

Dear colleague,

I am writing to you with another update on the unauthorised encampment on our Mile End campus.

I'm very sorry to tell you that the continued significant health and safety risks, which in some cases include life-threatening risks, caused by the behaviours of members of the encampment and by the people they are inviting onto campus, means that we have no option but to proceed to a legal route to disperse the encampment. We have asked them to disperse on three separate occasions and been ignored. We have also tried to explain to them the serious nature of the risks their behaviours, and the behaviours of the individuals they are inviting onto campus, are causing. This has also been ignored.

These health and safety risks also apply to members of the encampment themselves. The risks include, but are not limited to, our students putting themselves in danger by climbing on our property to display banners and flags, the danger of these items falling or being blown off, potentially onto other people or into the Mile End Road, and a significant fire risk presented by the encampment itself. We are also aware that the rallies associated with the encampment have become a focal point for individuals whose intent is to cause damage and disruption. Members of the encampment are wilfully subverting our processes for inviting speakers and other members of the public onto campus, which are in place to protect our communities' safety. We cannot guarantee everyone's safety if these processes are not followed.

We cannot continue with this unacceptable level of health and safety risk, nor the harassment and intimidation and interruption to normal University business caused by the encampment. Given all these factors and the continued refusal of the unauthorised encampment to disperse following requests from the University, a legal notice to disperse has now been issued.

We would like to be clear that it is not the presence of the encampment itself that is the primary concern. Everyone has a right to peaceful protest within the law and within our freedom of speech policy and as you will know from my first communication, although the encampment was in breach of our policies, our initial reaction to the unauthorised encampment was to monitor its impact. Unfortunately, following the first rally where we suffered criminal damage and the subsequent behaviours of the encampment's members, the unacceptable risk to health and safety, and the fact that it has become a focal point for unlawful and threatening activity, leaves us no choice but to pursue the dispersal of the encampment.

As I have consistently explained, we do not tolerate racism, antisemitism, islamophobia, abuse, incitement, discrimination, intimidation, or harassment of any kind. We have and will continue to engage the police in any instance of unlawful or potentially unlawful behaviour. Where the behaviour of any staff member or student breaches any of our University policies, we will investigate and act appropriately in line with these policies.

I realise these are very challenging times and would encourage everyone to reach out for support if they need it via their line manager or our [Employee Assistance Programme](#).

Best wishes,
Colin

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