Suppression of Free Speech and Academic Freedom on Palestine at The Australian National University



Submission to the People's Inquiry into Campus Free Speech on Palestine

ANU4Palestine are a non-affiliated grassroots group of ANU students, staff, alumni, and community members on sovereign Ngunnawal and Ngambri land. We are dedicated to advocating for Palestinian liberation and organising on campus to end ANU's financial and academic ties with Israel as it commits a genocide against the Palestinian people. ANU4Palestine's members represent a large and diverse portion of our university community, including Palestinian, Muslim, Indigenous, BIPOC, and Jewish community members, as well as their allies. Many members were also involved with or supported the ANU Gaza Solidarity Encampment during its 110-day protest. Before, during, and since the Encampment, ANU4Palestine members have experienced and witnessed extensive attempts to suppress support for Palestine by the ANU executive, ANU Security, and other ANU staff and students who are emboldened by the ANU's treatment of those who vocally support Palestine. This submission contains accounts of incidents as they were experienced and reported to us by our members, colleagues, and peers.

The suppression of pro-Palestinian voices at the ANU since October 2023 is not an isolated phenomenon, but part of a broader pattern of suppression that undermines the core values a university is meant to uphold. ANU4Palestine recognises that there are undoubtedly many more instances of anti-Palestinian sentiment, repression, and intimidation that have occurred behind closed doors or outside of our networks. We also recognise that attempts to suppress support of Palestine and criticism of Israel's crimes against the Palestinian people date back to well before October 2023. As a space that claims to foster critical thought, open debate, and principled dissent, the ANU has a duty to protect—not penalise—those who speak out against injustice. Yet, again and again, students and staff advocating for Palestinian human rights have faced censorship, intimidation, and disciplinary threats.

This submission has detailed many such instances, and they speak to a deeper problem: one where profit and political pressure are being prioritised over the rights of students to express solidarity, demand justice for Israel's ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, and criticise the institution's support of genocide.

We must be especially cognisant of the Palestinian students who are being told, implicitly and explicitly, that their grief is disruptive, their resistance is unwelcome, and their voices do

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The ANU, and all institutions of higher learning, must decide whether they will stand with those fighting for justice, or side with the forces that seek to suppress them. There is no neutral ground.

We call on this inquiry to hold the university accountable, and to reaffirm what should never have been up for debate: the right to speak, protest, and organise in support of Palestinian liberation.

From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free.

ANU4Palestine

anugazasolidarityencampment@proton.me

15th April 2025

Weaponisation of ANU disciplinary proceedings and Student Code of Conduct

- 1.1. Since the ANU Encampment's establishment, ANU students have consistently been threatened by ANU with disciplinary action if their support for Palestine or criticism of Israel's genocide. Reasons for threatened disciplinary action ranged from participation in protests like the Encampment, to using phrases that are widely used to call for Palestinian liberation that the ANU claimed made some other students 'uncomfortable' (i.e. 'from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free' and 'intifada'). Students and staff who spoke out in support of and advocated for Palestine on campus were surveilled (confirmed by an FOI released on 12/03/24, appendix 5) and the ANU made it clear that by doing so, they were risking disciplinary action. This has shattered any trust that the Palestinian community and their allies had in the ANU Executive and ANU Security.
 - **1.1.1.** In early May 2024, students were identified as participants of the Encampment and called into meetings with Chancellery, where they were told they had committed a possible, unspecified violation of the Student Code of Conduct.
 - **1.1.2.** Students were told that if they continued to stay overnight at the encampment, they would be in breach of the Code of Conduct by "refusing to comply with a reasonable demand by an ANU officer", and thereby subject to disciplinary action (see <u>appendix 14</u>). This is an authoritarian weaponisation of the University Code of Conduct with the clear and express purpose of intimidating students, in order to prevent them from exercising their right to free speech and

- **1.1.3.** During these meetings, these students were encouraged by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) to write and hand over a list of names of other students involved in the encampment.
- **1.2.** Expelling a student from the university for publicly expressing support for the Palestinian armed resistance, a statement which is supported by international law affirming the right to armed resistance by occupied peoples. Following an appeal, the student was later found not to have breached the university code of conduct and the expulsion was reversed.
- **1.3.** Following their threats and enactments of disciplinary action against pro-Palestinian students identified as part of the encampment, the university administration then refused to meet with any other student protestors, unless they were de-anonymised representatives who would not be guaranteed immunity from disciplinary measures for their participation in the Encampment. Given that the University had already demonstrated their willingness to weaponise disciplinary proceedings against identified pro-Palestine students, this effectively cut off all viable routes for protestors to engage directly with the University administration in a way that preserved their personal safety.
- **1.4.** The University carried out a Code of Conduct inquiry against a student, which was in part a retaliation to a media statement released by the Encampment. This statement, which was released by the Encampment collectively not by the individual student targeted by the inquiry and reflected the views of Palestinian and BIPOC staff and students, critiqued the framing of a pro-Palestine protest in a campus-wide email sent by the Dean of the College of Arts and Social Sciences (CASS) as being racist and ignorant (see **section 7**). The Dean's comments characterised student art and protest in support of censorship of Palestinian voices on campus as inherently harmful to other members of the community. Instead of accepting criticism that BIPOC students felt demonised by the Dean's email, this critique was characterised by the University as "misinformation, inflammatory and potentially defamatory" (see appendix 1). It was deeply concerning for BIPOC students to see their concerns dismissed so quickly and completely by non-BIPOC staff members.
- **1.5** In early 2025, a student was emailed by the ANU to warn them that they would potentially be subject to disciplinary action for publicly using the phrase 'from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free' (see appendix 2). This phrase is commonly used to call for Palestinian liberation and a Palestinian state free from Israel's illegal occupation where citizens are granted equal rights, regardless of ethnicity or religion.

2. Threat of police force

university campus as part of an attempt to intimidate protestors into decamping.

2.2 Emails obtained under Freedom of Information requests (see <u>appendix 3</u>) demonstrate that the involvement of the police was planned and authorised by senior ANU leadership staff including Vice-Chancellor Genevieve Bell.

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- **2.2.1** This intervention was planned for Reconciliation Day, a public holiday, meaning that there were less students and staff around on campus to support those who were woken up and surrounded by ANU Security and the AFP.
- **2.2.2** Per the emails obtained from the ANU Head of Security, ANU Security planned to rely on the threat of 'possible student disciplinary action under the student code of conduct' to ensure student compliance with directives to pack down the Encampment. Furthermore, despite an alleged 'unacceptable risk', the ANU waited until they could have AFP presence to increase the weight of the threat.
- **2.3** Some personal testimonies from students who were present at the Encampment during this day:
 - **2.3.1** "On 27th May 2024, those who were camping at the Gaza Solidarity Encampment were woken up in the early morning (just after 8) by one of us shouting that everyone needed to get out of their tents, now. When we left the tents, the lawns where we were staying on were surrounded by security personnel. There were considerably more police and security personnel than campers. We were told that because we had already been warned once, we had to start packing up immediately and if we did not, the camp would be torn down around us. The warning that they had given us was an email sent in the afternoon of the previous day, with barely 12 hours between the email and calling the police on us. Throughout the entire day, the security personnel maintained a perimeter around the camp and tens of police were called. During the morning, the security personnel walked around the camp and made jokes about us packing up, and wouldn't move away when students asked for space. We asked for more time in order to comply with their orders several times and were denied without reason every time. When we finally had enough people to stop packing up, we barricaded the camp and linked arms so that we could not be removed easily. When we stopped packing up, they started to tell us that we would be arrested if we didn't leave. They kept telling us that disobeying the move-on order would mean being arrested, but they left without doing anything by the afternoon. I had attended a few protests before the camp, none for Palestine, and I had always felt like the protestors had been treated with respect. But on the 27th, all the rules were different and we were treated with no respect or dignity at all. The stress I felt that day was the worst I had ever experienced and there were several times throughout the day when I thought I was going to throw up or pass out from stress and exhaustion. That day was one of the worst of my life. Afterwards I considered going to speak to the university psychologists but I felt like I wouldn't be taken seriously because of what the university had done to us. When I needed to call university security for personal issues I was so scared and nervous that they would laugh at me like they laughed on the 27th. I lost all trust that my university cared about me."

2.3.2 "Almost straight after waking up, I walked from my accommodation to the encampment. I immediately saw two police cars blocking the central bridge in the Kambri area, and saw both uniformed police officers and ANU security guards patrolling the encampment, both from inside the encampment and the surrounding

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area. It was clear that police were outnumbering students on campus that morning. I was extremely distressed and concerned for my friends who had slept at the encampment the previous night. I tried to walk onto the encampment but was stopped by police and told I was not allowed to enter. I spent most of the morning contacting friends to come to the encampment in order to protect it. I remember calling my parents very early in the day, telling them that there were police on campus and that I was concerned for my safety, and to be on hold during the day in case I was in any danger. I did not feel that the university had called the police with any consideration for our well-being, or the wellbeing of any other student on campus, including those not involved in activism or the encampment. Myself and a number of other students surrounded the 'main tent' (marquees used as a food storage and meeting area), linking arms and sitting on the floor. We also wrote the numbers of lawyers on our arms in case of arrest. I was concerned about my residential scholarship and employment in the case that I were to be arrested, and was continually concerned for the whole of last year that my residential scholarship would be threatened based on my involvement in the encampment and other pro-Palestine activism. The entire day consisted of students being intimidated by police for protecting the encampment. In the afternoon, a speaker repeated a message to us, stating that we must move the encampment by the following day or risk arrest. Shortly following that, the police left. Myself and many of my friends were extremely distressed at a number of aspects of the day, including the overt suppression of pro-Palestine activism, the threat of arrest, the distrust we felt in the organisation we came to for education, and the fear that individual students involved in the protection of the encampment that day would be targeted and face severe consequences. I was not a key organiser of the encampment on police day but many of my close friends were and express significant distress and distrust in the university to this day."

3. Threat of legal action

- **3.1** ANU Director of Brand and Marketing sent a letter threatening an individual student with legal action over ANU4Palestine's Instagram account name and profile picture (see appendix 4). This email was sent to the student's personal, non-university email account, rather than the more appropriate ANU4Palestine official email.
 - **3.1.1** First, the email threatened legal action over the name of the account 'ANU4Palestine', claiming that ANU4Palestine was not able to use the term 'ANU' in its name without authorisation. Many unaffiliated/unofficial clubs, societies, groups, and collectives on campus over the years have used the term 'ANU' in their names to signify their target audience or members (e.g. the popular ANU student Facebook

group 'ANU Schmidtposting'). ANU4Palestine is named as such to signify to viewers that it represents the views of members of the ANU community, however has faced legal threats that other groups have not. The uneven application of this supposed 'legal concern' comes across as a threat specifically because of ANU4Palestine's support for Palestine and vocal criticism of ANU's complicity in genocide.

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- **3.1.2** Second, the email threatened legal action over ANU4Palestine's logo. This logo design is an obvious political parody of ANU's logo. Parody is one of the categories of fair use, and at no point was ANU4Palestine attempting to convince viewers that the account was run by or authorised by the ANU. The clear intent of the ANU4Palestine account to criticise the ANU's financial and academic ties supports the parodical reading of the logo.
- **3.1.3** This student had been involved with the Gaza Solidarity Encampment in its early days as a media liaison, but had not attended the Encampment in over 3 months at the time of the letter being sent to them. Their name and contact had been published *exclusively* for media statement contact at the time, not for general correspondence. By that point, the ANU was aware of the ANU4Palestine official email and had corresponded with the Encampment via that email consistently. The decision to reach out to an individual student via their personal contact to threaten legal action for the action of a collective made that student feel specifically targeted and intimidated for their vocal support of the Encampment in its early days.

4. Intimidation of students by ANU Security staff

- **4.1.** ANU Security conducted so-called 'welfare checks' on students at the Encampment at all times of the day and night, without warning. One such check was conducted at 2:00am one night.
- **4.2** For the majority of the encampment, there were security contractors present at the Encampment 24/7. According to information made public in ANU's Freedom of Information disclosure log, ANU spent over \$840,000 in additional security around the Encampment.
 - **4.2.1.** Security appeared to actively ignore some incidents of threats to student safety and wellbeing, such as an incident when a hostile student entered the encampment late at night and began shouting and physically shaking tents where people were sleeping. This individual had to be physically removed from the area of the encampment by two students, while security staff watched and failed to intervene. Despite the ANU claiming that security was stationed at the Encampment to protect student protestors, in reality security failed to prevent harassment of students camping and often engaged in the intimidation themselves.
- **4.3** Students were often subject to unprompted and invasive questioning by security staff.

- **4.3.1** In one instance, a security guard approached a student arriving at the Encampment in the evening and asked inappropriate questions like "what were you holding?" and "have you been smoking?".
- **4.3.2** Another incident included a security guard approaching a student walking towards the encampment and questioning them insistently on where they were going.

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- **4.4** ANU security staff repeatedly conducted invasive, unpredictable, and unjustified 'inspections' of electronic equipment (including after the NTEU had conducted a full testing of all electronics per the ANU's request, and later after the university had already cut access to power at the Encampment see **section 5.3**). These 'inspections' included both third-party contracted security staff as well as ANU Security employees entering individual students' tents, recording and photographing students, and directly attempting to intimidate individuals present.
- **4.5** Many students reported instances of senior security staff following them around campus between their classes for no evident reason other than they were wearing keffiyehs and/or being known to be involved with pro-Palestine activism on campus.

5. Attempts to shut down the encampment

- **5.1.** During the winter break of 2024, security personnel began to conduct unannounced 'health and safety' inspections, where personnel would enter the main marquee area from the hours of 11pm to 3am. These 'inspections' consisted of nothing more than security personnel entering the tent without permission or forewarning, and leaving once they had confirmed that there were people in the marquee area. There were obviously no clear guidelines being adhered to and no prior discussion of concerns between the university and the encampment. Students often slept or napped in this area and having personnel let themselves into the tent in the middle of the night was completely inappropriate and an extremely uncomfortable experience for the students.
- **5.2.** During the exam period of the winter break, the ANU erected signs around the encampment warning students about making excessive noise and disrupting exams. This is not usual fare for exam period, and these signs have not been erected since. These signs were seen nowhere else on campus, despite the fact that there are numerous other locations where students congregate during exam time, near exam halls. This was clearly specifically aimed at the encampment, despite the fact that it had faced no noise complaints before or after the exam period (see appendix 12).
- **5.3** For the final month of its duration, the ANU cut off electricity to all powerpoints around the campsite. Per a press release from the ANU Gaza Solidarity Encampment published on 24th July 2024: 'On Monday 22nd July, ANU Facilities and Services asked for access to the

ANU Gaza Solidarity Encampment in order to test and tag electrical cords. Despite being provided with access to the cords they requested, the ANU has still decided to turn off access to any power to the encampment effective immediately. In an email sent to the Encampment on Tuesday, 23rd of July, the university stated they were denied access to the Encampment to conduct their safety checks. This is blatantly untrue. Extension cords running from the encampment to the power supply on University Avenue have been retagged and dated in accordance to WHS regulations since the 22nd of July, irrevocable proof that the camp provided access to Facilities and Services.'

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- **5.3.1** During this time, the Encampment repeatedly attempted to negotiate with Facilities & Services to reinstate power to light the campsite, boil water for warmth in the middle of winter, and to charge personal devices to maintain academic studies (see <u>appendix 13</u>). The Encampment also provided Facilities & Services with records of WHS inspections done by third parties, and provided ANU with photo evidence that their staff had not been denied entry to the campsite. At one point, the ANU did not reply for 15 days despite multiple emails from the Encampment. During this time, the ANU had denied electricity to the Encampment, creating a severe safety risk to people sleeping there overnight.
- **5.3.2** The ANU insisted on restricting the functions of the encampment in the name of the 'safety of the community', while completely disregarding the safety of those within the Encampment and evidence of consistent compliance. It was impossible for the ANU to be unaware of the safety risk they had created for students at the Encampment, therefore their insistence on maintaining these unacceptable conditions led many students and staff to feel like the ANU was trying to demoralise, scare, and freeze students into decamping.

6. Surveillance + gathering of students' personal information

- **6.1** University staff surveilled and tracked student protestors via social media content, key card data, and in-person surveillance by ANU Security (see <u>appendix 5</u>).
 - **6.1.1** Documents detailing correspondence between ANU Security and ANU Executive, obtained under Freedom of Information requests, demonstrate that the ANU was actively maintaining a list of names of identified pro-Palestinian students associated with the encampment (see appendix 5). An email from ANU Head of Security reveals that at least some of this information was acquired through 'social media analysis'.
 - **6.1.2** When <u>appearing at Senate Estimates in late 2024</u>, '[u]nder questioning from Greens Senator Mehreen Faruqi, [Vice-Chancellor] Bell repeatedly refused to say whether private investigators, consultants or university staff had monitored the social media accounts of student activists'.
 - **6.1.3** The emails obtained also reveal another staff member of ANU's security team

referring to 'consideration and review in the Gallagher Access Control system', followed by a withheld block of text, which is assumed to be a list of student names (see <u>appendix 5</u>). Gallagher Access Control provides the security access system to buildings across ANU Campus, and markets itself as enabling consumers 'to monitor where, when, and why people are there at all times'.

6.2 Many students involved in the Encampment testified that they had been excessively filmed and photographed by ANU Security as part of their identification efforts. In these

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cases, security staff did not tell students that they were going to be filming them, and relied on stealth. This recording was done at all hours of the day and night.

- 7. Vandalism of pro-Palestine artworks at the ANU School of Art and Design, and subsequent response by the ANU, including censorship and demonisation of protestors
- **7.1** Working with staff, students organised and installed an exhibition of pro-Palestine artworks and protest materials at the ANU School of Art and Design (SOAD) on 11th June 2024. After installation, unknown parties vandalised the display outside of hours, within less than 24 hours of the exhibition being installed. This vandalism included the theft of several items on display, which were never recovered, as well as physically cutting out the Palestinian flag from artworks on display, in a clear and targeted example of anti-Palestinian racism and suppression of free speech (see appendix 6).
- **7.2** A statement by the School of Art and Design on 13th June 2024, posted to Instagram, claimed that "these materials were not removed by the University, nor the School", and stated that "the University is investigating the matter to determine who may have removed and vandalised the materials." Despite this statement, and the fact that keycard access records were available, neither SOAD nor ANU staff ever informed the exhibition organisers of any investigation outcome or identification of the perpetrator/s.
 - **7.2.1** It is notable that this act of vandalism occurred outside of working hours in a building which is only accessible via identified key-card access. This means that the vandalism was almost certainly committed by an ANU student or staff member with key-card access. ANU Security internal systems have access to records of individuals with key-card access to this building, as well as information about any activation of key-card entrances during the window of time that this vandalism occurred. As noted previously in **section 6.1.3**, ANU likely monitored the key card access associated with identified pro-Palestine students at the Encampment, but in this instance refused to do the same for the vandalism of student artworks.
- **7.3** Following the exhibition theft and vandalism, SOAD management, including Head of School Mitchell Whitelaw, initially made an offer of a second exhibition for the impacted students and staff. However, during a subsequent meeting, this offer was reneged, on the

grounds that the public display of the Palestinian flag had been deemed a 'security risk'.

7.3.1 SOAD staff offered the organisers of the original exhibition the use of the space for a new exhibition with political and anti-war themes, but under the condition that any artworks displayed would not contain references to Palestine, the current genocide in Gaza, or University ties to weapons manufacturers or the state of Israel. This offer was refused as a blatant attempt to suppress artistic expression and free speech in relation to Palestine activism.

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- **7.3.2** SOAD then announced that the Project Space would no longer be available for any independent student-organised exhibitions, with student work only able to be displayed as part of class projects organised by teaching staff.
- **7.4** On the 6th August 2024, students organised a <u>sit-in at the SOAD</u> in protest of the ANU's censorship and repression of artistic freedom. This sit-in included the guerilla installation and display of artworks, banners and posters within the space of the original vandalised exhibition. Following this protest, all materials were immediately confiscated by ANU Security.
- **7.5** The Dean of the College of Arts and Social Sciences subsequently sent a mass email to all CASS students (see <u>appendix 7</u>), which contained a multitude of examples of disinformation, obfuscation, accusations of harmful behaviour, and generally hostile double standards towards pro-Palestine students protesting university censorship and complicity in genocide.
 - **7.5.1** The Dean's email demonised the sit-in as not being a "peaceful protest" due to alleged "damage to buildings" and "vandalism". This statement demonstrates significant hypocrisy, in failing to acknowledge that the protest was held in response to the University's failure to address the targeted theft and vandalism of pro-Palestine student artwork. No equivalent University communications were circulated in regard to this original instance of racist vandalism, and as detailed in **section 7.2**, the University deliberately failed to adequately investigate the incident.
 - **7.5.2** One section of the email read, "Requests to install artistic exhibitions in University buildings must be made and authorised through appropriate channels and this did not occur in relation to yesterday's incident." This statement obfuscates the fact that the sit-in took place in response to the University's refusal to reinstate the original exhibition following the vandalism, as well as barring any future independent student use of the Project Space (see **section 7.3**).
 - **7.5.3** The email claimed that the protest caused "disruption to work and study" and "behaviour that causes harm to those in our community." This sentiment was later repeated in an email from the Provost to a student facing disciplinary action (see **section 1.4**), which contained the following explicit reference that, "The protest included painted slogans such as 'long live the Intifada' which distressed some staff and students. The University has a duty of care under work health and safety laws to ensure an environment without risks to health and safety, including to prevent exposure to materials or behaviours that risk psychosocial harm." This rhetoric

demonstrates the common Zionist device of characterising pro-Palestine language and slogans as inherently 'unsafe' and antisemitic in order to enable suppression and censorship.

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8. Vandalism of ANUSA BIPOC safe space and subsequent response by the ANU

- **8.1** The BIPOC Base is the ANU Students Association (ANUSA) BIPOC¹ Department's designated autonomous safe space on campus. In March 2024, BIPOC students came together to express their solidarity with Palestinians through creating a chalk mural on the outer brick wall of BIPOC Base. The mural contained the Palestinian flag, calls for Palestinian liberation, calls for a ceasefire, Palestinian symbols, etc. Throughout the year, the mural was defaced three times and reported to the ANU on two separate occasions, including one time where it had been almost completely rubbed off (see appendix 8).
 - **8.1.1** After the first defacement was reported to ANU, ANU Security assured the 2024 ANUSA BIPOC Officer that they had no objections to the mural and would increase patrols and install CCTV signage. However, no such measures were seemingly implemented and the subsequent two defacements demonstrated the ineffectiveness of ANU's response. An investigation was undertaken by ANU Security and it was found that at least one of these defacements were done by someone who is not a staff or student at ANU. Furthermore, ANU informed the Officer that this was allegedly a known person to ANU Security, indicating that this person had likely been warned previously but was enabled by insufficient deterrence from ANU to come onto campus again.
 - **8.1.2** When discussing this investigation with the Officer, ANU Security reportedly gave contradictory accounts about the clarity of CCTV footage, which exact defacements they investigated, and what information they had available.
 - **8.1.3** Per the 2024 BIPOC Officer, at an ANUSA Student Representatives' Council Meeting where a motion was passed condemning the defacements: 'Concerns about the defacement go far beyond mere vandalism; firstly, the repeated targeting of a space for BIPOC students shows that individuals on campus are emboldened to continue these racist acts without fear of consequence, secondly, these acts have restricted BIPOC students' freedom of expression within the very space created to empower us, thirdly, although we recognise the initial efforts made by ANU, no meaningful measure has been implemented. Finally, these concerns have left BIPOC students feeling deeply unsafe and unprotected from harmful racist behaviours, even within the very spaces specifically designated to be safe.'

8.2 After the final defacement, the BIPOC Department held a department event to redo the mural. Around a week prior to the event, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) emailed the BIPOC Department requesting that the event not proceed and warning against using the phrase 'from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free'. The following day, the Officer and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor had a pre-scheduled meeting, originally intended for the Officer to express the Department's concerns about the defacement. However, instead of acknowledging how the vandalism had made BIPOC students feel unsafe in their safe

¹BIPOC stands for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour

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space, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor reportedly changed the agenda for the meeting and engaged the Officer in a long conversation about the phrase 'from the river to the sea'.

- **8.2.1** Throughout this meeting, the Officer remained adamant about the Department's decision to re-do the mural and ended the meeting by clearly asserting that the ANU trying to stop the event was an infringement of BIPOC students' freedom of speech. The Officer reiterated that because of that reason, the event would proceed. In response, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor reportedly expressed neither dissent nor agreement. Without a formal directive and in light of this conversation, the Officer took the silence as acquiescence.
- **8.2.1** The Department proceeded with the event and the BIPOC community came together to reinstate the mural. Just over 12 hours later, the ANU itself erased the entire mural overnight without notifying the Department.
- **8.2.2** Shortly after, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor contacted the BIPOC Department, accusing them of 'breaching a university directive' and even attempted to demand payment for the "cleaning". The Deputy Vice-Chancellor then allegedly warned that if the BIPOC Department did not comply with ANU's directives, that the university may revoke the safe space entirely.
- **8.2.4** Per a follow-up motion passed at a 2025 ANUSA SRC Meeting: 'This series of events highlights a disturbing pattern of suppression and intimidation directed at BIPOC students, who are not only fighting for their right to an autonomous space but also for their right to political expression. The BIPOC Department is one of the bodies representing Palestinian students on campus, and for the ANU not only to repeatedly ignore vandalism of pro-Palestine artwork but to then support it themselves, shows just how little the ANU executive considers its Palestinian community members. The university's actions contradict its stated commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion, revealing a broader unwillingness to protect BIPOC students when their advocacy does not align with institutional interests.'
- Experience of Palestinian and pro-Palestine students at graduation ceremonies

9.1 During graduation ceremonies held in December 2023 and February 2025, students wearing or displaying Palestine-related clothing (keffiyehs, Palestinian flags etc.) had their official graduation ceremonies cropped before being made available to students in order to remove the ANU Chancellor from the images (see <u>appendix 9</u>). Some students alleged that when the Chancellor saw that they were wearing something referencing Palestine, she didn't bow to them as she did to other students, didn't smile in their pictures, or took a notable step away from them during the official photographs to make it easier for her to be cropped out.

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9.2 A Palestinian student simply wearing a traditional thobe found that they had been half-cropped out of their own photograph in order to remove the Chancellor, who was standing close to them. This supports the idea that not only did the Chancellor not want to be seen to be associated with the Palestinian cause, she did not even want to be associated with Palestinian students, going so far as to partially crop them out of their own graduation photographs to remove herself.

Exclusion of pro-Palestine Jewish students from Jewish student spaces

10.1 In 2024, one Jewish student contacted the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and the ANU Director of University Experience to request access to an autonomous space for Jewish students on campus. In this conversation, the ANU became aware that this student had been involved in pro-Palestine activism on campus. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) immediately responded that the autonomous space "is not a space for challenge or debate" despite the student making no indication that they intended to initiate any such behaviour within the space (copies of these emails obtained under a Freedom of Information request can be found at the following link:

https://d1zkbwgd2iyy9p.cloudfront.net/files/2024-10/202400073%20Documents%20Released.pdf).

- **10.1.1** After significant correspondence with the Director of University Experience, the ANU ended by saying that the student needed to be an official member of the Australiasian Union of Jewish Students branch on campus to be granted access. One of AUJS's four pillars is Zionism and representatives and members of AUJS have been openly derisive towards anti-Zionist Jewish students at ANU.
- **10.1.2** This requirement has been neither advertised nor formally enshrined anywhere, and none of the other autonomous safe spaces on campus require club affiliation to access. The ANU had only ever described the space to students and the Senate (at Senate Estimates) as a space for Jewish students, not AUJS members. This student reported that this requirement was unclear and it felt like the ANU was

dismissing their Jewish identity and prioritising the political beliefs of other students over their ethnicity and religion.

- **10.2** Other pro-Palestine Jewish students reported similarly being denied access to the Jewish autonomous space. One was told that because they were a member of another marginalised community with an autonomous space on campus, that they should just use that space instead. This was in spite of the student specifically seeking access to the Jewish student space on the basis of their Jewish identity.
- **10.3** During the 2024 ANUSA Annual General Meeting, members of AUJS called anti-Zionist Jews who were members of the Encampment 'fringe Jews' and referred to themselves as

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'actual Jews', suggesting that anti-Zionist Jews are less legitimate or are merely faking being Jewish.

10.4 During a 2025 ANUSA SRC meeting, one of the 2025 co-presidents of AUJS stated that members of the ANU community should consult only AUJS on issues relating to Jewish students, and said that others did not need to go seeking 'fringe' opinions. This sentiment falsely suggests that all Jewish students are Zionists and represented by AUJS - in fact, there are a range of political beliefs amongst Jewish students.

General anti-Palestinian racism and censorship on campus

- **11.1** Anti-Palestinian and Islamophobic graffiti and stickers on ANU campus censored genocide, attempted to erase Palestine from dialogue, spread violent and false rhetoric regarding resistance, and used hateful and intimidating speech towards pro-Palestinian individuals (see appendix 10). No statement from the ANU was made about these targeted and racist acts, yet at the same time, the ANU cracked down on pro-Palestine stickering. For example, the university agreed that stickers with a cross through the Israeli flag were of a "hateful nature", but did not condemn the theft of Palestinian flags that were part of student art exhibits (see **section 7**). While pro-Palestinian speech was being heavily vilified, Zionist vandalism was ignored.
- **11.2** Prior to when the ANU Poster Policy came into effect on 6th February 2025, posters relating to pro-Palestine activism and events were repeatedly vandalised and torn down (see appendix 11). These hateful acts and intentionally misleading information limits accessibility to community gatherings and political forums, both areas which the university prides itself on having. These posters were not rectified nor their removal investigated in any way by the ANU.

- 11.3 ANU's new_Poster Policy serves as a dangerous attack on free speech, drastically restricting who can put up visual materials and whereabouts, entirely banning stickers and even originally prohibiting flags unless they were approved by the ANU two weeks in advance. Given the provided context above, it can be seen that the response to anti-Palestinian racism and censorship on campus was not to deal with the aggressors but to remove the space almost entirely, and instead, create an inaccessible, heavily controlled and censored area with what's left.
 - **11.3.1** The policy was proposed on the 1st of October 2024, emerging alongside the increased display of pro-Palestine posters, banners and stickers on campus. After immense backlash from varying campus demographics, the ANU provided a feeble and attenuated revision of the policy. Moving from an overtly aggressive approach into a strategically ambiguous one, the <u>implemented policy</u> still prohibits visual

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materials being displayed without permission anywhere other than a few small billboards across campus.

- 11.3.2 The fact that the visual media must be linked to an affiliated club is an issue of inclusion, accessibility and safety. Now, people must be a part of an authorised club in order to take up space in the negligible allocated locations, leaving out many individuals and groups that are not able to obtain approval for various reasons. Sharing information and the growth of community support is a major part of student activism, and print media has always played a pivotal role in the access into these circles. In addition to this, implementing identification policies is a calculated attempt to surveil and monitor political speech that challenges the ANU. Posters must hold visual linkages to the club, allowing the university to trace, intimidate and potentially discipline individual students for their political statements or associations as they have in the past.
- 11.3.3 In a scramble for justification, the ANU states that this policy comes out of intent to prevent damage to the environment. Yet the ANU, in explicit breach to the Socially Responsible Investment policy, is investing over \$35 million in projects that violate their emissions guidelines and has a \$32.7 million dollar investment in BHP, one of the nation's largest producers in coal. The ANU deliberately manoeuvres around the SRI policy, which has no guidelines on oil and gas, allowing it to be invested \$6.7 million in Woodside Energy, the leading oil and gas provider, and has ambiguous definitions about "controversial" weapons companies, somehow allowing it be be invested \$1.05 million in weapons manufacturing, numbers that have increased by 33.88% since October 7 2023. ANU's intentions in preventing damage to the environment is an obvious facade given that they are actively profiting off the exploitation of the natural world, and the genocide of First Nations people who have had connections with land severed by being forcibly displaced and violently massacred.
- **11.3.4** The truth of the matter is that the ANU's Poster Policy is following a trend on protest crackdowns starting in May 2024, correlating to the start of the

pro-Palestinian encampments at universities across the country. This policy policing visual materials is the second of its kind in the nation, and its draconian presentation is harmfully setting precedent for other universities. The recent USYD proposition that harshly and extensively inhibits the use of flags, banners, posters and chalking, comes at the same time that ANU made the policy effective, emphasising not only the serious ramifications for students at ANU currently, but in addition, the dangerous consequences for the safety and freedom of future students across this land.

- **11.4** At the 2024 ANUSA Annual General Meeting, several motions were debated on discussing the Encampment and Palestine activism more broadly. Students speaking in support of Palestine were subjected to mockery and racist generalisations by Zionist students attending the meeting.
 - **11.4.1** While members and supporters of the Encampment were speaking on their support for Palestine, Zionist students mouthed 'f**k you', gave the middle finger, and

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made gagging gestures. To our knowledge, students who engaged in this harmful behaviour have not faced any consequences for their actions or ever faced disciplinary action despite public statements being released by the Encampment about the behaviour immediately following the meeting.

11.4.2 A motion moved by members of AUJS suggested that pro-Palestine Encampments were comparable to the N*zi regime, and said that phrases calling for Palestinian liberation (such as 'from the river to the sea' and 'intifada') were genocidal phrases.

12. Failure by ANU to ensure the safety of BIPOC community members and others who are in support of Palestine

- **12.1** An ANU zoom webinar about the ICC investigation into Israel's persecution of the Palestinian people (31st July 2024) was hacked by someone who then shared graphic pornography to attendants without consent. ANU did not investigate this incident, offer any support to webinar attendees, or make any public acknowledgement.
- **12.2** In late 2024, a group of students regularly walked around campus in Make America Great Again hats, antagonising and attempting to intimidate people who they identified as pro-Palestine or involved in other activism on campus. This sort of behaviour was facilitated by the anti-Palestinian and Islamophobic environment created on campus, and these students likely felt comfortable doing this due to a notable lack of serious response from the ANU on anti-Palestinian racism. ANU Security was repeatedly called, but did not remove the students from the area, and continued to watch as the students intimidated and mocked others.

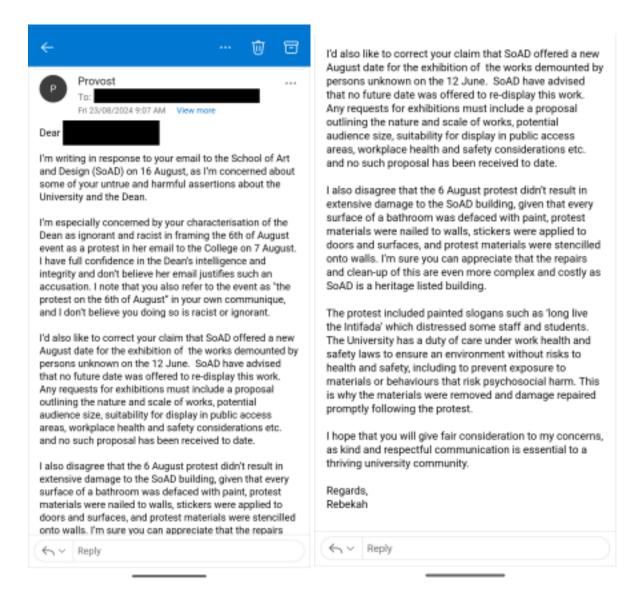
12.3 At Senate Estimates, ANU Executive repeatedly hesitated to mention the exceptional experiences of Palestinian staff and students as a result of Israel's genocide, and has not sufficiently acknowledged the increase in racism on campus faced by Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim students. This is in stark contrast to the active and additional support the ANU has provided to other student groups (see **section 10**).

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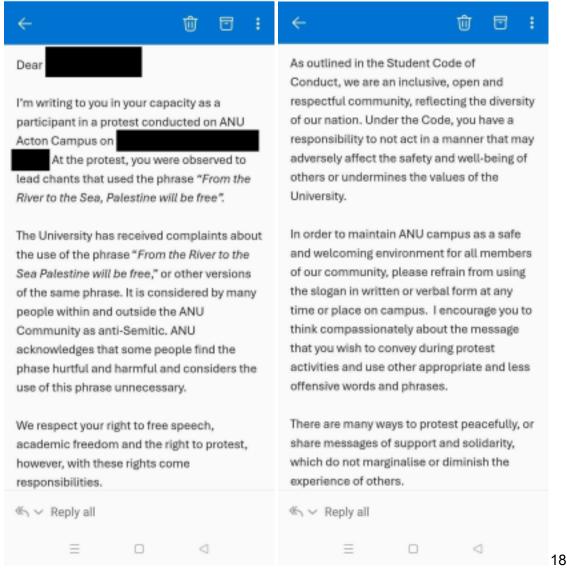
Appendices

<u>Appendix 1:</u> Email from the ANU Provost dismissing concerns from the Encampment and BIPOC students about racist comments made by an ANU staff member



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<u>Appendix 2: E</u>mail from ANU threatening a student with disciplinary action for use of the phrase 'from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free'



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Appendix 3: Emails between ANU Head of Security, Vice-Chancellor, and the AFP Released under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*Documents can also be accessed via the following link:

https://d1zkbwgd2iyy9p.cloudfront.net/files/2024-09/202400081%20Documents%20Released.pdf



The mail sure if poulte summits at much, however when you get this mensage sould you please sension a map-or paint us in the direction of the evidence that the area of the excampleant is university land, ecoupled by an otherwise under the control of the university.

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HI Luces





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To the Cover of the Cove

DIA SUPT PERFORMING THE ROLE OF GOORGINATOR - MORTH DISTRICT

Own

Air-Discussed on the priorie pastenties, the AMS that been put in the unfortunate position of read-cement the EMI-I Project Encompanies due to a handle and salely risk, namely it's busilion in the location of an intergency encursion meanthly alone for numerous buildings in the Kandal Project including a residential half of our 450 auctions.

The assembly area had previously been noted and alternate assembly areas were designated, but sturing a fire statum measurable land work of the residential had and the adjunction secretic area filed on subject to the adjunction assembly areas filed fil

It is was therefore decide that the Protest Encompment needs to be removed.

Lam-writing as the Mox-Chancellor and President of The Australian National University (WW) to seek the support of the Australian Federal Pulse (APP) to sensore the student encompress) located in Kambri, a central precinct on our licton compass.

The encampment is currently occupying the primary emergency execution site for the large number of people living in, visiting and using Kambit and the surrounding area. ANU identified an alternative execution point to sension this highly used in boards proposed area of campose are the occupament is inception. However, during a resent fire altern and related execution of the residents half and the calculation control is Kambit, the alternative surveyed by new failed. This failure and successful in its breath and underly was immediately represently store failed. This failure and successful in its breath and underly was immediately represently systems. The failure and successful in its breath and underly was immediately represently systems and an investigation identified an involutible risk to students, end? and wider public.

We consulted with the AFP on Friday 34 May to support the vacating of the study We consided with the APF on Friday EA Mayors support the excelling of the student encompress in Karabot. The addice was the existing excellent exposation support from the APF-with the long weekend and other standing exents in the Capital was then Monday 27 May. We have implemented suffly exesuses, including subdivious security staff in Exertin, to excellent exposurements exist from the identification of this WHS fisit on Friday, to the direction of the camp to worth entire in Monday morning.

At their this manning, Monthly 27 May, the Director of Facilities and therefore issued a directive to members of the amountyment to sensise the Kambri precinct and to remove their tests, manyuses and personal belongings (see ottached). This directive was provided to the Cincerpment email address and is fund copy provided to all students isociated within the encampment, We have also authorised as irrelatation to the encampment, participants is partner and calladorate to londer a manifestable for the presental protect. This new vite is members and provided protects, of for the students in calculation or one removement, with tests and provided the calculations are described in a presentation of the calculation and provided in a provided protect.

Our intention for the day remains to seek assistance from the AFF to clear this primary evacuation site for Eartion, which is clear of all tents, marguess and personal belongings. To be clear, as has been the case since the engampment commenced, we have not To be clear, as has been the case amon the encampment commence, we have no described any four estudents of body protesting. They may continue to do so as bong as it is respectful, precedul and abilities by our soles of combant and clears in impose safety of our staff, students or the broader community.

I also want to state that these are young and earnest students and we wish to continue to manage this issue in a compassionate and sensitive manner.

The incomb of the encampline's have elected not be compromise with the university on their demands, depute the Vision Chamselor (VC) indicating on Printip 2018 that she would be taking the matters to consult need morely, and therefore et all the products got the encamplined like after universities in other states have done when receiving similar VC action.

Mithout a voluntary pack-down we are left with no choice for the eating of the university. It's staff, students and visitions led to remove the encomprentity university directive.

As not discussed Priday or interviews to actividay, but as we undendant no may need the support of ACT Pridatey, treatment as agreed as are hidding our addon 18 filteraby 2700 of 8 50cm, to enable part time to be 000m opins and appeartour action as you deem appropriate.

Namely we city have between these and on students leafs the evenings being frequential is sensitive. It is not as a serial frequential or the sense in the control of the sense is the leafs and put for show.

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Altadred you will find the email correspondence teading to this decision and the Order to to issued by the Director of Facilities and Service.

ARU Management will be meeting and planning timestow and I will be available for discussions with you and your officers of your remainleness.

Thank you for your advice and support on always and we hope that with ACT Policing's support we say remaining and without insidered on Manufac represent.

Lucae Owen Security-Operations Manager — Campus Safety, Events & VPh



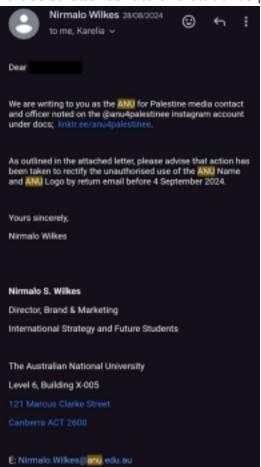


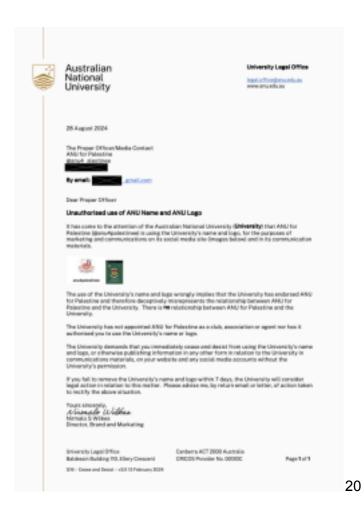
I will be the Operations Community for our enqueue temperor, working from the coordinate our offices. I can be contracted via small of the contract of the con

On 1 she per on my approinters for the congagnment and information provided by Lucus and his reason over the dentities of the consequents. It has provided with ACT Policing attractions or one the part month.



Appendix 4: Cease and desist letter sent to one student's private email address





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<u>Appendix 5:</u> Email from ANU Head of Security about ANU's monitoring of student social media to construct a list of students involved with the Encampment

Released through a under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* for emails 'regarding the identity of students, tracking students, creating profiles on students, engaging third-party companies to find out about students, compiling a list of students, or any email that identifies student identities; at, or affiliated with the ANU Gaza Solidarity Encampment'.

Documents also accessible at the following link:

https://d1zkbwgd2iyy9p.cloudfront.net/files/2025-03/202400165%20-%20Documents%20Released.pdf

Franc Jos Duci

Ter Luces Owen: Grady Versille: Deputy Vice-Chancelor (Academic)

Col Steven Fameri Lisa Kennedy Subject: RI: Daily Summary 06/05/24 Date: Thursday, 9 May 2004 2:06:25 PM

Hachments:

magedULpag magedULpag

After consideration and review in the Gallagher Access Control system:



Kind regards,

Joe

From: Lucas Owen
 lucas.owen@anu.edu.au>

Sent: Thursday, May 9, 2024 12:22 PM

To: Grady Verwille <Grady.Verwille@anu.edu.au>; Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

<dvc.academic@anu.edu.au>

Co: Steven Fanner <Steven.Fanner@anu.edu.au>; Lisa Kennedy <Lisa.Kennedy@anu.edu.au>; Joe

Ducie < Joe. Ducie@anu.edu.au> Subject: FW: Daily Summary 06/05/24

Hi Grady,

This list is by no means complete and is a work in progress. More will be identified after social media analysis post the ANUSA AGM.

Regards

Lucas Owen

Security Operations Manager - Campus Safety, Events & VIPs

ANU UniSafe Facilities and Services Division Anthony Low Building, 124 Garran Road The Australian National University Carberra ACT 2600

+61 2 6125 9303

Lucas.owen@anu.edu.au





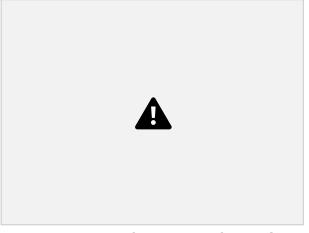




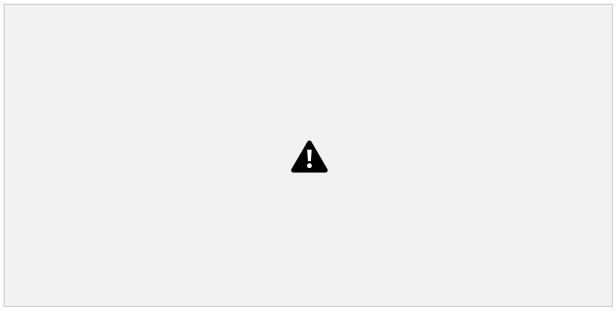






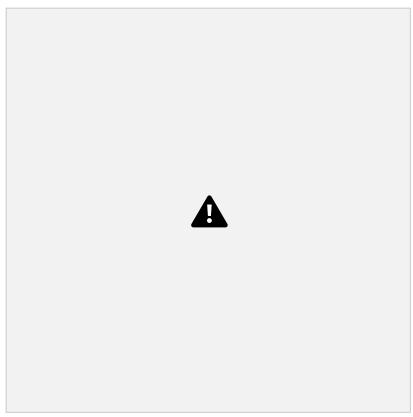


<u>Appendix 7:</u> Email from Dean of ANU College of Arts & Social Sciences regarding the SOAD protest

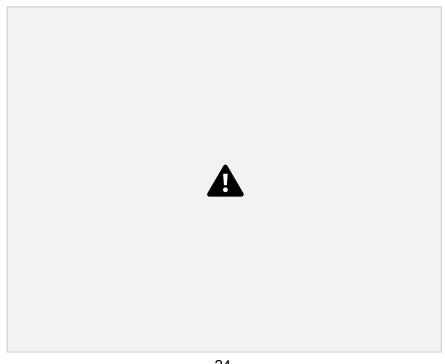


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Appendix 8: Post from the ANUSA BIPOC Department Instagram account (September 2024) that includes of a photo of one of the defacements

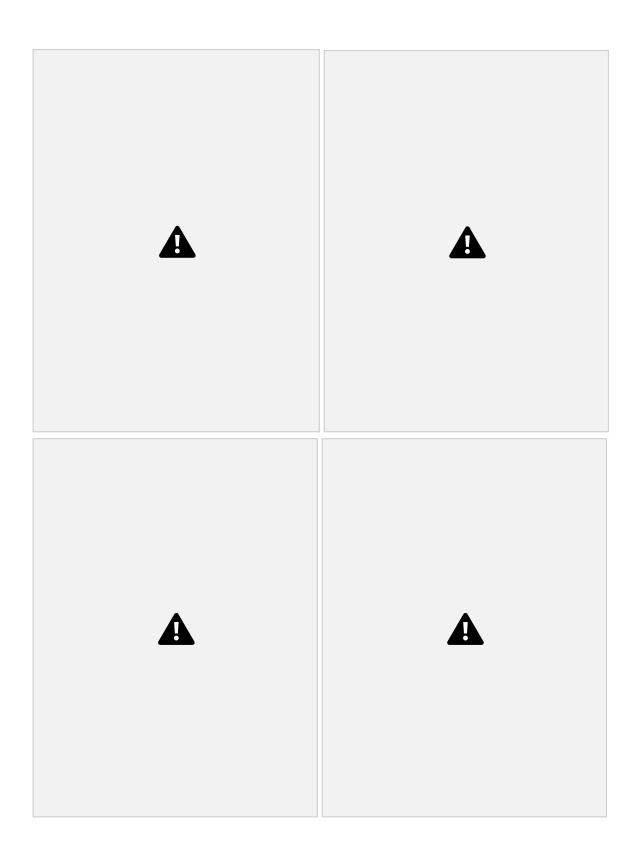


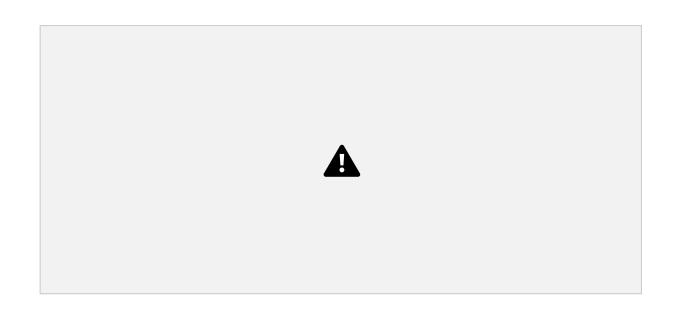
Appendix 9: Pro-Palestine student's official graduation photographs cropped to remove the ANU Chancellor



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Appendix 10: Anti-Palestinian and Islamophobic graffiti and stickers on ANU campus







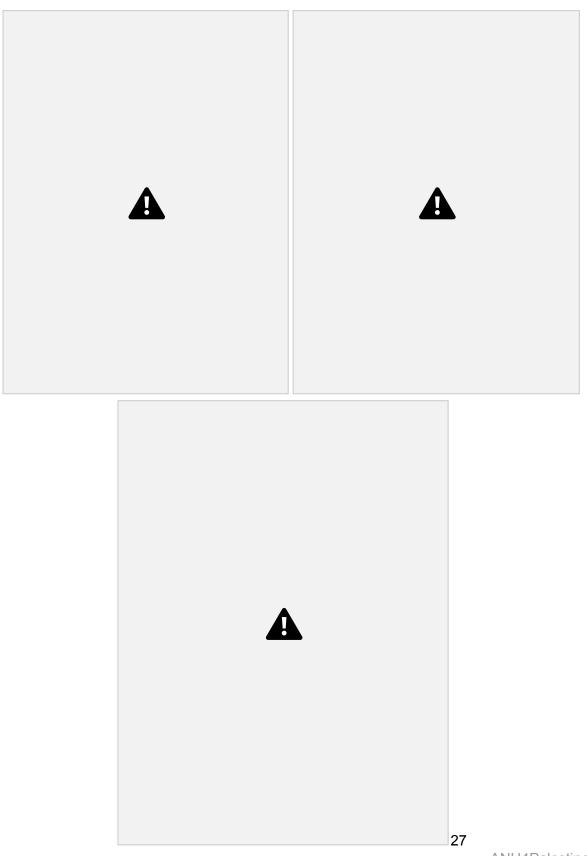


Graffiti promoting genocide denial:

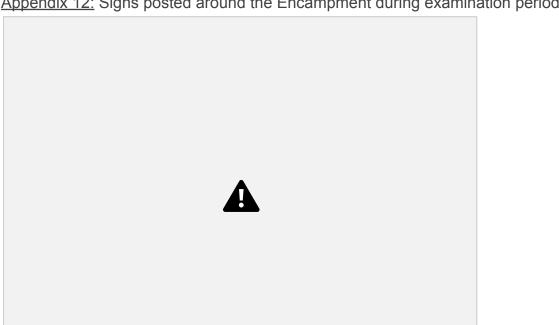
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Appendix 11: Defacement of posters promoting events in solidarity with Palestine





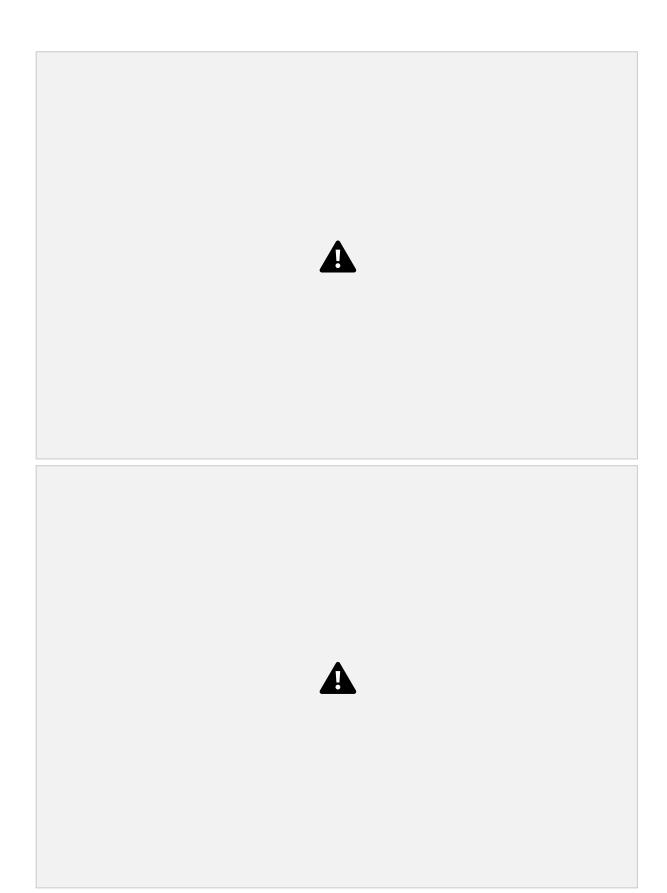


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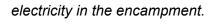
<u>Appendix 13:</u> Correspondence between the Encampment and the ANU about their decision to cut off electricity to the campsite

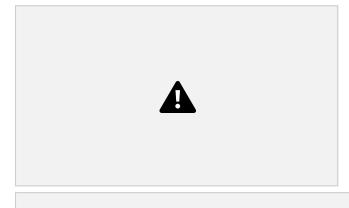
Correspondence also available to view via following link: https://drive.proton.me/urls/4J8Y49N6ZG#C98a8ngHv6Lx



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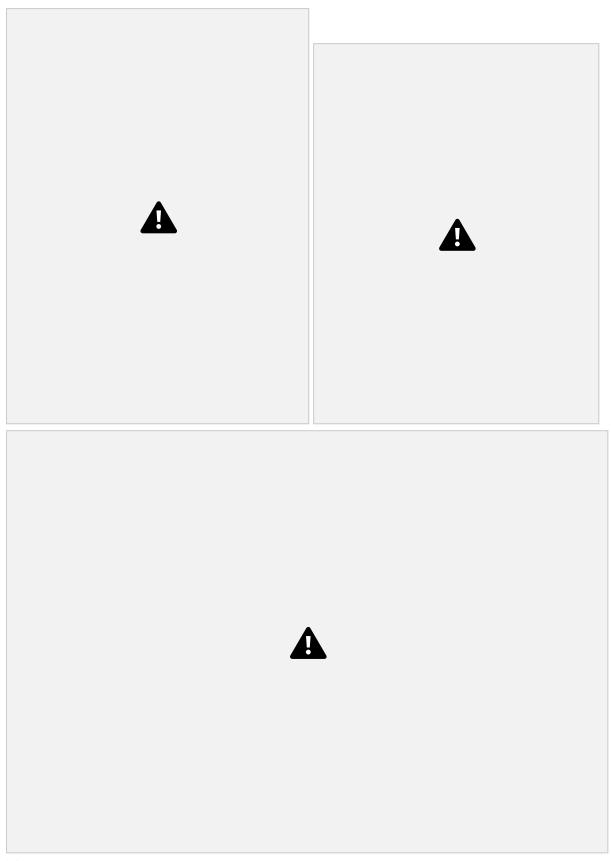
Attached photograph of ANU testing tag from the day Facilities & Services claimed they were denied entry to the encampment. Note: this cord was the only connection to mains







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Appendix 14: Notice to student from DVCA requiring them to cease participating in the encampment, under implicit threat of a future Code of Conduct violation.

