

## Report on official motions discussed at LSE Branch

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### Motion title: Educational Support for Palestine

Date and type of General Meeting / Session: Branch Meeting 17 May 2024

Status: Passed

### Motion text:

LSE UCU notes

1. The ongoing genocide in Palestine has also resulted in [scholasticide](#). This consists of the [killing](#) so far of 5,479 students, 261 teachers and 95 university professors, the destruction of 12 of Gaza's universities, the closure and destruction of all Schools, resulting in the complete disruption to education for over 90,000 students, all in a wider context of mass displacement where the vast majority have had to flee their homes. This is not only disastrous for individual students, but for any hope in the economic, intellectual and cultural future of Gaza and of Palestine.
2. Palestinians, including students and workers in the now destroyed higher education sector, have repeatedly called for solidarity, advocacy and support from colleagues and comrades internationally, including via [trade unions](#).
3. LSE has so far taken limited action regarding this scholasticide:
  - a. LSE's Scholars at Risk programme has not been used as proactively and at as large a scale to help scholars at risk in Gaza and Palestine as it has in preceding conflicts (though we note with appreciation the imminent arrival of two scholars from Gaza via the initiative).
  - b. Current scholarship programmes such as the Access to Education Scholarship are insufficient and ineffective, especially given the requirement that applicants must already be in the UK.
  - c. Data on current scholarships including the Sir Siegmund Warburg Scholarship suggests they have proven insufficient in providing for Palestinian students.
4. While scholarships and visas are important for individuals, maintaining, supporting and helping rebuild education and scholarship in Gaza itself is also essential, and called for by [Palestinian academics](#).
5. There exist several remote online initiatives seeking to provide emergency, trauma-informed educational content remotely, spearheaded by West Bank Palestinian Universities (with coordination from the [Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education](#)), who are currently calling for help from international Higher Education colleagues, seeking both individual volunteers and institutional partners.

6. There are rising staff-student escalations in universities seeking to pressure universities to acknowledge and end their complicity in genocide.

#### LSE UCU resolves

1. To call on LSE to acknowledge and subsequently work to remove our complicity in this scholasticide, through a wider campaign to:
  - a. DIVEST all investments found to support the Israeli military in any way, following their own ESG commitments, committing to research (and respond to research conducted by others) and review so-called 'indirect' investments, rather than hiding behind claims of complexity, and to fully respond to student and staff demands, including those made in LSE UCU Branch motion of 7th November and subsequently.
  - b. DISTRIBUTE educational resources and scholarly opportunities to Palestinian scholars and students equitably and with a sense of the urgency and gravity of the current scholasticide.
  - c. DEFEND LSE's own internal commitment to academic freedom, allowing pro-Palestine events and groups to flourish on campus and build community, and for its staff to volunteer to support education in Palestine. It must use its position as a renowned institution to defend its staff and students.
2. To call for the LSE to expand eligibility requirements for Scholars at Risk (SAR) program to prioritise and expedite individual applications from Palestine.
3. To call for the LSE to expand its eligibility requirements of the Access Scholarship in line with the humanitarian scholarships offered by other UK universities which includes:
  - a. Expand eligibility requirements for its scholarships and fundraising capabilities, in-line with best practices of other universities such as the University of Liverpool Humanitarian Scholarships for Master's Programmes and Goldsmiths Humanitarian Scholarship, which we note has, as a result of [student action](#), been increased from two to three full scholarships, and a new undergraduate scholarship.
  - b. Expansion in line with scholarships targeted at refugee students not already granted asylum in another country, who may be facing bureaucratic difficulties entering a safe country in the first place.
4. To call for the LSE to expand fundraising opportunities by creating links to existing charities/non-profits while the LSE provides fee waivers and visa support.
5. To call for the LSE to formally and publicly partner with [TESI](#) and/or Birzeit's [Rebuilding Hope Initiative](#), and provide concrete material support, technical financial and academic, to their online educational courses.
6. To call on LSE UCU branch members to personally volunteer in such programmes, where they have capacity and appropriate skills to offer, and to support them in these initiatives.
7. To extend solidarity to the global student escalation movements both worldwide and domestically, including through attendance of UCU members with LSE UCU banners.

**Amended:** Yes.

#### **Total votes:**

- In favour: 52
- Abstained: 2
- Against: 0

**Notes:** (if any)