

Statement of Yoni Nazarathy

- 1 I am an Associate Professor in the School of Mathematics and Physics at the University of Queensland (“UQ”). I am also a consultant in my own data science company, Accumulation Point, Pty Ltd. I have worked at UQ since April 2012, starting as a lecturer. My academic expertise is in probability, statistics, machine learning and artificial intelligence. I earned my PhD in Haifa University in Israel, and after a postdoc in The Netherlands I migrated to Australia. Throughout my academic career I have maintained professional relationships with researchers in academic institutions in Israel and this included supporting visits of scholars and research students to Australia.

- 2 I have been a critic of some Israeli policies over the years. This can be attested by seeing some of my Medium blog posts for 2018-2019, and YouTube videos with opinion views on Israeli policies in the West Bank and elsewhere (links to some of these can be found here: <https://yoninazarathy.com/opinion-blog-posts-and-videos/>). Nevertheless, as a believer in the right of Israel to exist, as it is a house for 45% of the world’s Jewish population, I have felt under attack by anti-Israel activists since October 2023. The majority of this statement was included in the submission to the Royal Commission by the Australian Academic Alliance Against Antisemitism (5A). I am making this individual submission to supplement with some personal additions not specifically related to the university sector.

- 3 On Monday 29 April 2024 an Anti-Israel encampment was set up, apparently by a group named “Students4Palestine,” at the Great Court of the UQ St Lucia campus. The Great Court is a large, grassed area with buildings on each side. One of the demands of the encampment organizers was to cut ties with Israeli universities.

- 4 I became aware that the encampment was going to be established through social media posts on Friday 26 April 2024. Over the weekend, I tried to persuade the administration of UQ not to permit the encampment. (See Attachment 1.) On Monday 29 April 2024, the Vice-Chancellor informed me by email that UQ would permit the encampment to proceed.

A rally began at the Anti-Israel encampment at about noon on 29 April 2024. At the rally, a leader of the encampment called on attendees to “fight for Palestine,” declared that there are “so many enemies... in the government and the university administration,” and repeatedly referred to UQ as “our campus” when listing the demands. He called for UQ to divest from Israel which he described as an “apartheid regime” that “should be treated like a pariah state,” and promised to “camp out indefinitely” until their demands were met and encouraged “all students to be a part of this movement” inviting UQ students to camp and non-students to visit anytime. (See this video taken by me at that rally:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q8v9kg4L3K8>). Note that months later, it was revealed to me by the Vice Chancellor and the head of HR, that this leader of the encampment, known as [REDACTED], was not and is not a student.

- 5 On April 29, 2024, a few hours after the anti-Israel encampment was setup, an encampment named Camp Shalom was set up at the opposite end of the Great Court by Jewish staff and students at UQ. Camp Shalom was about 150 metres away from the Anti-Israel encampment. I was involved in the establishment of Camp Shalom. “Shalom” means peace in Hebrew. Our motivation was both an attempt to convince UQ to protect the campus and ban all encampments and an attempt to present Jewish students and staff with a safe space for the duration of the unrest. Note that while some UQ staff attended Camp Shalom, others let me know that they avoided any visits to the Great Court during this period as the anti-Israel encampment made them very uncomfortable.

- 6 Camp Shalom remained on campus for three weeks, until the point at which the UQ vice-chancellor finally asked the encampments to leave campus via an e-mail communication to the whole university body. That request was sent to the university body (staff – and perhaps students) on May 17, and a day later, on May 18, Camp Shalom was disbanded. However, the Anti-Israel encampment did not respond to UQ's call to disband, and despite disregarding the direction of the VC, the VC stated that the university “remain[ed] committed to engaging with Students4Palestine to agree to a peaceful resolution to their camp and to ensure that their protests on campus are safe and do not disrupt university activities.” The anti-Israel

encampment remained in place for a further two to three weeks. See Attachments 2 and 3.

- 7 I maintained a record of events that occurred at UQ during the period of the encampment, together with the University's responses to those events. These include:
- a. On 2 May 2024: A student urinated in an expatriate Israeli staff member's working area (the staff member's name is not public knowledge) and graffitied "RESIGN" on the wall. UQ responded to this event. The student was taken by police and issued a fine, On the early morning May 4, the same student walked from the anti-Israel camp to Camp Shalom, woke up the camp Shalom members with cow bells, and grabbed a plate of snacks from the camp. Despite her clear involvement in the anti-Israel encampment a few days after an attack targeting an Israeli staff member, the university has stated that the student's conduct was not connected to the anti-Israel encampment or protests. (I understand that the student was late suspended and eventually deported (she was an international student)).
 - b. On 9 May 2024, during an anti-Israel protest in the Hawken engineering building, a person smashed a classroom window (with 50 students inside, according to the news report at attachment 6) and escaped. As far as I am aware, UQ has taken no action in response to this.
 - c. Throughout the period Camp Shalom was in place (between 30 April and 17 May 2024), there were many incidents in which people stole or snatched flags and signs from Camp Shalom or was signs were torn and vandalized. Attachment 5 is a copy of a report from the CNN website. The "Zionist & Proud" sign shown in that report was vandalised by someone who poured coffee over it. (The CNN article states that someone spat upon the sign; I do not have personal knowledge as to whether or not that occurred.) To my knowledge the University did not investigate any of this activity.

- d. On 30 April and 1 May, the flag of a known terrorist organization, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (listed as a terrorist organisation in the United States, Canada, Japan and the EU) was flown at the anti-Israel encampment. (See Attachment 5.) I understand that the University asked that the flag be removed, but took no disciplinary action.
- e. During the first half of May, in an extensive video interview, two participants of the anti-Israel camp expressed support for terrorism, with one stating that he would " be a terrorist" if he lived in Palestine and "100 percent I would join Hamas." This was published on the Courier-Mail website. See Attachment 6. Camp Shalom members raised this as an issue with UQ administration, who responded that they were taking disciplinary action, but I have seen no evidence of any disciplinary action that was taken. [REDACTED]
- f. UQ asked the anti-Israel camp to refrain from chanting "intifada", chanting of "out out Israel out", and chanting other violent and intimidating and vilifying statements. This (<https://www.instagram.com/reels/C7EG7c2LqzG/>) is an Instagram post by "students4palestine_uq" which shows the UQ head of security removing from the encampment signs saying "Student Intifada". (The video also shows [REDACTED] speaking with the University COO during the removal.) However, following this, on May 20 and May 21 (and possibly on other occasions), violent chants continued unchecked and in full force.
- g. In late May, the main UQ sign was vandalized with the words "Tuition = blood money". (See Attachment 7.) I do not know whether UQ conducted any investigation of this.
- h. Throughout all of May 2024, there were posters and signs all over campus, in non-designated locations and in classrooms. UQ did not remove these on an immediate basis and did not take disciplinary action. Similarly, on some occasions, protestors spoke at the start and end of lectures, so that they appeared on the video recordings of those lectures. To my knowledge, UQ has not taken steps to prevent this, or instructed teaching staff to remove all such content.

- i. The Anti-Israel camp has academic members (including casual academics) who have used the UQ room booking system to also book rooms for protest (and "teach-in") purposes. This is misuse of UQ rooms. To my knowledge, UQ has not cancelled such bookings and has not taken disciplinary action.
- j. There have been multiple highly antisemitic blue/white stickers posted on campus. A copy is shown in Attachment 8. To my knowledge, UQ has taken no steps to investigate who is responsible for distributing or affixing these stickers.
- k. Throughout May, I (and others associated with Camp Shalom) experienced verbal harassment, middle fingers, and crude language. UQ did not investigate this and did not take disciplinary action. A sign that forms part of the Anti-Israel camp (a photograph of which is Attachment 9) read "Join the Camp!! Fuck Your Classes". As a member of the UQ staff, I found this disrespectful and distressing.
- l. Social media posted by 'students4palestine_uq' contained material defamatory of UQ leaders (see the Instagram post at Attachment 10). To my knowledge, UQ has taken no disciplinary action about this.
- m. On 20 May 2024, two people who are unconnected with UQ, one of whom is from New South Wales, led a protest during which they climbed onto the roof of a building. UQ called the police and two arrests made. However, during this protest, [REDACTED], a local activist unconnected with UQ with a large following) made a post on Facebook advocating for such action. UQ has not refused this local activist access to campus, even though he is inciting others to break the law and is endangering students. Note that in communication in April 2026 (this year) UQ's Chief Operating Officer let me know that the activists who climbed the roof are banned from campus, yet others, such as [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] have not been disallowed from campus.
- n. There was a protest on 1 May 2024 at the Hawken engineering building. I understand that during this event two security guards were attacked and injured,

and that UQ dismissed a staff member due to this incident. However, UQ has not disclosed details of the incident or its response.

- o. On 29 May 2024, the Great Court area was evacuated due to a bomb threat. In an email sent that day, UQ stated that the event was a hoax, but I am not aware of whether it was investigated further by either UQ or the police.
- p. On 29 May 2024, the Student Union conducted a General Meeting at which it passed motions calling for UQ to sever ties with companies that supply the Israeli Defence Force, to shut down the Boeing Centre and to financially divest from Israel. Two students spoken in favour of the motion and a Jewish medical student, [REDACTED], who was one of a very small minority of Jewish students, spoke against it. The debate inside was generally civil.
- q. However, after the event, a protest congregated under the vice-chancellor's office and the speeches were anything but respectful. Here (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pENathq4Ze4>) is a video of [REDACTED] again, the encampment leader, shouting into a megaphone, referring to the Jewish students who attended "our meeting" as "five lonely loser Zionists" they were "up against". To the best of my knowledge, while UQ has said it is investigating this vilification, no disciplinary action has been taken. As previously stated, this person leading the rally, the encampment and attending student union meetings, was not a student.

8 With the exception of referencing antisemitism in communications on May 17 and June 1, and lightly referencing a few adverse events in other communications, UQ has claimed that "*most of the protest activity has been very civil*" (variations of this narrative have been continuously provided by the Vice-Chancellor). These claims of UQ via the Vice-Chancellor have appeared throughout May 2024 both in personal communication with Camp Shalom members, in media communications, in all staff/student communications, and in the all-staff forum of May 27. However, these claims, attempting to present "*activism on campus*" in a positive light, stand in stark contrast to many severe events that happened on campus after April 29, 2024, which I have detailed above.

- 9 While Camp Shalom members let UQ know about many adverse events, often with detailed information and suggestions on action, UQ seems to have taken action on only a small subset of these events. In particular, as far as we know, no disciplinary action and/or detailed investigation took place for the majority of the incidents. Even in cases where events were directly reported to UQ, the approach was very hands-off.
- 10 On June 1 UQ released a “Statement of Commitment between the University of Queensland, UQ Muslim Students for Palestine and the University of Queensland Union”, a copy of which is here: <https://about.uq.edu.au/activism-on-campus>. After this statement was released, describing the deal the University made with these groups to end the encampment, members of the anti-Israel camp dismantled part of the camp and stopped sleeping on campus. I observe that the agreement does not prohibit parties not to camp out again on the campus.
- 11 The negotiations for the “Statement of Commitment” did not involve anyone involved with Camp Shalom or any other representative of Jewish students or staff. The Vice-Chancellor did meet with Jewish student leaders on Friday, 31 May, but they were not presented with the details of the forthcoming agreement.
- 12 Paragraph 3b of the Statement reads: *Develop and publish an Anti-racism Commitment, to operate alongside the University’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusive Behaviours Policy and our codes of conduct for staff and students. This will be supported by a speaker series to build an understanding of different perspectives and lived experiences. The series will be led and coordinated by UQ’s Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences but co-created with students.* (Note that the speaker series took part in 2025 and early 2026. It did not include any speakers that identify as “Zionists”. It did, however, include anti-Zionist speakers.)
- 13 Camp Shalom members contacted the Vice-Chancellor on 1 June 2024 to express concerns about the wording of 3b (and the fact it does not explicitly discuss hate speech against Zionists or antisemitism).

- 14 In September 2024 the head of HR, Phil Vaughan, met me together with the Vice Chancellor. They presented me with a letter responding to my concerns and presenting their view that the university had always been responsive and vigilant. See Attachment 11. Of these responses I was most concerned the response in page 5 stating that they have now confirmed that the speaker [REDACTED] was not a student, *“Having made enquiries to ascertain the identity of the speaker who made these comments, the University confirmed the individual concerned was not a student or a staff member.”* It is hard to understand how the university was unaware that the leader of the anti-Israel encampment located in the centre of campus for many weeks, who made public speeches and appeared in news articles – and, presumably, was involved in negotiating the “Statement of Commitment” months earlier – was not affiliated with the university.
- 15 The fact that UQ has not banned [REDACTED] from campus is an ongoing concern for me and one I have raised a number of times with University leaders. [REDACTED] presented himself as a student for the period of the anti-Israel encampment but the fact that he was not a student was used by the university to explain why university conduct rules did not apply to him. [REDACTED] I find it perplexing and disturbing that the University has refused to take affirmative steps to prevent him or other external agitators from disrupting the campus. This seems to me to be an obvious way to improve safety on campus for Jewish and Israeli students and staff but the University has not taken action.
- 16 Let me also state how I feel on a personal and professional level as a Jewish academic at UQ. In the past two and a half years, I’ve taken some informal responsibility in representing the voice of Jewish academics and students on campus. Thus I think it is important that I summarise my thoughts and, in particular, I want to touch on my engagement with UQ’s executive team, which I believe may be similar to what Jewish academics across the country have experienced with leadership.
- 17 On the one hand, I feel that UQ’s executive including the Vice Chancellor, the COO, the Head of HR, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Campus Culture and Leadership) are all very communicative and

respectful in their communication. They obviously want to do what is best for the university. In particular, unlike in the 2024 “Camp Shalom” era, I feel that now there is more awareness among management about the lack of security (including emotional security) that I and other Jews on campus are feeling. This is certainly the case after the Bondi massacre, and was also felt in earlier communication by UQ leaders just after a synagogue was torched in late 2024. Namely, my university leaders are aware that Jews are feeling unsafe, and in general they want to convey positivity and concern for safety.

- 18 However, most of these communications and the resulting university actions (or lack thereof) leave me with the sense that our concerns are being approached as a “risk to manage” rather than to promote the wellbeing of “a valuable asset”. More often than not, I find that communication with university leaders does not yield action from the side of the university, but is rather a mechanism for them to tick the box with an aim of reducing risk. This has been a consistent feeling throughout the many communications we have exchanged following 7 October, during the Camp Shalom period, and through to the present.

The QUT Conference

- 19 On 23 and 24 January 2025, the Carumba Institute at the Queensland University of Technology held a conference at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre that was billed as a “National Symposium on Unifying Anti-Racist Research and Action”. I attended this Symposium. Several of the speakers including Dr Randa Abdel-Fattah and Dr Sara Saleh have public anti-Israel views. There were no speakers in the conference that identify as Zionists.
- 20 Several of the speakers at this event spoke in strong terms against “Zionists”. See for example this short video that I took during the “humouristic” event held before the formal conference opened: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llLvWaatQsg>. This rhetoric left me with the strong impression that it conveyed antisemitic sentiment, and that the speakers believed that it was acceptable to vilify a group if it referred to “Zionists” rather than “Jews”. Several of the speakers shouted or chanted

“Free Palestine”. Other speakers spoke in mocking terms of the Prime Minister’s Special Envoy, Jillian Segal, AO. This video and audio include remarks I interpreted as belittling concerns about antisemitism and disparaging the Special Envoy:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_4l6AhbDPqY.

I’ll note that this opening event of the conference was a day after the January 21, 2025 Maroubra child care centre arson in Sydney. The child care attack was not mentioned in the conference.

- 21 Ostensibly, the Jewish perspective at this event was provided by Sarah Schwartz of the Jewish Council of Australia (“**Jewish Council**”). The Jewish Council is an anti-Zionist group which does not, in my experience, reflect the views of the majority of Jewish Australians. The fact that the Carumba Institute invited a representative of Jewish Council to speak indicated to me that it was not looking to present diverse opinions, but sought a speaker who would offer the same opinions as the other (anti-Israel) speakers, while allowing the organisers to claim that they had presented a Jewish voice.
- 22 Sarah Schwartz spoke in the course of a segment described as “The Greatest Race Debate”. In the course of her presentation, Sarah Schwartz argued that Federal opposition leader Peter Dutton had sought to politicise antisemitism, and displayed a slide picturing “Dutton’s Jew” (a copy of which is Attachment 12). I found the slide to be offensive and antisemitic, particularly because of the views it attributed to Jewish people, and the fact that it was presented by a Jewish person did not alter that fact. I was also shocked that a conference that was supposed to be promoting “Anti-Racism” would permit a slide to be shown that so obviously stigmatised one particular group. No other racial or national group was subjected to such treatment.
- 23 There was also a segment during the “humoristic” event of Jan 22, where one of the speakers spoke about “punching a racist in the face” and that the solution to racism is “punching that c*%t in the face” Hear the audio here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K7FRCXWH2mU> . While this was supposedly done with humour, given the earlier complaints about Zionists and implying that

Jews try to privilege (“exceptionalise”) antisemitism and to diminish other groups’ experience of racism, I felt an implication that Zionists or Jews are racists.

- 24 I was horrified by the content of the conference and I shared material with the media. As a result, conference organisers were not happy with me. Indeed on the last day of the conference, during the closing session, all the participants stood in an orchestrated fashion, and the conference organizer orchestrated yelling “Shame” focusing on “the person in the audio – who knows who he is”. One person also yelled, “punch him in the throat.” (You can hear this in the audio available in a report in the Australian: <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/indigenous-academic-chelsea-watego-invokes-black-lives-matter-in-racism-row/news-story/62397965f3dd537dd76a0c02c3e19827>.)
- 25 I found the experience humiliating and I felt unsafe. The news reports about the event identified me by name and shared a video that I had made.
- 26 Following the conference, Randa Abdel-Fattah tweeted to her followers about the “Zionist infiltrator” (screenshot is Attachment 13) and Matt Chun, who received an award at the event, wrote about me at length in his Substack, identifying me by name and including an illustration of my face, and calling me an infiltrator and “Zionist occupier,” among other things (<https://mattchun.substack.com/p/on-the-anti-racism-symposium-the>).
- 27 QUT appointed a retired judge, John Middleton, to investigate and report on it. Mr Middleton interviewed me for 45 minutes, but when I tried to speak to him about why I felt that particular statements were antisemitic, he cut me short or changed the subject. He was not interested in hearing on the relationship between antizionism and antisemitism.
- 28 Justice Middleton submitted his report in about July 2025, and while he said that “some of the content was capable of causing offence and more careful consideration should have been given to the timing and potential risk in light of the broader social context”, he concluded that “neither the content presented, nor the conduct of participants, were antisemitic when taken in the context of the event”.

As the context of the event was to promote “Anti-Racism”, I found this conclusion alarming.

29 In the days following the conference I was also contacted by a QUT student who chose to remain anonymous. The student said: “I am devastated to hear the way you were treated at that event. I am a studying in a program (I am omitting the program to protect the student’s identity) at QUT, the only Jew in my cohort, and it's been really horrible with my cohort since that slide was distributed. I just wanted to reach out and tell you that I am deeply sorry that you had that experience.”

30 This is only one of many students that have reached out either for support, or consultation during the past 2.5 years. I am just mentioning this particular case as it is QUT related.

31 The above events occurred prior to the Bondi Massacre. They were difficult, but they did not involve loss of life. In a way, they “prepared” me for the possibility of Bondi. The day after the massacre I wrote this:

Note that the content of items 1—31, as above serve also appear as part of the submission of the Australian Academic Alliance Against Antisemitism (5A). In that submission, supporting material is also supplied. Hence for supporting material for items 1—31, please see the 5A submission.

Post Bondi Reflections:

The Sadness of a Non-Surprising Massacre (Written by me on Dec 15, 2025)

32 For many Australians, the Dec 14, 2025 Bondi beach massacre would be a shocking surprise. There were over a dozen people murdered by two shooters (the full numbers are not yet clear) and there are several dozens wounded. It all happened in broad daylight in one of Australia’s most iconic locations.

33 The last time that more than 10 people were murdered in one incident in Australia was in 1996, and since then the total number killed in “mass shootings” averages about two people per year. Hence for many, the Bondi beach attack certainly doesn’t follow a numerical trend and is thus obviously “surprising”.

- 34 Yet for many Jewish Australians, namely about 1 out of every 200 Australians, there is little surprise, just sadness. Let me explain why.
- 35 You see, since the Oct 7, 2023, massacre where over 1000 Jews were murdered in one day in Israel, there have been ample warning signs of some “like-minded” event happening here in Australia. After all, just immediately following the Oct 7 massacre, there were a few that celebrated on the stairs of the Sydney Opera house and were not met with the force of the law.
- 36 Then for two consecutive years, antisemitic events continued to grow and develop in Australia. This first appeared with plenty of words on university campuses going unchecked, for example a call to an “intifada”, or direct vilification of Zionists for who they are. This behaviour was endorsed by the extreme left, as well as major unions. Worse of all, it was not handled properly by our education system and university leaders.
- 37 Things then worsened with physical attacks. As a sad example, our prime minister has had to move his electorate office due to repeated actions of pro-Palestinian “protestors”. In Sep 2025, he said, "aggressive protesters have repeatedly blocked access to the electorate office in Marrickville for people seeking assistance". But a blocking of the prime minister’s office, unchecked by the law, all under the premise of “free speech”, is just the tip of the iceberg.
- 38 Since the end of 2024, Jews in Australia have suffered a wave of physical vandalism attacks, including attacks on Jewish restaurants, vandalism of anything associated with Israel, and worse of all (prior to the Bondi massacre), several burnings and arson attempts of Jewish Synagogues. For example, on Dec 6, 2024, the Addas Israel Synagogue in Melbourne was burned to the ground!
- 39 While Australian authorities seemed to take that arson event seriously, and even eventually expelled the Iranian ambassador once involvement of that country was evident, there are thousands of other more minor cases that many non-Jewish Australians just don’t know about. One just needs to Google “Antisemitism Australia”, and witness dozens of reports of slurs, spray-paint, other minor incidents,

and even university symposia where justification of the Oct 7 massacre was accepted and endorsed. These reports will often be in “right wing” media, whereas the state-funded ABC news often whitewashes such events. Further, Jewish organizations have kept logs of thousands of events that have occurred. Yet those logs are not widely accessible.

40 So in summary, while all but the most extreme Australians would be both sad and surprised today, I think that sadly, many Jewish Australians are not surprised. We are just very sad.

41 My heart goes out to the families that have lost loved ones on Dec 14, 2025, and to the many wounded. I pledge to do my part to continue and combat antisemitism in our country, and I know that you will too. Thank you.

Other Jew Hate in Brisbane

42 After Bondi, like many others from the community I focused on “risk mitigation”. As part of that, while this is not with a direct academic (university) focus, I became aware of Imam Uzair Akbar, who was invited to take part in a Brisbane/Queensland vigil for the Bondi victims (Dec 21, 2025).

43 Although he joined this vigil and said strong words condemning the attack, I and others learned that the Imam has made public statements against Jews, some of which aired only after Bondi, sometimes with direct contemporary references. A video compiling such remarks are here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iAfNMGcwn-I>. I perceive some of his statements to be antisemitic.

44 After some action by the community in early 2026, the Imam apologised for some of his statements and took some of the videos off YouTube. Yet, to the best of my knowledge, he remains an educator of a major Brisbane school and I have no knowledge if the material is available behind closed doors or not. This obviously worries me.

[REDACTED]

Dated: June 13, 2026.