decision.*”

ITS to DS - “*we have found that the issue has not been caused by a technical issue, it has been caused by the fact that your honorary status has expired.*”

DS to MC – request to reactivate status, as enshrined in CA.

- 05 Feb 2016 MC to DS – passing buck to GES to deal with.
- 02 Mar 2016 Simon Pook sends CA to DN.
- 11 Mar 2016 RW email to PY saying he is an invited speaker at a shale gas conference and DS is apparently on the list.
- 12 Mar 2016 PY email to DN alleging that DS is presenting at a shale gas conference.
- 29 Mar 2016 DN sends Simon Pook copy of internal review written by VP Neal Juster.
- 03 May 2016 Simon Pook requests that GU takes legal advice; asks for GUID to be re-activated in the mean time.
- 05 May 2016 DN writes to Simon Pook refusing request for re-activation; no comment on legal advice.
- 18 May 2016 DS sends DN *aide-mémoire* proving 100% compliance with CA regarding use of GU affiliations in all his published articles 1998-2016; notification of impending change of solicitor from English- to Scottish-registered.
- 18 May 2016 DN acknowledges receipt of *aide-mémoire*.
- 25 May 2016 Email from Rob Edwards [journalist] to PY *re* possible Herald on Sunday piece; PY reply saying DS paper [see 27 Jan 2016] has been rejected.
- 26 May 2016 PY email to press office *re* Rob Edwards query.
- 31 May 2016 PY in response to GU press office *re* possible *Herald on Sunday* piece.
- 02 Jun 2016 PY email to FOI office denying any formal communications between Court and himself about DS.
- 14 Jun 2016 PY to DN +2 *re* Rob Edwards, *The Ferret, Glasgow Herald*.
PY email to JM *re* DS “*endless attempts to pretend he knows Hydrogeology when he demonstrably doesn’t*”.
- 16 Jun 2016 DS makes SAR to GU for correspondence quoting himself between DN, PY and ITS.
- 15 Jul 2016 Receipt from GU of SAR, comprising covering letter and emails; letter states that Court not involved in termination case.
- 19 July 2016 DS emails DN to request substantive response and information on how to appeal against the internal review.
DN reply to DS – not budging from decision by VP Neal Juster of March 2016; “*I do think that you stray outwith the terms of the 1998 agreement when you associate yourself with the University in submitting an objection to a planning application ...*”.