



PALESTINE  
SOLIDARITY  
CAMPAIGN



# A 10 STEP GUIDE

TO STARTING AN  
**#APARTHEIDOFFCAMPUS**  
CAMPAIGN

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# INTRODUCTION

Israel's system of institutionalised racist discrimination – amounting to the crime of apartheid – can only be sustained because of weapons, technology and other support it receives from companies around the world. UK universities invest nearly £500m in and hold ties with companies and institutions complicit in Israeli violations of international law. This includes arms companies like Thales, BAE systems and Raytheon. To help students fight back, we have launched a database exposing UK university investments and ties with complicit companies and institutions.

Our research has shown that despite over 87 UK universities holding “ethical investment policies”, 118 out of a total of 150 UK universities invest in companies complicit with Israeli apartheid.

You can view the extent of UK university complicity here.

## UK COMPLICITY

Britain played a central role in the ethnic cleansing and colonisation of Palestine. During World War One Britain, in the infamous Balfour Declaration, promised the land of Palestine to the Zionist movement for a Jewish homeland, despite 97% of the indigenous population of Palestine being non-Jews. After World War One, Britain was given colonial control over Palestine under mandate from the League of Nations. During the mandate period, Britain did not grant Palestine representative institutions, such as a parliament and a government made up of native Palestinians that commanded a majority in that Parliament, but facilitated Zionist ambitions to colonise Palestine.

The settlers formed their own institutions, including military units, such as the Haganah, which were trained by the British colonial authority. Tensions continued to grow during the mandate period. In 1947 Britain agreed to end its control of Palestine, renouncing its mandate. Palestinians were left at the mercy of the Zionist forces Britain had



trained. As a result, 750,000 Palestinians were ethnically cleansed, in an act known as the 'Nakba' – 'catastrophe' in Arabic.

UK complicity in Israel's institutionalised racism against the Palestinians continues to this day. The UK government continues to enable, normalise and profit from Israeli apartheid through their extensive arms & trade deals and diplomatic ties. This level of complicity carries through to UK universities, who continue this legacy of colonialism through their links with companies and institutions who enable the oppression of the Palestinian people.

## **ISRAELI APARTHEID**

Israel has established an apartheid regime that discriminates against Palestinians in a variety of ways. On its foundation in 1948 the new state passed laws which prevented the over 750,000 dispossessed Palestinians from returning to their homes, whilst allowing Jews from around the world to migrate to the state of Israel as citizens. To this day, Israel has prevented these refugees and their descendants from exercising the legally enshrined right to return to their homes.

The Palestinian citizens of Israel make up 20% of Israel's population and face more than 65 laws which discriminate against them due to their Palestinian descent.

Across all parts of the Occupied Palestinian Territories (Gaza, West Bank and East Jerusalem), Israel operates a regime of systematic racial discrimination, which facilitates the continued ethnic cleansing of the indigenous Palestinian population.

## **BOYCOTT, DIVESTMENT & SANCTIONS**

In 2005, following decades of oppression of the Palestinian people under Israel's apartheid regime and several failed "peace negotiations",

over 170 Palestinian civil society groups called for the international community to take Boycott, Divestment & Sanctions (BDS) action as a non-violent means to pressure Israel into complying with international law and the basic principles of human rights.

The BDS movement is inspired by the South African struggle and the international solidarity campaign to sanction South Africa until its apartheid regime fell. BDS represents Palestinians living under apartheid in Israel, Palestinians under occupation in Gaza and the West Bank and Palestinian refugees. It calls for no cooperation with Israeli apartheid until it:

- 1) Ends the occupation and colonisation of Palestinian territories**
- 2) Ends inequality for Palestinian citizens of Israel**
- 3) Allows Palestinian refugees their right to return to their homes**

All of these demands are enshrined in international law. BDS is an anti-racist, anti-discrimination, non-violent movement which seeks to campaign for freedom, justice and equality for all.

## **IT'S TIME TO GET #APARTHEIDOFFCAMPUS!**

In response to the deep complicity of UK institutions and the call from the Palestinian people for BDS, we're calling on UK universities to end any complicit ties to Israeli apartheid and pledge to be **#ApartheidFree**.

This can only happen with people like you taking part in and building grassroots campaigns in solidarity with the Palestinian people, which pressure UK universities to end their complicity in Israeli apartheid.

This 10 step guide will provide you with the key information you need to build a campaign on your campus.

# STEP

# 1

## BUILD A CAMPAIGN TEAM

Many UK campuses already have a Palestine solidarity group in some form.

Therefore, building a campaign team can simply be developing an existing group into a BDS campaign, or otherwise directing its activities more explicitly towards a divestment campaign or a campaign for your university to sign the “Apartheid-Free” Pledge (see page 16).

In any case, building up a committed base of activists to carry a campaign is a crucial task that can’t be short-cut: campaigns are built, not discovered!





## HERE ARE SOME SIMPLE TIPS TO BUILD A STRONG CAMPAIGN TEAM:

- If you are looking for members to join your team, create an open meeting where you can advertise your mission statement and bring keen students into the campaign. Or you can book an “Apartheid Off Campus” workshop through our website.
- Creating and getting posters printed to plaster around campus can help reach interested students and increase the attendance of your meeting/workshop! Canva.com is a great and easy to use site for designing posters – meaning you don’t need to be an expert to deliver a striking poster.
- Advertising your event on Facebook can also help increase your reach. Check out our google drive full of “Apartheid Off Campus” graphics and pictures you can use to advertise your event online!
- Have an agenda for the first meeting and a strong chair to keep it on track, as well as someone to take minutes on ‘action points’. Lay out what information you’ve got and make sure there’s time for people to introduce themselves and what they hope to gain from being there (and, if appropriate, how they feel they would be most comfortable getting involved).
- Building trust and friendship between team members helps us work together, so make time to get to know each other. Socials are good. Make sure that your group is both inclusive internally, and welcoming to new people externally.
- Understanding what people’s skills and interests are is important, and a diversity of skills and experience will help the campaign.
- Internal email lists, WhatsApp and Facebook groups and a shared dropbox, google-drive or online tasks dashboard can be useful for

communications between meetings.

- Regular meetings are important to keep up momentum. Ensure these are structured and link into past meetings/action points.
- Different people will be able to have different levels of involvement, and it's important to cater for that – not everyone has to come to every meeting. Highlight opportunities for people to get involved 'upfront' and behind-the-scenes with campaigning so that people can be involved in different ways.
- Some groups use consensus decision-making techniques to ensure that everyone in the group is listened to. Ensure that whatever your decision-making process is, there is an opportunity for members to reflect on, feed into and shape campaigns. Democratic campaigns also allow you to build up organisers to take on the campaign year upon year without collapsing after the initial organisers graduate and move on – which is crucial as divestment campaigns may take place over multiple academic cycles.





# STEP

# 2

## RESEARCH AND PICK A TARGET

Most British universities are connected in one way or another to Israel's apartheid regime. Whether it's through Israeli or international goods from companies complicit in Israeli apartheid being stocked in university shops, financial investments in companies which are complicit in Israel's war crimes or academic research links associated with Israel's arms trades. The trick is to pinpoint a target to have a base for your campaign.

The best campaign aims are strategic in the sense that they:

- are ambitious but realistic – i.e. *focus your campaign demands on specific companies to divest from, not anything and everything with some connection to Israel's regime.*
- can connect your university's role directly to Israel's practices of apartheid and settler colonialism – *can you describe this relationship within 1-2 sentences?*
- can open up conversations throughout campus about questions of human rights, complicity, how universities are run and for whose benefit.
- present opportunities for collaboration, coalitions and solidarity with progressive allies.

## RESEARCH

### Financial investments

We have exposed UK universities' complicity with Israeli apartheid and compiled their relevant financial and institutional links. All this information



is collated into a user-friendly database accessible via the link [here](#).

UK universities can be complicit in a number of different ways, which include:

- Investing in companies that are involved in Israel's human rights abuses against the Palestinian people.
- Holding a “memoranda of understanding” or partnership with an Israeli university. Many Israeli universities facilitate: the Israeli military and apartheid regime and are built in illegal settlements, on stolen Palestinian land. For more on the academic boycott, check out the “Why Boycott Israeli Universities” pamphlet.
- Holding partnerships and/or financial arrangements with companies who are complicit with Israeli apartheid.

- Sponsorship by complicit companies. For example, BAE Systems sponsor the Centre for Ethics and Law at University College London (UCL). BAE Systems export military equipment to Israel and other regimes that commit human rights abuses.

NB: See page 28 for how to submit an FOI request to find out more information on your university's complicity.

## **Investing in apartheid – University complicity database**

To expose the magnitude of UK universities' investments in companies facilitating Israeli apartheid, we sent Freedom of Information requests to all 150 UK universities requesting the market value and details of their direct and indirect investments. With this information, alongside information from Bloomberg Terminal, we have been able to identify shocking findings.

We estimate £450 million in total is invested by UK universities in companies complicit in Israel's apartheid regime!

Here are some of the key findings:

- 53 UK universities did not hand any information over. 42 of these refused, citing exemptions from the FOI Act, despite other universities doing so willingly. These decisions are currently being challenged.
- 33 UK universities do not hold any investments (this is likely due to their size).
- 44 UK universities provided us with the full data. Out of these, we know that the overall investment in complicit companies is at least £129,239,973.
- Based on the concrete data from these universities, and excluding any anomalies, we have calculated an average "complicity percentage" for the sector, i.e. an average percentage for what

proportion of a university's total endowment fund is invested in complicit companies (3.78%). When this average percentage is applied to universities for which we weren't provided data, it suggests that there is an estimated further £327,070,866 that has not been disclosed to us. Therefore, in total, combining the known amounts with the undisclosed calculated average, the estimated total investment in complicit companies for the whole sector is £456,310,839.

- Further to this, our FOI requests revealed that out of the recorded 150 UK universities, 87 hold some form of an “ethical investment policy” which seeks to eliminate unethical investments such as those linked to human rights abuses.

## **Decide your demands**

- Does your university hold no complicit investments/links but hasn't signed the pledge? Focus your campaign for your university to pledge to be apartheid-free (see page 16).
- Does your university hold some complicit investments/links but not extensive amounts? Call for your university to sign the pledge to be apartheid-free and include a clause stating their commitment to end the highlighted complicit links within three years (see page 16).
- Does your university hold extensive amounts of investments in companies complicit with Israeli apartheid and/or hold large institutional and financial links with complicit companies and/or institutions? Then your university may have some work to do before you ask them to sign the pledge to be apartheid free. In this case, it is best to focus on one or two key demands on which your campaign group can focus their efforts.

## **These demands may include:**

- Divestment from all companies complicit with Israeli apartheid. You may choose to centre your communications on one specific company.
- Ending a partnership/contract with a specific company/ institution.


\*See page 17 for example petitions for your campaign.

## **Focusing your campaign**

- After you have checked your university's complicity, you can prioritise your campaign's focus on one or more targets.
- In order to keep the message clear, it is probably best to emphasise one target when spreading the message of your campaign.
- However, once you have made some progress in your campaign, you can also introduce other targets under the banner of your campaign in your list of demands to the university. This is completely down to you and your group to decide, depending on the context of your campaign and campus.

## ONLINE PRESENCE

Most students are very well-accustomed to social media, and for campaigns it can be your most useful tool when used correctly. To begin your campaigns social media presence, here are some steps:

1. Create a Facebook Page. If you already have a Palestine solidarity group, you may already have a Facebook page. If not, then be sure to create one! It can be used to increase your campaign's reach, share and create events, posts and more. 
2. After you have created a Facebook page, you can then proceed to create an Instagram, Twitter etc.
3. Post engaging content which is likely to increase your outreach to students on campus. For example:
  - A short video detailing your campaign, with different students taking part
  - A poster which expresses your campaign demands and reasoning
  - Memes
  - Pictures from protests/events
  - Live videos of actions – to maximise the reach of your live videos, make sure the action starts within the first few seconds of filming and cut the video when the action is over – keep it short and sweet (around 2 mins) for social media



## LAUNCH A PETITION

Petitions are a really useful way to demonstrate that there is wide support for your campaign.

- Keep your demands clear and ensure that your chosen targets are used for the petition.
- Have an addressee – which will most likely be the Vice Chancellor (VC) of your university.
- Use your online presence to further the success of the petition.
- Decide whether your petition will be exclusively for university members or open to all concerned individuals and groups. There are benefits and costs to both. If you choose to keep it focused on university members, this will allow you to have a strong and clear message when handing in the petition to your VC. Other allies can also add to the campaign in other ways (see Step 5).
- Send the petition to friendly academics, who may pass on the petition to other faculty members sympathetic to the cause. This can also help you build a list of friendly faculty members, which will always be useful.
- Stalls are a great way to collect large numbers of signatures from your target group (university members) in a short period of time.
- Petitions allow you to build up a database of potentially-interested contacts: make sure to inform them of opportunities to get more directly involved with your campaign, and of any significant updates.
- Remember: petitions are a tactic, but shouldn't be the primary tactic of your campaign.
- Also bear in mind that petitions may spread further than your campus and pick up outside attention. Ensure that they concisely and accurately describe what your campaign is about and why it is important, so that there isn't a chance of it getting misrepresented.

## Apartheid-Free Pledge

We [*university*] reaffirm; our opposition to all forms of oppression and that everyone is entitled to basic human rights, as affirmed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We commit to ensuring our university is free from oppression and discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, gender, class, ethnicity, religion or any other characteristic.

Apartheid is an extreme form of racism and we don't want our university to be complicit in it in any form. We want to be an active part in the global fight against racism.

We recognise that Israel denies Palestinians the right to live free from oppression, through:

- The illegal occupation and colonisation of their land.
- Discrimination against Palestinian citizens of Israel
- The denial of the right of return for Palestinian refugees, as enshrined in UN Resolution 194.

Legal experts, academics and UN reports have affirmed that this system of racial discrimination amounts to the crime of apartheid under international law.

As an apartheid-free zone, we refuse to provide any kind of support or to engage in the normalisation of relations with any regime of racism, oppression and dispossession.

In working to make our university free from all forms of discrimination, we affirm that the university seeks to hold no investments or ties with companies or institutions complicit in the denial of rights to Palestinians.

In doing this, we declare our university an apartheid-free zone. This allows us to take a step further in the global fight against racism, and stand on the right side of history.

## Example petition

We are asking the University of Manchester (UoM) to divest from companies who are complicit in Israel's war crimes. UoM is the only university in the country to hold social responsibility in its top three values, yet infringes upon its own Socially Responsible Investment policy every day by holding investments in these companies. Therefore, we feel that the university should adhere to its own policy and divest from companies that help sustain Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian land as well as Israel's apartheid regime.

One of these companies is Caterpillar, whom UoM currently hold around £2,114,435.97 worth of shares in. Caterpillar supply armoured bulldozers to the Israeli army (IDF) for the specific purpose of demolishing Palestinian homes, factories, agricultural land and civilian infrastructure in illegally occupied territory. This is a violation of international law and UoM is complicit in this by holding investments in Caterpillar.

The UN Human Rights Council has included Caterpillar in their blacklist of companies who have products that are known to be used in violating the human rights of civilians and actively breaking international law. It could not be any clearer that UoM's investments in Caterpillar break the university's own Socially Responsible Investment policy, yet they still continue with these investments. This can go on no longer.

As students, we cannot sit by silently as our tuition fees are used to support oppression and the infringement of basic human rights.

# STEP

# 5

## **BUILD YOUR CAMPUS POWER**

BDS is particularly successful as a movement because it connects many pressing issues – from racism to sexism to state violence to refugees to colonialism and so on.

All of these connections are opportunities for solidarity and coalition-building with groups that are active on those issues.

Finding allies with other campaigns, student societies, academics and staff on campus can significantly accelerate your campaign and chance of success. For example, the BDS Campaign at the University of Manchester works closely with the Fossil Free campaign and Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT), as both campaigns are working towards divestment and share the same values. This was recently in the form of a very successful joint “Divest NOW” protest.

Also, other student groups and staff can co-sign your statements, as well as publicising your petitions to their own contacts and/or mailing lists.

In addition to securing student groups and staff support, reach out to your SU executive team and explain to them your goals, your chosen targets and the need for them to push your campaign in their meetings with the university administration.

If possible, you can ask your SU exec team to bring a report with your demands and reasoning to their meetings with the university administration.

## **BUILDING ALLIANCES WITH ACADEMICS AND STAFF**

Over 800 UK academics have signed a petition supporting the Boycott of Israel. This petition was formed and circulated by BRICUP, a UK

academic organisation in support of Palestinian rights. You can contact them directly and ask what academics have already publicly supported the BDS campaign at [contact@bricup.org.uk](mailto:contact@bricup.org.uk).

Most academics are unionised with the University College Union (UCU). UCU has a branch in every UK university and actively supports the BDS movement and is affiliated to PSC. Find out who the chair is of your university's UCU branch and ask them to meet to discuss your campaign.

Academics and unions can support you in a number of different ways, including through applying internal faculty pressure on the university to become apartheid free, signing open letters/petitions, as well as circulating the campaign amongst other academics at the university.

In addition to academics, there is a high number of other staff at a university, many of whom will be unionised. It's worth reaching out to the Unite branches and Unison branches for your university. They also support the BDS movement and are affiliated to PSC.

It's all about making connections!

## REMEMBER:

- Coalition-building and solidarity is a two-way process. Make sure to show up for and support groups that support you.
- SUs and SU execs can give valuable reach and resources to boost your campaign – but make sure to build up your campaign's strength independently of them, and avoid 'handing over' your campaign to the SU.

## **BUILD YOUR EXTERNAL POWER & EMAIL CAMPAIGNS**

Public support and engagement are a key part of your campaign. The more public your campaign is, the more successful the overall BDS movement will be in pushing for the end of Israel's war crimes and oppression of Palestinian human rights.

- Changing the mood or consciousness of your campus is an important aim for the longer term, even if your campaign goal isn't immediately achieved.
- An email campaign is a great way to involve public support as well as internal support from university members.

A great way to start an email campaign is to have a template email (which can be based on your petition), and then ask your allies to email into the university with the demands of your campaign, as well as displaying their dismay at the university's support for Israel's war crimes.

This can be extremely effective, as public image is key for universities, and damaging their reputation is one of the most effective tools we have. Once they start noticing how many people are concerned about the university's actions, it may force the university to reconsider their investments – getting you a step closer to reaching your goals.

All anti-racist, anti-colonialist, anti-discrimination groups and those calling for justice can be our allies. There are many allies in the Palestine solidarity movement, and many have a presence in most cities. These include:



- Palestine Solidarity Campaign
- Palestine Action
- NUS Liberation campaigns:
- NUS Black Students' Campaign
- NUS LGBT+ Students' Campaign
- NUS Trans Campaign
- NUS Women Campaign
- NUS Disabled Students Campaign
- Campaign Against Arms Trade
- War on Want
- Local Palestinian communities
- Broadly socialist or left-wing groups
- Sympathetic MPs & councillors

When asking supporters to email the university, you can also ask them to send the same email to the national media. Sometimes they get through, and your campaign will reach a new level!



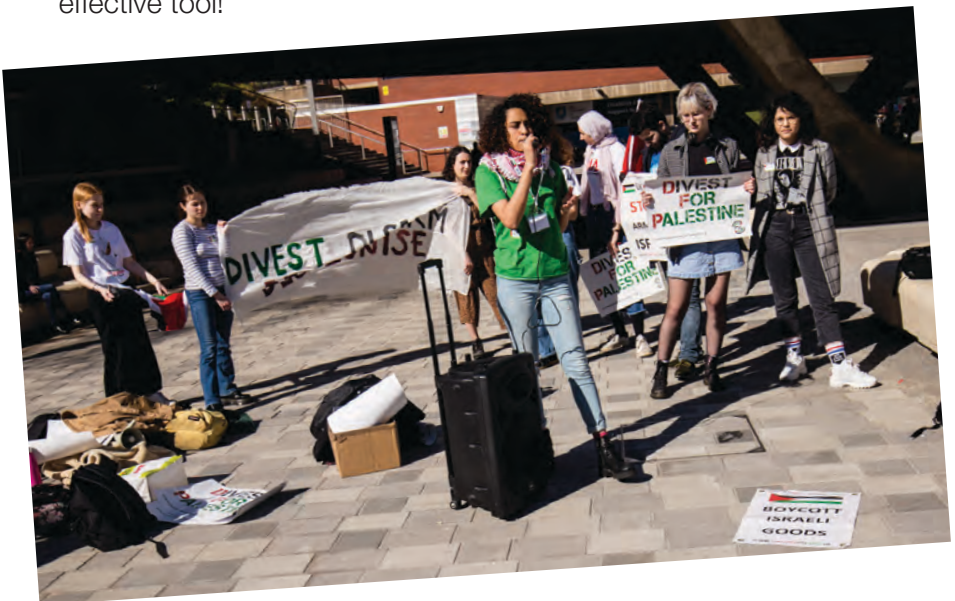
# STEP

# 7

## ENGAGE YOUR DECISION MAKERS

If you don't ask you won't get, so you need to be asking regularly. Getting apartheid off campus can be a tricky process, but it is not impossible! These are some key points to consider:

- Many universities already have some form of “socially responsible/ethical” policy on investments. It's worth looking through the policy and discovering if there are points they are violating through their ties to Israel, because clearly investments in Israel's war crimes are not socially responsible. Using the institution's own policies and words to hold them to account can be a very powerful and effective tool!



- Your students' union executive team can help you identify who the key decision makers are and understand the decision making process, including how you can influence it (though not all officer teams will be friendly to Palestine activism!).
- Many universities have a board of governors meeting (or similar) where these issues can be raised. If you can get a report in there or even a one page piece of paper with your demands and reasoning, you will be closer to the goal of divestment.
- When you are made aware of these meetings, you can choose to do a demonstration/protest outside, to directly show the decision makers that you support the campaign. **Be loud!**
- Management may try to weaken your campaign with offers of a 'seat at the table', or offering the opportunity for one or two members to engage directly with power-holders.

They can then isolate and grind activists down with endless bureaucracy whilst the rest of the campaign winds down in energy. Make sure that power-holders are always aware of the strength and size of your campaign – and that behind any 'spokespeople' at the table there are dozens more waiting outside the door to apply direct pressure.

## **EVENTS AND ACTIONS**

There are a million and one things you could do to raise the profile of the campaign and keep bringing in new people, including:

- Film screenings and speaker events
- Presentations to key audiences
- Parties, gigs, fundraisers and socials
- Rallies and marches (outside key university events, such as Governors meetings and open days)
- Stalls and speaker slots at local events
- Actions and stunts including banner drops and creative actions
- Posters around campus (simple and very effective)

For inspiration on creative actions, be sure to check out Beautiful Rising's comprehensive list of different tactics you can take to raise the profile of your campaign.

Make sure you take pictures/videos of every event, and publish them through your campaigns social media presence, as well as sending them out to journalists (see Step 9).

NB: If you are taking pictures and videos from your phone, be sure to turn your phone sideways so they appear horizontally – this is optimum for when posting pictures on social media. Your phone should only be vertical when recording live streams.

Make sure you collect the contact details of everyone you can to help build the campaign.

Always have sign-up sheets! And always send a follow-up email with a thank you and next steps if you can.

## **MEDIA**

Whether you have a protest planned or wish to expose your university's complicity in Israeli apartheid, having the ability to access the media is key to furthering your campaign and to damaging your university's reputation.

### **Key points for contacting the media:**

- Have a press release ready. This should be around 350-400 words. Keep it factual and exclude emotive language (you can introduce this in your quotes, however). Make sure to include contact details on the press release.
- Send your press release to friendly journalists, newspapers, well-networked people etc.
- After you have sent your press release to media outlets, make sure to chase it up with a call. Often press releases get overlooked, so that call is important!
- If you have an open letter from academics, student societies and/or students etc, make sure to keep it under 300 words and contact the letters desk at various media outlets.

Remember: Make sure to release press statements before (or right alongside) a major event or protest, so that any press can reference your own words, rather than twisting the aim of your action.

## Template Press Release

*This is an example of a template press release which was given to all students for a national #ApartheidOffCampus Day of action which took place during Israeli Apartheid Week 2019. You can adapt this format and style to any action you do on campus. N.B: Make sure you include maximum two quotes and aim to show a diverse range of voices in these quotes.*

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HUNDREDS RALLY TO DEMAND UNIVERSITY OF FAREHAM REMOVES INVESTMENTS FROM COMPANIES COMPLICIT IN ISRAEL'S OPPRESSION OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

- 200 students flood campus with pro-divestment demonstration during international Israeli Apartheid Week
- Students at Fareham joined others at 20+ across the country took part in the #ApartheidOffCampus day of action

Students marched from the library to Senate House to demand that university management commits to remove its investments from companies complicit in the oppression of Palestinians. Protesters pointed out that the university holds £5,000,000 worth of investments in Caterpillar, who produce bulldozers used to demolish Palestinian homes in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

The protest was part of the national #ApartheidOffCampus day of action called as part of Israeli Apartheid Week 2019, with 20+ actions taking place across the country, called by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign.



Lewis Hillier, Chair of the Fareham Friends of Palestine Society, said:

*“The protest shows the level of support on campus for our divestment campaign. The university can’t stay silent any longer. The university community has spoken, our money shouldn’t be used to fund human suffering.”*

Members of staff were also among the protesters. Paul Jones, Chair of Fareham UCU, said,

*“We stand with the students taking action. Its disgraceful that the university community has no say in where the investments go.”*

Protesters plan to take further action is their demands are not met.

ENDS

Notes for Editors:

- The Occupied Palestinian Territories refers to the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem. These territories are regarded as under illegal military occupation, as defined by International law.
- More information on Caterpillar can be found [here](#).
- More information about Israeli Apartheid Week can be found [here](#).

For further information about the society, please contact: XXXX

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07484 724799

## **KEEP PUSHING UNTIL YOU WIN**

If and when you achieve any victories, make sure to make a loud noise about it, and share it with the movement!

When a university divests, they may not state that the reason is your campaigning for Palestine. However, after a strong campaign, it will be clear that divestment occurred because of BDS activism.

Our message is clear, and with pushing and campaigning both on your campus and across the country we can accelerate the BDS movement, get #ApartheidOffCampus and get UK universities to pledge to be #ApartheidFree! Together, we will win for Palestine.

### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (FOI) REQUEST**

**1.** Find out where to submit an FoI request.

A list of addresses for FoI requests for universities can be found [here](#).

**2.** Include your personal contact details such as name and email.

**3.** Outline your request.

Whilst a university is legally obliged to respond to FoI requests under most conditions, they can deny them on a number of grounds including:

- Excessive/vexatious requests
- Issues of 'Commercial sensitivity' for the university
- Requests that are too broad, vague, or might take more than a set number of staff hours to complete.

Make sure your request is clear, direct and measures in what you are asking for.

## Template Fol request

Dear [Name of Public institution]

This is a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000/Freedom of Information Act (Scotland) 2002 [choose as appropriate] I request that a copy of the following documents [or documents containing the following information] be provided to me in digital format:

■ The partnership between the University of Manchester and the Weizmann Institute, Israel including research contracts, investment fundings, exchange programmes, procurement.

Name:

E-mail:

I look forward to your prompt response.

**4.** They should first acknowledge your request and have 20 working days from this to fulfil your request.

Set a reminder for 20 working days after submitting a request and if you have not received the information by then, you should:

- a) Send another email stating that the institution is in violation of the Freedom of Information Act and that you expect the information to be provided immediately.
- b) If there is still no reply, complain to the Information Commission Office (ICO) which is the UK public body governing the Freedom of Information Act.

It is a very simple and quick procedure and the ICO have the ability to force the information out of your institution.

To complain, screenshot the emails of your request and any other relevant correspondence, fill in this form from the ICO: and attach

the form as well as your screenshots to the email: [casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk)

**5.** If/when your university replies but do not provide all the information you have requested, it is legally obliged to state the provisions of the FOI Act which have been used to exempt the redacted information and justify this. You can then:

a) ask for an Internal Review if you would like the request to be reconsidered. Explain why you disagree with the university's reasoning behind its partial disclosure or refusal (eg. its prioritisation of commercial sensitivity over the public interest)

b) an Internal Review should, again, take no more than 20 days but you may need to remind the university of this. If after an Internal Review has taken place you are still being denied the information requested and think this is unfair and the university has misinterpreted the act, you can appeal to the ICO (see above). Again, you will need to stress the public interest argument and why this outweighs other relevant factors.

Here are some other asks you can consider (In separate Freedom of Information requests):





■ The partnership between the University of Manchester and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, including research contracts, investment fundings, exchange programmes, procurement.

■ The partnership between the University of Manchester and Technion – Israeli institute of Technology, including research contracts, investment fundings, exchange programmes, procurement.

■ All correspondence (emails, minutes etc) between members of the University of Manchester and the Israeli embassy during the month before and during Israeli Apartheid Week. (1st February 2017–3rd March 2017)



Visit our website and join PSC at: [www.palestinecampaign.org](http://www.palestinecampaign.org)

Facebook: [palestinesolidarityuk](https://www.facebook.com/palestinesolidarityuk)

Twitter: [PSCupdates](https://twitter.com/PSCupdates)

Email: [info@palestinecampaign.org](mailto:info@palestinecampaign.org)



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