



The primary purpose of the Study War No More report is to supply information about funding provided by military organisations – governmental and industrial – to 26 UK universities between 2001 and 2006.

The report ultimately intends to support students and academics concerned about the very real impact their institutions have on international peace and conflict; and to encourage debate regarding the democratic deficit within academic institutions and the ends and ethics of research and research funding.

Universities are publicly funded institutions and yet information on military funding of higher education is often not available within the public domain. Where resources do exist, the information is often partial and out of context. As such, we have used the Freedom of Information Act (FoI), internet research and questionnaires in order to create as clear a picture of the relationship between universities and military organisations as possible. Whilst we have striven to uncover as much data as we can, we are keenly aware that the report is a foundation document rather than a definitive record of university-military research.

We hope therefore that the report will provoke, inspire and motivate others to continue researching this area, and act as a basis on which people can create, develop and sustain a campaign.



PEACEMAKER BRIEFINGS

STUDY WAR NO MORE: Military involvement in UK universities

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INTRODUCTION

Study War No More is a joint report and campaign run by Fellowship of Reconciliation and Campaign Against Arms Trade, launched in December 2007. This Peacemaker Briefing is an adaptation of the Study War No More report's executive summary.

To receive a full copy of the report, including an explanation of the methodology and the footnotes, please email request@studywarnomore.org.uk, download a copy from the campaign website www.studywarnomore.org.uk, or call the office on 01865 748 796.

REPORT FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Military projects at 26 UK universities 2001–2006: Principal findings

- Our research found that between 2001 and 2006, more than 1,900 military projects were conducted in the 26 UK universities covered by this report.[1] In terms of income to these universities, we have estimated the total value of these projects to be a minimum of £725 million.
- Out of the 26 UK universities, those conducting the largest number of military projects were, in descending rank order: Cambridge, Loughborough, Oxford, Southampton and University College, London.
- Three powerful multinational companies were involved as the sponsors/ partners of over two-thirds of identified military projects at the 26 UK universities. These companies are: Rolls Royce, BAE Systems and QinetiQ.
- The UK government's military research establishment – including Ministry of Defence (MoD), Defence Science Technology Laboratory (Dstl), Defence Evaluation Research Agency (DERA) and Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) – was involved in a quarter of all military projects at the 26 UK universities.
- Over half of all military projects at the 26 UK universities are conducted in university engineering departments, with the rest spread over other science and technology departments.

Military funding and influence at UK universities

Our research shows that the military sector – both governmental and industrial – has been able to push its way into UK universities through funding a variety of projects, mainly involving research. By sub-contracting research to universities, which have world-class, publicly-funded staff and facilities, the military sector can keep overheads down and, in the case of military companies, profits up. The ease with which military organisations can influence university departments, through purchasing research and services and providing sponsorship, is indicative of the general trend towards commercialisation in higher education. The hundreds of projects conducted between 2001 and 2006 for the military sector at the 26 UK universities indicate that the military has, in particular, built up strong levels of influence over science, engineering and technology departments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Transparency, Accountability and Democracy

The first step towards challenging the dependence of UK universities on funding from military organisations is to ensure that information regarding this relationship is publicly available so that it may be freely discussed. Transparency can only be achieved through the use of the media, public debates, meetings and campaign groups to press for change within universities and government. Ultimately, the decisionmaking structures of universities and government must change if the military sector's research agenda is to stop being pushed onto university departments and there is to be a reduction in the amount of military projects conducted at UK universities.

More detailed information on researching and campaigning can be found on our website:

www.studywarnomore.org.uk

Public Subsidies for Military Research

Public money, mainly from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council's collaborative research grants scheme, heavily subsidises many of these military projects, in particular those conducted by military companies, which contribute relatively small amounts of money. The public financing of military research makes these projects more attractive to universities, especially those suffering from funding shortfalls. Academics thus accept and actively seek out military money because they are under pressure to attract research funding to their department. Moreover, because the university funding system has been used by the government to introduce policies which promote research with economic benefits to industry, science, engineering and technology departments' funding options have narrowed. Academics may also be more willing to accept military funding if they do not perceive the work to be military. This may be because they don't associate the research they are being paid to conduct with a direct military application. This is despite the fact that it is often possible to identify work which has been paid for by military that either have very high military revenues or spend millions of pounds on military production and/ or procurement.

Researching military funding at UK universities

Our report found that in spite of the Freedom of Information Act, accessing data regarding the funding of universities by the military sector (for example from university and research council websites in addition to FoI requests) is time consuming and only presents a partial picture of the actual economic relationships. Two reasons for this – apart from the fact that institutions are often not compelled to provide such information – are the need for commercial confidentiality between competing organisations (including universities) and the cloak of secrecy surrounding the military sector. Without full transparency in the future, including clear and easily accessible information concerning how public money is used to support projects conducted by the military sector, it will not be possible to accurately assess the extent of military involvement in UK universities or monitor developments and trends.

Calls for Action

Recommendations and actions:

1. Seek out and publicise military funding at your university

Activists should utilise the Freedom of Information Act and the information available on university and research council websites to investigate their universities' ties with the military sector. It is also important that academics and other staff members lend their weight to student campaigns, help students find out departmental information and liaise with university authorities. In order to share and disseminate this data as widely as possible, student media, unions and other societies and groups should be informed of any findings relevant to their institution and activists should make their concerns known to the wider community regarding the external funding of universities.

2. Lobby for democratic change within your university and government

Once activists have information regarding military funding at their university, they can use a variety of tools to campaign for an end to military influence. Campaign goals could include:

- The creation of a central register (including data provided by the government) of all university ties with military and/ or industrial funders to include funding sources and any other industrial connections.
- That academics should be required, for example on their departmental web pages, to state the funding they have taken from external organisations, what this funding was for and who provided it.
- The establishment of an ethics committee whose members could include university managers e.g. the Vice-Chancellor, academics, students and representatives from industry, to review research with military applications.

- Establishing links with other universities in order to lobby universities for the above changes and government for a reprioritisation of public support away from military projects and towards civil and socially useful projects at UK universities.
- Where necessary, academics should reject funding from projects with military sponsors and/ or with likely military applications and seek alternative work which provides civil benefits to society, for example, by helping to address social and/ or environmental problems.

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