

# THE STUDENTS' GUIDE TO ANTISEMITISM



Helping to identify and tackle antisemitism on campus

# UNDERSTANDING

## What is antisemitism?

**Antisemitism is discrimination, prejudice, hostility or racism against Jews.**

**Antisemitism** has been called '**the Longest Hatred**'. Its persistence is not doubted, yet precise definitions of antisemitism can cause heated debate.

It can come in many shapes and forms: street racism, state-backed terrorism, lunatic conspiracy theories, sly remarks, Holocaust denial and inversion, or in supposedly intellectual and academic works.

Some people say antisemitism is an ideology in its own right. Some say it just pollutes other ideologies whilst others compare it to an illness, or virus. However you choose to describe it, **you can find types of antisemitism in all sorts of different ideological places**, including the far right, the far left, and Islamism.

**FAR RIGHT ANTISEMITISM** can take **Nazi** or **nationalist** forms, in which Jews are deemed to be primary **enemies of the race** and/or of the nation, therefore deserving to be killed, expelled or discriminated against.

**FAR LEFT ANTISEMITISM** can associate Jews with capitalism or globalism, and may allege that **Jews are only ever loyal to other Jews** – therefore Jews are a class enemy of the people, or of the revolution.

**ISLAMIST ANTISEMITISM** derives from interpretations of history, religion and modern politics in which Jews are cast as **enemies of Islam**. These relate to the status of Jews under early Islamic rule; the influence of European antisemitism on majority Muslim societies during colonial rule; and the role of Islamist movements like Hamas in radicalising the conflict between Israel and Palestine.

To be clear, **Islamism is not meant here as some kind of code word for Muslims**. It means those ideological groups who demand that Islam guide all public life. At its most extreme, groups such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda are murderously antisemitic.

In Britain today, the far left and most Islamists claim to oppose antisemitism (the far right sometimes claim this also). Nevertheless, their opposition to antisemitism can be, at best, partial. For example, **they may strongly support groups like Hamas and Hizbollah** that are utterly antisemitic in their hostility against Jews and Judaism.

# ANTISEMITISM

## Defining Antisemitism

In 2016 the 57 member countries of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) adopted a working definition of antisemitism, known as the 'IHRA Definition', to aid its work in combating antisemitism. It reads:

'Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.'

(For the full definition visit [www.cst.org.uk](http://www.cst.org.uk))

The IHRA definition has since been adopted by the UK Government; the Labour Party; the Crown Prosecution Service; the Scottish

and Welsh governments; and many UK local authorities. The National Union of Students adopted it as policy at its National Conference in 2017.

The IHRA definition evolved from a previous working definition, drawn up by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) in 2005, which is used by the UK College of Policing. It states that 'criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic', but points out that antisemitic language is sometimes directed at Israel. It then gives a list of behaviours that 'could, taking into account the overall context', indicate antisemitism. It is not legally binding but it can be helpful in identifying antisemitic speech or images, and is recognised by the Jewish community as the standard non-legal definition of antisemitism. Additionally, NUS has passed a constitutional



The EUMC definition was adopted by NUS at its 2007 National Conference and reaffirmed in 2010, 2013 and 2016. It was replaced by the IHRA definition in 2017.

rule recognising the perception of the victim in defining antisemitism and other hate crimes, in line with current government and Police definitions.

# What is Anti-Zionism?

Poster from a pro-Palestinian demo in London, uses antisemitic myths about Jewish power, now directed at Israeli PM Netanyahu, shown as a vampire, a classic antisemitic image.



'Anti-Zionism' describes a wide range of hostile attitudes towards Jewish self-determination, and particularly towards Jewish nationalism and Israel as a Jewish state.

Zionism is a complex and contested term, because its **definitions mean different things to different people**. In particular, mainstream Jewish definitions of Zionism differ from far left, far right and Islamist definitions – all of which can use, and denigrate, Zionism as a term of political or antisemitic abuse. For example, the term 'zio' is always pejorative.

# Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism

Antisemitism, anti-Zionism and anti-Israel hatred are not the same as each other. They can, however, be hard to distinguish. Antisemitism can feed off criticism of Jews, Israel or Zionism, regardless of how fair or unfair, antisemitic or legitimate, that may be. Criticism of Zionism or Israel may not be antisemitic per se, but it risks becoming

so when traditional antisemitic themes are employed or the word 'Jewish' is replaced with 'Zionist' in order to shield antisemitic sentiment. **Boycotts of Israel can lead to hostile environments where antisemitism can thrive.** Gauging antisemitic motives and impacts largely depends upon the interaction of the following factors:

## MOTIVATION

To what extent is the criticism, or outright hatred, driven by the Jewish nature of Israel and/or Zionism, or expressed by attacking Israel on the basis of its Jewishness?

## TARGET

Are Jews being singled out as recipients for criticism, bias or hatred that ostensibly derives from anti-Israel or anti-Zionist enmity?

## REPEAT BEHAVIOUR

Does the offender repeat their behaviour, knowing the consequences and concerns that will be raised?

## CONTENT

Does the criticism, or hatred, use antisemitic or otherwise racist exclusivities, themes and motifs, such as comparing Israel to Nazis?

## RESPONSE TO CONCERNS

Are Jewish concerns sincerely and equally engaged with? Or, are Jewish concerns viewed with hostility and singled out for scorn?



Comparing Israel to Nazi Germany is antisemitic.

## Jewish life today

Jewish life in Britain is diverse and the Jewish community are well integrated into wider society. **On campus this translates to Jewish students overwhelmingly having a positive and rewarding experience.**

There is debate about the issue of modern day antisemitism. Some argue it is insignificant, whilst others believe that we live in dangerous times and the scale of antisemitism in Britain threatens the entire Jewish community.

Often, those who choose to deny or minimise the threat of antisemitism will compare it to other types of discrimination and argue that, in relative terms, the problem is not that severe. This is not a serious approach to racism.

Any discrimination or bigotry is too much, and there is no league table of racism. The argument also

fails to take into account the unique characteristics of the discrimination faced by different minorities. **We should be able to agree that where any form of antisemitism exists, it should be opposed just as any form of racism and discrimination would.**



# TACKLING ANTISEMITISM

## What you can do:



## EDUCATE

**Discrimination thrives on suspicion and ignorance** and can be combated by engaging with initiatives such as UJS' J.E.W. (Jewish Experience Week), inviting Jewish speakers on to campus, commemorating Holocaust Memorial Day and even in informal conversations.

A good place to start is UJS and your Jewish Society (J-Soc), who will be happy to provide ideas, resources and support.

## USE NO PLATFORM POLICIES

NUS has a No Platform policy, which has been adopted by many students' unions.

This is a strong tool at the disposal of minority students to protect themselves on campus from violent and non-violent extremism. **It exists to prevent individuals or groups known to hold extremist, racist and/or fascist views from speaking at union events.**

## FOSTER BETTER RELATIONS

Some groups and individuals will campaign against Israel on campus, which has the potential to create a hostile atmosphere and overflow into antisemitism. To avoid positions on both sides becoming entrenched, **try to foster good relations.** This shouldn't discourage healthy discussion, but it may help ensure that debates do not become tainted by antisemitism.

# ON CAMPUS



## UNDERSTAND CODES OF CONDUCT

Many universities and students' unions will have a code of conduct setting out expectations of student behaviour. If one exists, **make sure it is used and implemented, in order to protect your rights on campus.**



## EMPLOY SPEAKER GUIDELINES

Recognising that **controversial speakers invited on to campus can intimidate students**, NUS has produced guidelines on managing the complications associated with external speakers. Similarly, Universities UK has provided guidance to help higher education institutions manage this process and align their policies with students' unions.

These guidelines provide legal information and recommend processes for assessing and managing external speakers. As such, they are useful resources to remind students' unions and universities of their duties in upholding all students' rights. The guidelines can be viewed at [www.nusconnect.org.uk](http://www.nusconnect.org.uk) and [www.universitiesuk.ac.uk](http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk)

# Who can help?

There are many people who can help you if you are experiencing a problem related to antisemitism. Who you approach will depend on the nature of the problem and who you feel most comfortable talking to.

## THE POLICE

If you are a victim of or witness to antisemitic abuse, it is imperative that you tell the Police:

- In an emergency, always dial 999.
- For non-emergency situations, dial 101 or go to [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk) to find out which Police force covers your campus.
- Antisemitic hate crime can be reported online to the Police via the True Vision website ([www.report-it.org.uk](http://www.report-it.org.uk)).



## UJS AND J-SOCS

As the representative body of Jewish students in the UK and Ireland, the Union of Jewish Students is a good first port of call. They will be able to:

- Explain to you your rights and help direct your complaint to the relevant person or body.
- Support you in making representations to your campus security or campus liaison officer.
- Advise and support you on action to take with regard to your union and university.
- Put you in touch with like-minded students and direct you to suitable campaigning material.
- Put you in touch with your J-Soc.

-  [www.ujcs.org.uk](http://www.ujcs.org.uk)
-  020 7424 3288
-  [advice@ujcs.org.uk](mailto:advice@ujcs.org.uk)
-  @UJS\_UK
-  Union of Jewish Students

## CST

The Community Security Trust (CST) is responsible for protecting the UK Jewish community, and monitors levels of antisemitism. If you are a victim of or witness to antisemitism, you should contact CST as well as the Police. CST can:

- Report it to the Police on your behalf if you don't feel comfortable doing so.
- Put you in touch with a CST Student Security Coordinator to advise you on the next steps and speak to your university or union security on your behalf.
- Provide you with practical security advice.
- Use your report to help build a picture of antisemitic activity on your campus and the wider area.

-  [www.cst.org.uk](http://www.cst.org.uk)
-  020 8457 9999 / 0161 792 6666
-  [students@cst.org.uk](mailto:students@cst.org.uk)
-  @CST\_UK
-  Community Security Trust



## YOUR UNIVERSITY

Universities take all forms of hate crime seriously, and should be able to help you with a range of services by:

- Directing you to university Police liaison officers, neighbourhood policing teams or campus security teams. They deal with any student crime issues, including antisemitism.
- Referring you to university or students' union hate crime reporting centres. These can facilitate victims of hate crime in reporting incidents to the Police in complete confidence.
- Providing pastoral and emotional support through regular one-to-one meetings with your tutor.

## OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR

This is an independent body that runs a student complaints scheme in England and Wales. Complaints they can look at include discrimination, bullying and harassment, as well as welfare issues.

 [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk)  
 0118 959 9813



## Your legal rights

Legal protection surrounding race hate, including antisemitism, on and off campus is covered by criminal and civil legislation, enshrined in several acts and laws including: the Race Relations Act; the Human Rights Act; the Education and Education Reform Acts; the Public Order Act; and discrimination and defamation law.

It is helpful to know what your legal rights are and to recognise situations where they have been compromised.

The law recognises that **certain crimes are considered worse if the assailant is motivated by racial or religious prejudice.**

The perpetrator should therefore receive a more severe punishment if it is established that the crime was racially or religiously aggravated. The types of offences included within this category are those against the person, such as common assault, harassment and public order offences.

# INCIDENT

What to do if you are a victim of an antisemitic incident:

**IN AN EMERGENCY, ALWAYS DIAL 999**

Report the incident as soon as possible to:

1.

**THE POLICE**

Dial **999** in an emergency. In a non-emergency contact the Police on **101** or visit the True Vision website **[www.report-it.org.uk](http://www.report-it.org.uk)**. Remember to ask for a crime reference number.

2.

**CST**

In an emergency call the National Emergency Number (24-hour) **0800 032 3263**. In a non-emergency call CST on **020 8457 9999** (south) or **0161 792 6666** (north).

3.

**YOUR  
UNIVERSITY**

Report the incident via campus security, Student Services, the students' union or UJS.

# CHECKLIST

## GRAFFITI OR DAMAGE

- Collect evidence by taking photos and noting details of where the offending material is located
- Ask campus security to remove the offending material



## HATE MAIL

- Keep it and its envelope as evidence to give to the Police and make copies of both
- Handle as little as possible

## ABUSE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

- Report it to the Police, CST and your university
- Report it to the social media outlet
- Collect evidence by taking a screenshot of the offensive post, tweet, comments, and of the offender's profile



## ASSAULT

- Seek assistance and first aid from emergency services or campus security
- Once you are safe, approach witnesses and note their contact details
- Write down the exact events, location, timings and description of the offender

## ANTISEMITIC LITERATURE

- If it is being distributed, safely take a copy and note the description of the offender
- If it is found, take a copy and note location of discovery
- If appropriate take photos



[www.cst.org.uk](http://www.cst.org.uk)



@CST\_UK



Community Security Trust



[students@cst.org.uk](mailto:students@cst.org.uk)



National Emergency Number (24-hr) 0800 032 3263

London (Head Office) 020 8457 9999

Manchester (Northern Regional Office) 0161 792 6666



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Union of Jewish Students



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