

## **Motion: Escalation and student organised protest on campus.**

### **Newcastle UCU notes:**

- The now month-long student organised peaceful encampment and rallies protesting the University's ties to Israel.
- That students have communicated a clear set of demands, including disclosure and divestment of partnerships with corporations and organisations complicit in illegal occupation.
- That the rally was organised by students and supported by the Newcastle Palestinian Solidarity Campaign, a long standing community organisation.
- That the student-led rallies have been nonviolent. That members of the public have been present at these rallies and that this non violence is evidenced by the presence of families and children on the afternoon of 29 May.
- That on May 29, members report seeing security colleagues in full face covering surveilling staff and students and acting in an aggressive manner to colleagues.
- The presence of very large numbers of police on university campus on the evening of May 29.
- That members report seeing and have video evidence of police dragging, throwing and pushing students to the ground, and sexual harassment of female students, as well as hijabs being pulled off.
- That the two students who were arrested on 29 May were two Muslim students. This is discrimination and profiling. It is also noted that the only disciplinary action taken on 7 February was also against two Muslim students.
- Students report and have video evidence of being locked into the building without access to food water or toilets.
- Fire alarms were set off while students were locked in the building by police / security
- That Newcastle University invests in Keysight Technologies, a company with a military goods export license to Israel<sup>1</sup>

### **Newcastle UCU believes:**

- That student occupation is a long-standing, historical form of nonviolent protest.
- That student occupations do not necessarily, nor normally, result in such large numbers of police responding in such a heavy-handed manner.
- That this police response to student-organised protest was heavy-handed and threatening.
- That the presence of masked police and security guards, aggressive actions and the use of threats and violence was a major escalation in response to student-organised nonviolent protest.
- That this response is not a balanced one. The response was one which prioritises securing university capital assets (buildings) and the functioning of the university over all else, including the safety and wellbeing of students.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://caat.org.uk/data/exports-uk/licence-list?region=Israel&company=Keysight+Technologies+UK+Ltd> / <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/mediav8/freedom-of-information/files/Endowment%20Investments%2031%20March%202024.pdf>

- That we reject the heightened securitisation and surveillance of campus in response to nonviolent protest

#### **Newcastle UCU calls on the University Executive Board:**

- To cease threats of disciplinary action against student protestors.
- To provide details of the contact with police and the decision making process to call police response, and provide an account for grounds the police was called, and when.
- To stop using language that describes and positions protesting students as criminals and threatening in all-staff communications.
- To engage in meaningful negotiations with students regarding their demands and resolve with substantive outcomes.
- To apologise to the students for the intimidation and physical harm caused to students by police and security staff.
- To investigate and account for the actions of university security staff in the response to the protests, and to report on the advice and training provided to university security staff

#### **Newcastle UCU resolves:**

- To stand in solidarity with Newcastle Apartheid off Campus