

Australia's Universities Lie and Censor for Apartheid Israel

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Australia's 39 taxpayer-funded universities have endorsed a highly controversial new definition of antisemitism that was drafted by leaders from the Group of Eight (GoE), Australia's top universities, and is expected to be enforced on all campuses. It is likely that the several private Australian universities will follow suit. This despicable Action threatens the free speech of academics and students that is the core ethos of decent universities.

The essence of the definition adopted by Australia's universities is as follows:

"Antisemitism is discrimination, prejudice, harassment, exclusion, vilification, intimidation or violence that impedes Jews' ability to participate as equals in educational, political, religious, cultural, economic or social life. Criticism of Israel can be antisemitic when it is grounded in harmful tropes, stereotypes or assumptions and when it calls for the elimination of the State of Israel or all Jews or when it holds Jewish individuals or communities responsible for Israel's actions. For most, but not all Jewish Australians, Zionism is a core part of their Jewish identity. Substituting the word 'Zionist' for 'Jew' does not eliminate the possibility of speech being antisemitic."

This false, censoring and intimidating Action threatens the free speech of academics and students, and impacts negatively on the reputations of all past, present and future staff and students of Australia's 39 taxpayer-funded universities. Indeed it threatens Australia's A\$40 billion per annum Education Export Industry that is crucial for the funding of Australia's universities.

(A) Condemnation of the Action by Some Anti-racist Jewish and on-Jewish Australians

(1) The Jewish Council of Australia (JCA):

"Today, Australia's 39 Universities endorsed a dangerous and politicised definition of antisemitism which threatens academic freedom, will have a chilling effect on legitimate criticism of Israel, and risks institutionalising anti-Palestinian racism."

(2) Sarah Schwartz (JCA):

"It degrades the very real fight against antisemitism for it to be weaponised to silence legitimate criticism of the Israeli state and Palestinian political expressions. It also risks fomenting division between communities and institutionalising anti-Palestinian

racism.”

(3) Naama Blatman (JCA):

“As a Jewish-Israeli academic who researches and teaches in the area of settler-colonialism and Israel/Palestine, this definition will have a chilling effect on scholarly work criticising the state of Israel and the political ideology and impacts of Zionism. This definition could very well be weaponised to silence the crucial work of academics in this area, including my own.”

(4) The Australia Palestine Advocacy Network (APAN):

“[APAN] unequivocally condemns the adoption by Universities Australia and its 39 universities of a new definition of antisemitism that dangerously conflates criticism of Israel with discrimination against Jewish people. This move manipulates genuine concern about antisemitism to silence political dissent, shield Israel from accountability and shut down Palestinians and their allies.”

(5) Nasser Mashni (APAN President):

“By adopting this definition of antisemitism, Australian universities have sacrificed their integrity, turning institutions of higher learning into obedient tools for political censorship and the shielding of genocide and apartheid.”

(6) Sawsan Madina (formerly Head of Australia’s multicultural SBS Television):

“Now it would be helpful to have a prescriptive list of what one can say about Israel without being smeared as an anti-Semite... it would be greatly appreciated by all those who are morally caught between the need to speak up against a genocide and the fear of losing their livelihoods and reputations... “Once, an ‘antisemite’ was someone who hated Jews. Today, an ‘antisemite’ is someone the Jews hate”.”

Summarized below are 25 key objections to this false, authoritarian, anti-intellectual and dangerous Action by Australian universities that threatens academic and student free speech and scholarship.

(1) The Action is intrinsically racist by singling out alleged verbal abuse towards one group (Jewish Zionists) thereby ignoring real racism against many other Australian groups (notably Indigenous Australians, Muslims, Chinese and non-Europeans).

(2) The Action arose to counter opposition to the Gaza Genocide, assist Zionist lying and hide the horrific genocide.

(3) The Action ignored the opinions of eminent anti-racist Jews and non-Jews opposed to racist Zionism, instead taking advice from genocidally racist Zionists.

(4) The Action entrenches real anti-Jewish anti-Semitism in Australia through false conflation of Apartheid Israel and its awful crimes with all Jews including anti-racist Jews (the very best of Jews).

(5) The Action contributes to the racist Zionist trashing of the 3 millennium humanitarian Jewish tradition from the Ten Commandments and Jesus’ “love thy neighbour as thyself” to

wonderful present era humanitarians.

(6) The Action ignores the reality that anti-Semitism occurs in 2 equally repugnant forms, anti-Jewish anti-Semitism and anti-Arab anti-Semitism (including Islamophobia).

(7) The Action ignores the reality that most Jews are non-Semitic Ashkenazi Jews (like me) who as attested by DNA analysis descend from non-Semitic Turkic Khazar converts to Judaism in about the 9th century CE.

(8) The Action is anti-Jewish anti-Semitic and anti-Arab anti-Semitic by falsely smearing anti-racist Jewish, Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim critics of Apartheid Israel as assertedly “antisemitic”.

(9) The Action robs decent, anti-racist Jews and non-Jews of agency in protesting horrific Zionist crimes such as the Jewish Israeli-imposed Gaza Genocide. Silence is complicity.

(10) The Action’s Zionist proponents preferred adoption of the anti-Semitic and holocaust-denying International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Definition of Antisemitism rejected by over 40 anti-racist Jewish organizations.

(11) The Action was impelled by Zionists assertedly suffering “fear” and “intimidation” from on-campus and other pro-Palestinian human rights demonstrations, yet anti-racist Jews are warmly welcomed participants in such humanitarian events.

(12) The Action in seeking to constrain and punish expression of humanitarian views represents an attack on informed democracy and on both Kindness and Truth that constitute the core ethos of decent Humanity.

(13) The Action violates the core academic ethos of unfettered free speech. Censorship is antithetical to scholarship, teaching and communication of ideas. Gideon Polya in “Current Academic Censorship and Self-Censorship in Australian Universities” (2001):

“Finally, we should publicly insist that universities that constrain free speech are not fit for our children”.

(14) The Action violates Kindness and Truth that represent the core ethos of decent Humanity and pressures academics and indeed students to lie by omission and commission to students, academics and the public under dire threat.

(15) The Action unforgivably oppresses anti-racist Jews inescapably bound by the key WW2 imperatives of “zero tolerance for lying”, “zero tolerance for racism”, “bear witness” and “never again to anyone”.

(16) The Action hides 553,000 Gaza deaths, including 111,000 violent deaths, 443,000 dying indirectly from imposed deprivation, and the deaths of 393,000 children, 51,000 women and 113,000 men (The Lancet).

(17) The Action silences anti-racist Jews and non-Jews protesting the century-long Palestinian Genocide and Palestinian Holocaust (2.5 million Palestinians killed by violence, 0.1 million, and imposed deprivation, the remainder).

(18) The Action threatens that science-informed reportage on the horrendous death toll in

the Gaza Genocide may be punished as asserted “hate speech” and “antisemitism” directed against Zionist Jews.

(19) The Action represents a fundamental neoliberal and corporatist rejection of the collegiate idea of the university as its past, present, and future academics and students.

(20) The Action by Australian universities in the interests of Zionists and of Australia-violating Apartheid Israel tarnishes the achievements and integrity of all Australian university graduates past, present and future (notably at job interviews).

(21) The Action comes on top of and lends university weight to existing Australian Federal laws that punish alleged “terrorism” and “antisemitism” offences with mandatory imprisonment for 6 years and 1 year respectively.

(22) The Action ignores Australian complicity in horrendous US Alliance and Apartheid Israeli crimes and instead uses “antisemitism hysteria” to threaten anti-racist Jewish and non-Jewish truth-tellers.

(23) The Action as a party to Zionist “antisemitism hysteria” hides the horrific Gaza Genocide, threatens those exposing it, ignores real antisemitism directed by Zionists against anti-racist Jews, and ignores horrific violence against women.

(24) The Action commits Australia’s universities, staff and students to egregious lying by commission and omission in gross violation of the core academic ethos of Truth.

(25) The Action may well deter, ban or severely punish numerous sensible, humane and informed commentaries and conclusions e.g. pro-Apartheid Israel means pro-Apartheid and unfitness for public life and public office, and Gideon Polya, “Free Palestine. End Apartheid Israel, Human Rights Denial, Gaza Massacre, Child Killing, Occupation and Palestinian Genocide” (761 pages, 2024).

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In summary, the core ethos of academia is free speech but this has been grossly violated by Australian universities threatening anti-racist Jewish and non-Jewish students and academics critical of the appalling crimes of genocidal Apartheid Israel. This Action damages all past, present and future academics and students associated with Australian universities, threatens Australia’s A\$40 billion per year Education Export Industry, and trashes Australia’s reputation. This Action must be urgently reversed by universities, governments and the people, and the perpetrators of this national sabotage held to account.

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Post-9-11 Muslim Holocaust & Muslim Genocide” (2020), “Climate Crisis, Climate Genocide & Solutions” (2020), “Free Palestine. End Apartheid Israel, Human Rights Denial, Gaza Massacre, Child Killing, Occupation and Palestinian Genocide” (2024), and contributed to Soren Korsgaard (editor) “The Most Dangerous Book Ever Published – Dangerous Deception Exposed!” (2020). For images of Gideon Polya’s huge paintings for the Planet, Peace, Mother and Child see: <http://sites.google.com/site/artforpeaceplanetmotherchild/>.

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