

Additional Context

The Solidarity with Palestine Motion requires that the Students' Union take further steps to show support and lobby for Palestinians who have been experiencing violence in Gaza. This document will outline the key considerations underpinning the consequences of enacting the policy.

Students as Students Issues vs Corporate Conclusions

Due to relevant [charity law](#), the Students' Union is only permitted to take direct campaigning action on issues that affect present and future student SU members in their capacity as students at the University of Manchester. Given the charitable status of the SU, it may only act within its charitable aims:

“the advancement of education of students at the University of Manchester for the public benefit by: promoting the interests and the welfare of students at University of Manchester during their course of study and representing, supporting and advising students; being the recognised representative channel between students and the University of Manchester and any other external bodies; and providing social, cultural, sporting and recreational activities and forums for discussions and debate for the personal developments of its students ”

Common examples of students as students' issues may be increases in tuition fees, street lighting to increase student safety on campus, or increased childcare support for student parents.

For non-student-as-students' issues, the Union is only permitted to take a 'corporate conclusion', where any decisions from a Union Assembly vote can only be communicated as the views of the voting members, not a binding stance of the Union. The 'corporate conclusion' is a student stance that the Students' Union may communicate to the University and members because of the vote but may not take steps to implement or afford resources or funding to.

Within the remit of a corporate conclusion, the Union can still communicate the aims of the policy- however, it must be accompanied by the context of the Union Assembly vote. For example, when a non-students-as-students issue passes, UMSU can communicate that a specific portion of its members voted in majority by x% to pass the corporate conclusion. It can do no more than communicate this fact.

This does not mean that the Union cannot facilitate campaigning student groups and societies and offer support through its existing campaigning resources. Furthermore,

facilitating discussion on these issues lies within the [purpose of Union Assembly](#) and so, even if policies cannot be implemented, the space can be used to discuss potentially challenging or divisive issues.

How does this correspond to the Solidarity with Palestine Motion?

The legal advice provided to the SU concludes that the Solidarity of Palestine Motion is a non-student-as-students issue. This is due to the fact that it does not impact students in their capacity as students at the University of Manchester.

Whilst there are reasonings to argue that the issue *does* impact student as student issues, it is common legal opinion that the Charity Commission will not reach this same conclusion and therefore, subsequent campaign action taken by the Union would be considered impermissible. Please see the [government campaigning and political activity guidance for charities](#) for more detail.

The measures within the policy that can be implemented are resources and services the SU already provides for students campaigning or undergoing hardship. The SU can provide financial support to any student(s) that meet the criteria under the liberation and campaigns grants available. The Advice Service can also work with students to further their welfare, including on matters pertaining to this issue.

However, where measures involve SU advocacy, divestment, and stances, the SU must only take a corporate conclusion on these issues.

Below is a breakdown of the measures in the policy, and how the SU can or cannot take action on them.

The Students' Union and student body believes...

Next steps if policy passes	Measures
The SU will take this as corporate conclusion in the event of the policy passing. The SU cannot legally promote a corporate conclusion or put time and resources towards the promotion of non-students-as-students issue.	[The SU and student body believes] that the Palestinian people have been subjected to colonisation and genocide for over 76 years, escalating with the ethnic cleansing of the 1948 Nakba. Israel, in its entirety, is an apartheid settler-colonial state committing ongoing genocide against Palestinians.
	[The SU and student body believes] In supporting the self-determination of the Palestinian people and the establishment of a single, free, multi-faith Palestinian state, across all of historic Palestine, where Arabs and Jews can live in peace as equals with all rights respected and with a right of return for Palestinian refugees in line with international law.
	[The SU and student body believes] In standing in solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people against occupation, call for an immediate end to the siege on Gaza, and call on all members of the University community to support Palestinian liberation.
	[The SU and student body believes] in reaffirming full support for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS), and for opposition to Prevent.
	[The SU and student body believes] in recognising that, as an occupied nation, the people of Palestine have the right to armed resistance under international law.
	[For the SU to] Call on the University and Vice-Chancellor to cut all ties with the State of Israel, including but not limited to (see policy for sub-points)
	[For the SU to] Call on the University and Vice-Chancellor to stand up for those facing repression of their freedom of speech by the state, including: (see policy for sub-points)
	[For the SU to] call on the University to revoke their adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism, which conflates legitimate criticism of the state of Israel and its policies with anti-Jewish racism, and instead adopt the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism
	[For the SU to reject] the tactic of normalisation, i.e. the Israeli state, affiliated-organisations and any organisations` propaganda aiming to

	whitewash Israeli crimes and regime of oppression and spread the myth of a “two-sided conflict” rather than a dynamic of colonised\coloniser, and any events hosted by UoM or the Student Union that include this element.
	[For the SU to call] on the University to replace partnerships to Israeli Universities with new partnerships to Palestinian Universities.
	[The SU will condemn] the punishment and suppression of pro Palestinian activists and speakers by the government and University, and call on the University to take proper measures to provide support and protect those speaking out in support of Palestine from repression.
The SU stands against discrimination and harassment of any students as an infringement on the welfare of its members and can offer support through the Advice Service and signposting to the Report and Support service run by the University.	[The SU believes] In condemning the use of this conflict to incite islamophobia or antisemitism and support students facing discrimination on those grounds.
The SU has funding available via the liberation grant that can be applied for by any campaign group, including Palestinian activist groups, to provide educational opportunities in relation to their aim. Furthermore, the C&D team can support students in their campaign aims by offering advice and resources to assist.	[For the SU to facilitate] educational opportunities that amplify the voices of Palestinians.
The SU will not necessarily adopt the opinions of any students it is supporting however; the SU will work to support any students facing repression on account of free expression and legitimate views through the Advice Service and campaigns support.	[The SU will provide] full support for any students facing repression or harassment on account of free expression of legitimate views, such as support for the legal right to resist and self-defense of the Palestinian people, or supporting the right of return for Palestinian refugees, or supporting a one state solution, or any other views which are lawful, but may face unjustified targeting by government, media, university or anti Palestinian groups.
The Union cannot explicitly advocate for the measures mentioned however, as above, the SU has various funding and resources available to support any student campaigners.	Provide full support for campaigns to demilitarise the University, and to campaigns to cut ties with the Israeli state, or adopt BDS measures

