

**Policy Proposal** - University College London to end ties with companies/brands complicit in Uyghur forced labour.

**What would you like the Union to do?**

The union should mandate the following:

1. A call to involve University College London's Finance Committee and Investments Committee in urging University College London to end all current and future relations with companies complicit in the use of Uyghur forced labour. (as set out in the Australian Strategic Policy Institute's report).
2. SU to openly condemn companies and partnerships alleged to be complicit in human rights abuse in Xinjiang Uyghur autonomous region.
3. SU to encourage University College London to partner and invest instead in ethical companies, with values consistent with University College London's reputation as a humane, progressive and respectful institution.
4. SU to lobby NUS (National Union of Students) at the national conference to remove all complicit companies from their student discount platform.
5. Lobby University College London on the following:
  - a. To sever all relationships with unethical companies as listed in the Australian Strategic Policy Institute's report (1) who are implicated in the abuse of human rights in the Xinjiang Uyghur autonomous region.
  - b. To stop current and future sponsorships and investments in companies that are complicit in Uyghur forced labour. For instance, University College London prides itself on upholding ethically acceptable standards of conduct and the preservation of fairness and equality, all while accepting grants and buying shares in companies associated with the forced labour of indigenous populations.
  - c. To terminate all current research projects from the named companies and decline all future research funding from the named companies:

Brioni, Levi's, Louis Vuitton, Dior, Fendi, Givenchy, Celine, Timberland, Dickies, Vans, Theory, Sephora, Coach, Versace, Jimmy Choo, Michael Kors, Chanel, Costco, Hanes, Hermes, Gucci, Balenciaga, Yves Saint Laurent, Bottega Veneta, Alexander McQueen, Kate Spade, Fila, LL Bean, Hugo Boss, Lacoste, Li-Ning, The North Face, Skechers, Tommy Hilfiger, Victoria's Secret, Zara, Zegna, Anta, Jansport, Acer, ASUS, Dell, HP, Huawei, Lenovo, LG, Microsoft, Oppo, Samsung, Sony, Xiaomi, Cisco, Electrolux, Muji, Kohl's, Macy's, Nordstrom, Target, Tesco, TJ Maxx, Marshalls, HomeGoods, Walmart, Sam's Club, Flipkart, Bonobos, Walt Disney, BMW, General Motors, Jaguar, Land Rover, and Volkswagen.

**Why would you like to do this?**

University College London's relationship with companies such as Disney is incongruous with its purpose. Why do we as students feel passionate about this? It leads to a lack of faith in the usage of our tuition fees and ruins the credibility of our association with an institution. University College London prides itself on being a global leading university - this motion allows us the opportunity to pave the way for change and set the standard for better ethical and moral financial practices. Data from freedom of information requests show that in 2021, University College London received £160,400 in research funding from complicit firms and its investment in Disney alone is valued at £2,165,857 in 2021. Universities are failing

to recognise the devastating impact on human rights, security, and economic development their investments have. We would like this motion to be passed as we believe the ends do not justify the means. We want to ensure that our learning experience is not funded by companies that contribute to violations of internationally recognised human rights.

### **How will this affect students?**

University College London is involved in forced labour funding through investments, sponsorships and/or through graduate schemes and career fairs- that allow students to gain more exposure to firms complicit in Uyghur forced labour. This motion provides a method to reduce exposure and funding for such companies. In 2020, there was a huge global outcry after Disney's Mulan was filmed in East Turkestan (also known as Xinjiang). Additionally, Disney had expressed thanks in the end credits of the film to the Turpan Public Security Bureau, the entity that is responsible for the mass detention of Uyghurs in concentration camps(2). Furthermore, a Reuters report (3) found that Universal Electronics- a supplier for Microsoft made a deal with Xinjiang authorities to source hundreds of Uyghur employees. A March 2020 report by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute said that Microsoft had several Xinjiang suppliers believed to be using forced labour. As students, we cannot be part of an institution that partners or invests in such companies resulting in our institution being an accessory to China's violations of international law.

Students are unknowingly abetting unethical practices globally by paying fees that are being used in immoral ways. This motion provides peace of mind to students, knowing that the SU is doing all it can to ensure that the institution's investments are ethical in nature.

2. <https://campaignforuyghurs.org/mulan-disneys-complicity-in-chinas-genoc...>

3. <https://scceu.org/u-s-senators-behind-xinjiang-law-have-investments-lin...>