

SASH Press release

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Students picket Nottingham University as Red Face Day follows Red Nose Day....

Student campaigners will stage a demonstration at Nottingham University's open day today (17 March 2001). With faces painted red, students will force the university to face their embarrassing decision to accept £3.8m from the tobacco firm British American Tobacco for an 'International Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility'.^{1[1]}

Oxford University student, Patrick Mackerras and Chair of Students for Action on Smoking and Health (SASH), said: "It's just incredible that a university should take money for a school of corporate ethics from a tobacco firm. BAT products kill over 500,000 people per year, the firm is being sued by hundreds of people for compensation and the DTI is investigating the company's role in tobacco smuggling^{2[2]}. I couldn't think of a more unsuitable association but sadly the university appears to be unembarrassed by the link. That's why we'll be providing the red faces for them."

Mackerras added: "A tobacco firm funding a school of corporate ethics sounds like a joke, but the damage this donation has caused to the university's reputation is no laughing matter. Students have a right to know about this affair before they make a decision on whether to come to the University."

Student campaigners have been waging a battle against the University's controversial decision since December, when the University accepted £3.8m from BAT for an International Centre of Corporate Responsibility. Health campaigners have also been writing to local elected representatives and the university's governing body to protest against the decision. Earlier this week a press release was sent to over 100 student newspapers across the UK urging students to boycott the University.

Karl Brookes, a spokesperson for the health charity ASH, said, "As everyone takes off their red noses this morning, I can't believe that there aren't any red faces amongst the university leadership over this decision. You have to ask about the ethical and educational standards of the course when you look at the firm paying for it. It's not so much dumbing down, but selling out its academic reputation."

Brookes, added, "The decision has attracted world-wide condemnation^{3[3]}. The donation has damaged staff and student harmony. University leaders appear unable to do the right thing and return the money and now students will be demonstrating at an open day. It's hardly going to leave a good impression on the potential student or any relative visiting the campus."

^{1[1]} [Nottingham University to establish International Centre for Corporate Responsibility](#) , 4 December 2000

^{2[2]} BAT to be investigated by Department of Trade and Industry - [DTI](#) Press Release, 30 October 2000

^{3[3]} Visit the [conduct](#) part of the ASH website for further details.

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ISDN available for radio interviews. Please call 020 7739 5902 to arrange an interview.