

# ***DIVEST***

**A guide to campaigning for your university to divest from arms sales, and campaign for peace.**



**Sabeel-Kairos**  
Taking Action for Palestine

**M** student  
christian  
movement

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# what is divesting?

Divestment campaigns urge banks, local councils, churches, pension funds and universities to withdraw investments for political reasons. In this case, we are looking at how we can call on our universities to divest from, and cut ties with, companies that fund arms or technologies used in war. This isn't necessarily just who your university invests in, but also which companies they have ties with in other ways, for example through career pathways or guest lectures. Divesting from companies that fund arms can also help us to promote peace globally.



# who are sabeel-kairos?

Sabeel-Kairos UK (SKUK) is a campaigning Christian charity that works for human rights, justice and equality for Palestinians in partnership and solidarity with the Christian community in the Holy Land. Originally two separate organisations (Friends of Sabeel UK and Kairos Britain) that merged in 2017, SKUK is a membership organisation made up of individuals, churches and communities who stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people, and is a campaigning and theological resource for the UK Churches and the Christian community worldwide. SCM have been working closely with Sabeel-Kairos to run workshops for SCM communities to help them look at divesting, and giving them tools to research who their university has ties with.

## case study

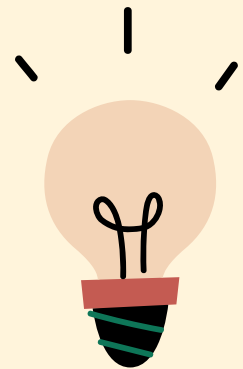
After prolonged protests, rallies, marches and direct action by students, the University of York has been forced to complete full divestment from weapons and arms manufacturers and announced this through a public statement on 11th of April 2024. In response to the news, a member of York Action for Student Solidarity (YASS), said: "Students are pleased to finally hear that the University of York has decided to divest from arms companies... and we are proud to be part of one of the first universities in the UK to commit to both of these."

# how to find out where your uni invests



Not all universities are transparent in who they invest with. This is concerning in itself. Some universities have an ethical investment policy, which should be readily available, but you can also request to see it if you are struggling to find it. If your university is not transparent in who they invest with ask yourself why... there is nothing stopping you from getting in touch and asking your institution to reveal where their money goes.

Demilitarise Education has a website to help you discover the ties your university has with arms companies and companies that fund other aspects of war, for example technology. Demilitarise Education is a "community of modern day peacemakers who untangle, expose and end university ties to the global arms trade. Building the world's first university and arms database will enable us to benchmark how peaceful universities are". Explore their website in detail as it can help you to understand the complexities of investments and their ethical impacts. The website has a section on freedom of information, which may help you in exploring your university. This is by no means the end of your research but it will help you know where to look next: [click here to begin your research.](#)



**Before you begin your research ask yourself the following questions:**

- What matters to you?
- What are your morals? How might who your university invests with clash with these?
- In what way does your faith impact your interest in where money goes?

Divesting from arms is just the start. You may begin finding other areas your university invests in that are uncomfortable. Work out what matters to you and why.



# template email

## who are you sending it to?

Ensure it is going to the right representative that deals with the finance and investments. If, for example, you are concerned about one department's links with companies you may want to target them first.



## paragraph one: who are you

Include who you are, and who you are writing on behalf of [I am writing on behalf of your university's SCM group] If you have a petition etc., you can add in a statistic here [I am writing on behalf of 200 concerned students].

## paragraph two: outline your findings

What has your research brought to light? [eg. our university invests x amount in arms]. Then what is the effect of these findings [eg. this is contributing to the killing of civilians].

## paragraph three: what do you want

What is it you are asking from your university? It is important to outline it clearly [eg a better ethical investment policy, to cut all ties, to divest].

## sign it off

You can offer an in-person meeting to discuss it further or encourage them to respond quickly.



# growing support for your campaign

## connect

Divestment is something that a number of university students are campaigning for. A great way to grow support for your campaign is to link together with other university groups. This can include connecting with other university groups. This can include connecting with other SCM groups at different locations and working together to encourage each other in the campaign. Find other SCM groups [here](#).



## spread the word

Social media can be a great tool to spread the word of your campaign. Consider tagging your university in posts to call on them to make changes. The Quakers in Britain has a great resource to help you use social media effectively. You can find it [here](#).

## events

Creating an event that raises money for a charity can be helpful in also raising awareness for a campaign. Whether it's a bake sale, an open mic, a second-hand clothes sale or a charity comedy show, preparing leaflets and information on divestment can help to spread the word but also give you a strong presence on campus. Don't forget to let people know how they can get involved to place more pressure on universities to divest from the arms trade.

