# University of Manchester protests over Israel-linked partnerships disrupt exams and prompt costly security measures



In recent months, the University of Manchester has been the focal point of several student-led protests concerning its affiliations with Israeli institutions and defence companies. These demonstrations have led to significant disruptions on campus and have prompted responses from university officials.

In March 2024, a group of approximately 50 students occupied the Simon Building for four days. The protesters, organised by UoM Rent Strike, Youth Front for Palestine, and Manchester Leftist Action, demanded that the university sever its ties with BAE Systems, Tel Aviv University, and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. They also called for an end to what they termed "unethical research" and for no disciplinary action to be taken against student activists. During the occupation, banners reading "UoM blood on your hands" and "Freedom for Palestine" were displayed from the building's windows. ([thetab.com](https://thetab.com/2024/04/09/manchester-student-suspended-for-occupation-in-protest-of-university-links-to-israel?utm_source=openai))

In response to the occupation, the university suspended a student pending investigation for alleged participation in the protest. The student claimed to have been "personally targeted and harassed" by university staff for being outspoken and critical of the institution. A university spokesperson stated, "We do not comment on the detail of actions or investigations regarding individual students particularly while they are ongoing." ([thetab.com](https://thetab.com/2024/04/09/manchester-student-suspended-for-occupation-in-protest-of-university-links-to-israel?utm_source=openai))

The protests continued into April 2024, with students occupying the Roscoe Building. They reiterated their demands for the university to end its partnerships with BAE Systems and Israeli universities, ensure all research is ethical and not linked to the arms trade, and refrain from disciplining students involved in protests. A spokesperson for the occupiers stated, "We have full control of this building, which is due to hold hundreds of students for exams next week. We will not leave until the university commits to not disciplining any student protesters and enters negotiations on the other demands." ([morningstaronline.co.uk](https://morningstaronline.co.uk/article/students-occupy-of-university-of-manchester-over-links-to-bae-and-israeli-universities?utm_source=openai))

The university's response included contacting Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue to assess the risks associated with the occupation, which officials noted were "well beyond those we have seen previously." The university also activated its exam contingency plans to accommodate the disruption caused by the protest. ([news.sky.com](https://news.sky.com/story/protest-at-university-of-manchester-disrupts-exam-timetable-after-pro-palestinian-group-occupies-campus-building-13144485?utm_source=openai))

Financially, the university allocated over £104,000 between October 2023 and June 2024 to address security concerns related to these protests. This figure includes £71,289.19 for security costs and £33,192.31 for overtime. The university's annual security budget for the 2024/25 academic year was £5.2 million. ([thetab.com](https://thetab.com/2025/02/26/revealed-manchester-uni-spent-104k-on-pro-palestine-protest-security-within-nine-months?utm_source=openai))

These events have highlighted ongoing tensions between student activists and university administration regarding institutional affiliations and ethical considerations. The university has maintained that it complies with all applicable national and international statutory and regulatory requirements and agreed frameworks for ethical standards in research conduct. ([bbc.com](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cqllypp4gw7o?utm_source=openai))

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/manchester-university-standoff-palestine-israel-b2552439.html> - This article reports on a group of students occupying Whitworth Hall at the University of Manchester, demanding the university sever its ties with BAE Systems, Tel Aviv University, and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and end what they termed 'unethical research'.
2. <https://www.taghribnews.com/en/report/652976/pro-palestine-students-occupy-university-of-manchester-campus-in-protest-against-ties-with-israel> - This report details pro-Palestinian students occupying part of the University of Manchester campus to protest against the institution’s complicity with Israel, specifically targeting its partnerships with BAE Systems, Tel Aviv University, and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
3. <https://www.thetab.com/2025/02/26/revealed-manchester-uni-spent-104k-on-pro-palestine-protest-security-within-nine-months> - This article reveals that the University of Manchester spent over £104,000 on security measures related to pro-Palestinian protests between October 2023 and June 2024, including £71,289.19 for security costs and £33,192.31 for overtime.
4. <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/protest-camps-exam-contingency-plans-29251731> - This piece discusses the demands of protesters at the University of Manchester, including ending ties with Tel Aviv University and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and ceasing 'unethical research' associated with arms companies like BAE Systems.
5. <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/war-gaza-pro-palestine-students-occupy-university-campuses-uk> - This article covers the occupation of university campuses in the UK, including the University of Manchester, by pro-Palestinian students protesting against the universities' ties with Israel and arms companies like BAE Systems.
6. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cqllypp4gw7o> - This BBC article highlights the ongoing tensions between student activists and university administration regarding institutional affiliations and ethical considerations, noting that the University of Manchester maintains compliance with all applicable national and international statutory and regulatory requirements and agreed frameworks for ethical standards in research conduct.
7. <https://www.aljazeera.com/program/newsfeed/2025/4/30/pro-palestinian-students-confront-university-of-manchester-leadership?traffic_source=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data