

"Every Student Matters"

A review into
the British Jewish
community's
provision for
Jewish students

December 1998
Kislev 5759

"Raise up many students. The School of Shammai said: We should teach only those who are wise, humble, of good stock, and rich. But the School of Hillel said:

***Every student matters.** For there were many disaffiliated people who were attracted back to Judaism, and out of them sprang honest, committed, and worthy Jews."*

(Avot d'Rabi Natan)

GRET



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Chairman's Introduction

To be a Jewish student can be both an exhilarating and an exacting experience. Often away from home, exposed to new exciting challenges, young people are expanding their horizons, grappling with new responsibilities and making significant choices that profoundly affect their futures. We, the members of the Review body, wish to ensure that during these times Jewish students are substantially engaged with other Jews, Judaism and the varied concerns of the community.

To offer a range of services to Jewish students in Britain is vital to the healthy development of the Jewish community. In recent years, Jewish students have come to the forefront of the community's attention, fighting for their rights as Zionists and as Jews. This campaign has been one of the success stories of the community and many organisations and individuals have devoted great time and effort to this cause.

The dramatic changes to tertiary education have had a considerable effect on student life. The introduction of semesters, continuous assessment and winter examinations impact on the time available for extra curricular activities. Student participation in clubs and societies has decreased steadily since these changes. The introduction of student loans, tuition fees and student debt might also have had an effect on student participation in voluntary activity.

There is now a fresh challenge. In a social environment that encourages young people to treat Judaism as no more than one option in an open market of secular and religious possibilities, it is important to confront the diminishing commitment of students to Jewish life. The challenge is to compete in this market and to sustain Jewish belief and practice through the compelling qualities of Jewish life on campus.

Whilst we hope that this Report and its recommendations will enable significant progress to be made, the problem that we encounter today of many Jewish students not engaging in Jewish activities on campus has its origins in the prior Jewish education of our young. We must ensure that there is vitality and attractiveness in the teachings which our youth receive in Jewish schools and religion classes, and that our youth clubs and movements entice their interest and enthusiasm. If the interest or commitment of our young is extinguished early, then whatever we recommend for campus activities is unlikely to reverse the trend. We hope

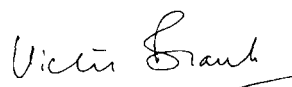
that the Jewish community will understand the critical importance of the issue – our failure to engage enough of our young in sufficient depth and with sufficient commitment to their Jewish life must be reversed urgently.

I would like to make four further comments. The Union of Jewish Students has a record of success in a number of areas achieved over many years, particularly in the political domain. Talented and committed students staff it. We must pay a great deal of heed to them and their need to maintain UJS as an autonomous entity. We must also listen to their experience and their knowledge of students' wants and needs. In turn, the UJS leadership can only benefit from closer co-ordination and co-operation with other communal agencies which can offer them funding, training, support and advice.

Many people devote considerable time and energy to helping students on campus: some of them are employed to do so and others do so voluntarily. The commitment of each of them is genuine and selfless. Nothing in this Report should be taken to be critical of those individual efforts. Our aim is to ensure that there is a proper strategic objective in the provision of resources and services on campus and to ensure that the effort is focused to achieve the stated aim.

Recognition must also be given to the Institute for Jewish Policy Research for their advice in the early stages of the Review. Particular thanks must also go to the many individuals and organisations who provided submissions or interviews which helped to formulate this report.

Members of the Student Review Body were drawn from different organisations and comprise people with different philosophies, yet each and every member of the body has accepted the need for a radical rethink. No topic has been taboo and nobody has taken umbrage at constructive criticism. I would like to express a deep gratitude to every one of them for the time and commitment that they have given and for their willingness to be constructive and never defensive. For this reason, I believe that this group of people could, for an interim period, play a significant role in establishing the communal co-operation necessary to implement our recommendations.



M. Victor Blank
December 1998

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to develop a strategy for the increased vitality of Jewish life on campus. The report does not seek to be narrowly prescriptive, but rather to identify priorities and to propose some principles for effective change.

We have listened to the views and recommendations of students from across the country, the central bodies involved in Jewish student provision, lay leaders involved at a local and national level and key professional personnel. This research underpins our assessment of the problems facing the Jewish student world and has led to our recommendations.

Students are inclined currently to be more practical and career-focused and their leisure patterns are set against a background of the non-ideological age in which we live. To some students we heard from and about, the Jewish community felt claustrophobic when they were teenagers, and university was an opportunity to escape and "explore the world". That which is provided on campus cannot hope to repair or make up for eighteen years of family, educational and communal conditioning on matters impacting on Jewish identity.

Main Findings

- The number of students who participate regularly in Jewish life on our campuses is relatively small compared to those who remain uninvolved. National organisations are catering for a small group of devotees. The majority of Jewish students remain uninspired and unaffected by the efforts of the Jewish community.
- Whilst significant progress in provision has been made in recent years, we have found that co-ordination in the field of Jewish student endeavour is limited. The community puts considerable resources into students, and yet there is little coherent strategy. A number of organisations, and therefore personnel, are duplicating activities.
- The personnel and financial resources expended in the student arena are substantial, yet much of it remains tied up in the central system. The local societies, which have the greatest potential for involving the largest number of students, are operating with meagre funds.

- The programmes and activities on offer to Jewish students are remarkably similar. This lack of variety might well be stunting the growth of student involvement.
- Whilst a limited group of dedicated paid personnel invest significant energies in student provision, they sometimes lack appropriate qualifications to undertake the roles that they assume.
- Although significant funds are invested in the Jewish student field, students have control over a small proportion of the total.

Main Recommendations

The goal for Jewish student provision is clear: We must raise programme standards in order to increase significantly the levels of participation in Jewish student life, and ultimately help to stimulate affiliation amongst future generations of young Jews.

To achieve these ends, the community must address the need for shared aims and co-ordinated action:

- Services to Jewish students are currently organised randomly by independent providers. This creates a level of duplication resulting in an inefficient distribution of resources. Whilst not wishing to stifle autonomous initiatives, there is an urgent need for collaboration between people across organisations in order to stimulate progress.
- The variety of services available to Jewish students is insufficient. There is a need to offer diverse and engaging opportunities encompassing culture, sport, politics, education, religion and the arts. Innovative ideas must be encouraged and supported from the centre through additional funding and regional personnel.
- Our research clearly indicates the great strength of student leadership. However, peer leadership is most effective when honed by professional training, guidance and support. We have therefore recommended that additional regional fieldworkers should be appointed who will provide support to local Jewish societies. Professional training should be upgraded for student leaders.

- A new approach to the management and training of personnel is needed. Our recommendations set out the need for clear guidelines to develop the role, functions and code of conduct applicable to professional staff. Lay management committees also need to be enhanced and should include appropriate mentors for student leaders. Recruitment for such committees should be widened to ensure that students and younger age groups of both sexes are represented.
- A reassessment of the facilities available in the student sector is necessary. Local Hillel Houses, as the only permanent physical facility available to students, continue to be the fulcrum of Jewish life. However, there is sometimes a conflict between their role as place of residence and as centre for student activity. Particular attention must be paid to the Endsleigh Street facility, which continues to experience difficulties in fulfilling its role as the vibrant London student centre.

A Campus Steering Group should be established immediately to implement the recommendations of this Review. The members of the Review body will serve as an interim committee to ensure that the issues are addressed speedily. We began by identifying a substantial gap between student wants and needs. Our aim has been to analyse what can bring fulfilment and meaning to as many Jewish students as possible. Using research and involving the key agencies, we have been able to formulate a strategy that should act as a blueprint to enhance Jewish student provision in the UK.

3

Terms of Reference

This Review emerges against a backdrop of enormous changes in higher education and examines the Jewish community's provision to Jewish students in the United Kingdom. It was commissioned in February 1998 by the Group Relations Educational Trust, the Hillel Foundation, the Union of Jewish Students and the United Jewish Israel Appeal, all of whom are actively engaged in promoting and protecting the general interests of Jewish students. The UJIA Strategic Planning Unit carried out the professional work. This Review, consistent with the philosophy of the four sponsoring organisations, is cross-communal in outlook. Whilst respecting the profound differences of philosophy and beliefs held by many of the student service providers, we set as our goal: the creation of diverse programmes and services of such quality that they will engage the mass of Jewish students with Jewish tradition, culture and community.

It is difficult to determine the number of Jewish students in total, and the number who are touched by community provision. Observers of the Jewish student field vary considerably in their working assessments of the size of the Jewish student population. These assessments range from a low of 5,000 to a high of 12,000 undergraduates. However, there is a consensus that a significant number of young Jews enter institutions of higher education. Schmool and Miller (1994) found that 4.4% of non-Jewish adult women have a first degree, compared to 42% of Jewish women. The Institute for Jewish Policy Research Report (1995) indicates that 50% of the Jewish population in the 18-29 age group have gained degrees, leading to the current estimate of 7170 students. A further estimate from the Board of Deputies of British Jews suggests that there are between 4900 and 6000 students. The Union of Jewish Students claims an average of 5000 members, suggesting a very high initial affiliation rate. However, numbers that frequently attend student activities are a fraction of this figure. Although inadequate to make detailed specific judgements, these figures do give an indication of the scale of the target group and the size of the task.

The Review seeks to identify the needs of Jewish students, to examine the Jewish community's current provision for them and to assess the relationship between what students need and what the community provides. It will endeavour to make recommendations as to how the

Jewish community can better fulfil its responsibilities to Jewish students and achieve this goal. From our investigation, we aim to improve the allocation and management of communal resources and put in place a more effective and co-ordinated programme.

4

Methodology

4.1

Types of Research

4.1.1

The National View: Communal Organizations and Student Priorities

The Review invited written submissions from key organisations involved at all levels of student provision. This information supplied detail on the organisations that fund and deliver student services: their aims and objectives, their methods of operation, resources, staff training, and their relationships with other providers. The Review conducted interviews with organisational representatives and key informants who have considerable experience and expertise. Their input provided a thorough, reflective view of the community's provision and on how to make progress.

4.1.2

The Local View: Campus Life through Student Eyes

A market research company, Dialog, investigated students' attitudes to Judaism, the Jewish community and the Jewish organisations working on campus. This research strove to determine how Jewish life and university lives relate to each other; and the general lifestyle of Jewish students. This research was undertaken through in-depth interviews with thirty-six students at three sample universities.

The Review also sent a researcher to gather data and insights from the local level of student provision. We identified the organisations providing services, the way they work, the level of training of their personnel, who they target and attract and how they evaluate their work. Interviews were conducted in three universities, of varying size and Jewish population, with Jewish society leaders, activists, chaplains, Hillel House committee members, Jewish academics and representatives of the local community. These snapshots enabled us to assess local services to students.

4.2

Limitations of the Review

There are limitations to our research and our findings.

We were limited in the number of campuses that we could investigate and, therefore, the numbers of students that could be interviewed. Those selected for the 'Local View' are not representative of the entire nation-wide

picture, but they are indicative of what is currently happening on university campuses in the United Kingdom. Leeds, Liverpool and Nottingham were chosen because they represent the mainstream of Jewish student life. It was the view of the Review Board, in consultation with UJS, that these three universities could form a solid foundation of comparability on which to base our analysis. Each has a Jewish community, chaplaincy services, an active Jewish society, a Hillel House and a considerable number of Jewish students. When successful improvements are made in these areas, there will be a natural increase in innovation and development throughout the Jewish student field.

There is a scarcity of basic information. It is difficult to assess the numbers of mature, post-graduate and Israeli students, as well as those that live at home. These are growing in number and have a very distinct set of needs, which we have barely addressed. We hope our recommendations will have a trickle-down effect and involve more of them in Jewish student life. Our deliberations have focussed on the majority of Jewish students on campus who are British-born undergraduates.

London is a unique situation which we have not investigated thoroughly. It is estimated that there is a relatively high percentage of Jewish students in the capital who live at home. Furthermore, the range of facilities and services that are readily on offer in both a general and a Jewish context are bound to affect the Jewish student population. In an arena of such high communal provision there is clearly a different role for campus providers.

We also recognise that there are local 'particularities' that affect Jewish student provision. Some towns have initiatives that make student life different from other places. It is demonstrably true that volunteer efforts are susceptible to the presence of vibrant local personalities. This Review cannot take such local differences into account and not all our recommendations are suitable to every single pocket of Jewish student life.

The Review cannot offer a simple formula to engage all students in Jewish life. We have developed recommendations to respond to the needs of Jewish students. This is not a blueprint for all, but does provide guidelines on how to improve student services.

4.3

Student Classification

To focus our analysis of the Jewish student population we have developed four broad categories of student involvement: Enthusiasts; Occasionals; Socialites; and Outsiders. Their purpose is to provide us with a common vocabulary for discussing the issues on the agenda. Inevitably, it simplifies a complex reality, yet it enables us to make intelligent assessments as to where and how to allocate resources.

- **Enthusiasts** may be members of the Jewish society and/or those who see themselves as contributors to Jewish student life in general. Enthusiasts attend a range of meetings and events regularly and identify themselves as active within the Jewish society. Some might have particular political, educational or cultural interests, yet they are conscious of a wider agenda. They form the core of peer leadership and are motivated to drive and support active Jewish society life.
- **Occasionals** are probably members of the Jewish society who have had limited contact with the society throughout their time at university, or activists who have become less proactive in their second/third years. They will attend events from time to time and invest some interest in society activities. They may also attend a large student event such as UJS conference. Occasionals have the capacity, if enthused and inspired, to become the driving force in attracting those on the periphery of the Jewish student life.
- **Socialites** are usually found in university towns with a large Jewish population and they are mainly interested in the social benefits of being with other Jewish people with similar interests. They are not really interested in the everyday running of the Jewish society but like to “pop in” for the occasional disco or night out. Socialites will also turn up in the face of extreme anti-Jewish activity.
- **Outsiders** may attend one or two Jewish society events but do not return, or they may never join at all. Outsiders might previously have led significant Jewish lives at home, but now seek the chance to experience other opportunities. Alternatively, they may have had very little Jewish content to their lives, represented by a small number of Jewish friends, a limited Jewish education and less emphasis on Judaism at home. They perceive the Jewish society as being out of touch with their perspective on university life.

Our research indicates that even Enthusiasts and Occasionals need far more engagement in Jewish student life. Our aim is to ensure that proper provision is made for these students, but for Socialites and ultimately Outsiders too. Campus provision should enhance Jewish identity at all levels, from the very involved to the very marginalised.

5

Findings

5.1 A National View of Provision

5.1.1 Outline

The Review invited written submissions from a range of communal bodies active in the Jewish student field. From these submissions we have attempted to estimate the total amount of current funding and resources that are devoted to students.

We recognise that some personnel invest time with Jewish students that will not be accounted for in this chapter. Our aim is merely to provide a substantial outline of what is being provided at the moment.

In the United Kingdom there are approximately 100 Jewish societies and 22 Hillel Houses in different cities across the country. Some thirty professional staff are working full-time purely to provide programmes and resources for the Jewish student community. There are also other professional staff who devote considerable time and effort into the programmes designed to benefit the Jewish student community.

5.2 Funding and Personnel in the Field of Jewish Student Provision

5.2.1 The Union of Jewish Students

UJS has a budget of approximately £400,000 of which almost half is spent on fixed overheads (£62,500 office accommodation charge and £120,000 on salaries), with the remaining funds running UJS programmes and activities.

The Union of Jewish Students has 10 salaried workers: Chairperson, National Secretary, Northern Fieldworker (based in Manchester), Southern Fieldworker, London Fieldworker, National Education Co-ordinator, Campaigns Organiser, Research officer, Administrative Director and Secretary.

5.2.2 The Hillel Foundation

Hillel has an annual cash budget of some £400,000, raised mainly from voluntary donations. Hillel provides core funding to UJS of £45,000 per annum. Additionally it provides office accommodation, at a valued cost of

£62,500, in its Endsleigh Street headquarters. The Hillel Foundation currently administers capital assets estimated at a value of £10,000,000 for the 22 Hillel Houses.

Hillel employs a full-time Executive Director and a full-time assistant. There are also four administrative/service staff who work as part of the team that runs Endsleigh Street. Hillel has also just appointed a new Programme Director to be based in London. This position is to support UJS's work and increase activities for Jewish students in London especially in Endsleigh Street and in the new Hillel in Kilburn.

There are senior student wardens, catering and maintenance staff in many of the regional Houses.

5.2.3 The Group Relations Educational Trust

GRET provides £65,500 towards the cost of UJS activities. This money is part of the £400,000 UJS budget.

5.2.4 United Jewish Israel Appeal

In calendar year 1998, the UJIA made a core allocation to UJS of £140,000 to support its educational work under the UJIA Jewish Renewal programme. This is part of the £400,000 UJS budget.

The UJIA provides additional support (approximately £45,000) in the form of subsidies for UJS's Israel Experience schemes with the Jewish Agency; the provision of resources, materials and training through JPMP; and the running of the Hebrew Reading Crash Course in association with UJS in seven venues across the country.

An allocation of £60,000 in both 1997 and 1998 was also made to the National Chaplaincy Board from the proceeds of the United Synagogue Kol Nidre Appeals.

5.2.5 The National Jewish Chaplaincy Board

The National Chaplaincy Board pays the salaries of the seven orthodox chaplains and an administrator. Individual chaplains' salaries vary from £24,250 per annum to just over £34,000. All chaplaincy expenses (travel, food, telephone etc.), which amount in most instances to between £6,000 – £7,000 per annum per chaplain are paid by the local boards from funds raised locally. Some local chaplaincy boards also pay an amount to the National Board as a contribution towards the salary. It is estimated that the total cost of the Jewish student chaplaincy is in the order of £262,000 per annum.

5.2.6 Reform Synagogues of Great Britain

RSGB invests just under £100,000 to cover expenditure on staff, programmes and bursaries. It provides a chaplaincy service when required, educational programmes in term and vacation time, Shabbatot and weekend seminars, mailings and work to build or maintain students' links with Reform synagogues.

RSGB employs a Student Co-ordinator, one full-time national chaplain, and a part-time northern chaplain. In addition, the Director of the Youth and Students Division, Shlichim, Programmes Administrator and one secretary support and advise this team.

5.2.7 Aish HaTorah

Aish HaTorah, the orthodox outreach organisation, has a budget in 1998 for the student element of their activities of £350,000. Most of this budget goes towards the Jerusalem Fellowships summer programmes. This year, Aish HaTorah took 300 people aged 17-25 to Israel for three and a half weeks – all of whom were subsidised by £1000 per person.

Two staff are dedicated exclusively to following up on the Fellowship's programme and two work part-time in this field.

5.2.8 L'Chaim Society

The L'Chaim Society has student centres in Oxford, Cambridge and London. Altogether there are 12 members of staff, although not all L'Chaim's activity is geared towards the student field. More than £400,000 is spent on student work. These costs include salaries and 'special' expenditure on celebrity speakers.

5.2.9 Limmud

30 places are offered to students at the annual Limmud seminar at a subsidised cost of only £30. This reflects a £200 per person reduction in price. Therefore Limmud's estimated expenditure in the student field is £6,000 per annum.

5.2.10 Jewish Care

£10,000 is annually set aside for advertising with UJS including adverts in the Jewish Student Magazine, the Freshers' pack and the diary. Additional funds totalling £20,000 are available on an ad hoc basis for specific projects. £1,000 has also been set aside for grants to Jewish societies. A dedicated worker carries responsibility to initiate student activities.

5.2.11 Assembly of Masorti Synagogues

Masorti employs a co-ordinator for youth and student affairs. Approximately one third of her time is spent with students and we estimate that Masorti invest £10,000 (salary plus expenses).

5.2.12 Jewish Societies

There are approximately 100 Jewish Societies around the country all with varying membership numbers and income. (From the submissions received, we estimate that subscriptions are generally set at a figure of around £5 per annum per member.)

In addition to this, University Student Unions give Jewish societies funds each year to be spent on activity administration e.g. photo-copying, publicity and room hire. Money allocated by the Student Union, which is not spent during the academic year, is normally returned to the Student Union at the end of the academic year.

Fund-raising activities for individual Jewish societies vary considerably. Some raise substantial sums from the local community or from the parents of Jewish society members. However, there is no ongoing strategy to raise funds and much depends on Jewish society activists. We can therefore only give a rough estimate for the total combined Jewish society income broadly based on figures provided by UJS and the submissions from Jewish societies.

UJS figures indicate that there are 5,000 students who are members of Jewish societies across Great Britain. Subscriptions go to the local Jewish society and everyone who joins becomes an automatic member of UJS. With university grants and a small amount of fundraising by individual Jewish societies, we can estimate the combined Jewish society income to be £50,000 per annum.

Approximate distribution of Jewish student society by size:

Number of Jewish students in society	Number of societies
250+	8
100-250	12
50-100	30
10-50	30
Under 10	20

5.2.13

Academic Jewish Studies

There are a number of Jewish studies courses available to students at many universities in Great Britain. Nine universities now have Jewish Studies or Hebrew Departments offering both full-time courses, as well as modules that are accredited to degree courses. Other universities have speciality courses in subjects such as Holocaust or Middle Eastern Studies.

In total we estimate there are over five hundred students who study a Jewish subject for at least part of their first degree.

5.3

Conclusion

We thus have a picture emerging of a field into which very substantial Jewish community resources are invested. With the exception of a tiny fraction of outside income, over 95% of £1.95 million is raised annually from charitable donations. Contrary to popular impression, Jewish students themselves do not control the majority of these funds and only 20% are within their direct authority. A significant proportion of the funds are earmarked to designated organisations in order to deliver specific programmes. The staffing resource is primarily located in the central agencies performing "national" functions, with less than half spending their time focused on providing support and programme in the field.

5.3.1

Summary of National Provision for Jewish Students

Total number of campus programme staff	46
Number of staff in field work positions	17
Number of Hillel Houses	22
Number of Hillel Residential Places	322
Number of Jewish Student Societies	100
Estimated UK Community Expenditure on Jewish Students	£1.95m
Estimated Number on Israel Experience Schemes	350
Number of UJS Members	5000
Number Attending UJS Conference	350

5.4

The Local View: Through Student Eyes

5.4.1

Outline

This section provides a general overview of what one might find in a university town with a substantial Jewish population. It examines the feelings expressed by the Jewish students interviewed at different universities. It goes some way in representing the views of different types of Jewish students and provides us with more information on the attitudes of Jewish students. Our findings have been separated in to four different categories – Jewish societies, Hillel Houses, chaplaincy and local communities. The quotes included in this section are the statements of students who were interviewed as part of the research for this report.

5.5

Jewish Societies

5.5.1

The first term of the university year is of vital importance for Jewish societies. If the Jewish society fails to engage and involve students in their initial period at university, it is unlikely to involve them at all. For many, the first term is a time for joining societies and many respondents spoke of becoming members of several societies after attending the Freshers' Fair at their university. However, many feel apprehensive to come again after the first term because they believe that a clique has already been developed that will be difficult to enter.

"In the first term it would have been crucial to start getting involved because then it would be alright, but because I was trying to do that in halls [of residence] I didn't. Now I feel in a way I can't come to these things (Jewish society events) because I don't know anyone."

5.5.2

On the whole Jewish societies provide popular social events, appealing to Jewish society Enthusiasts, Occasionals and Socialites. The Jewish society's major event is the Friday night meal. There are also a number of other social events such as bagel brunches, bowling trips and "Booze for Jews" evenings that take place throughout the year. There are relatively few original events taking place in Jewish societies at the present time.

5.5.3

First year students normally dominate the Jewish society leadership. They frequently assume the mantle of leadership after only one term at university. Second and

third year students are more settled and feel less need for a structured framework for their social life. They also feel that the pressures of work prevent them from remaining involved. Whilst the very important “Freshers” first term is thus “led” by second year students who have received some training, societies are often a ‘first year phenomenon’.

5.5.4

In university towns with large Jewish student populations, a natural Jewish social life is created. There is a “Jewish life” outside of the confines of the Jewish society. Many Jewish students share accommodation, often in university flats, and socialise with other Jews, independently of organised activity. Some events are popular mainly because they are not associated with the Jewish society. Furthermore, certain events are organised by Jewish students independently and these are more likely to attract those alienated by Jewish society activities.

“There’s a guy who’s here who plays the guitar... he’s managed to get a job over at a bar just round the corner... On a Thursday there’s about 40 Jews who just go there. It’s not a Jewish society organised thing. We all go down and it’s like a scene from Friends, and it’s really good. It’s come from nowhere.”

5.5.5

Larger Jewish societies offer a wide range of activities. In the large student populations, minyanim are held in Hillel House three times a day and on Shabbat. Recently Reform Friday night services have become more common. In smaller Jewish societies there is far less religious involvement, and services are rarely conducted within the confines of the society.

5.5.6

Although there are some criticisms about Jewish societies and Hillel Houses, most Jewish students agree that these two institutions are the backbone of the Jewish student community. They are seen as representing the security and traditions of home life and very few want to see them disappear even if they did not want to participate themselves.

5.5.7

There is a great deal of difference in perceptions of the Jewish society. Some students who are not active see their Jewish society as a religious organisation dominated by orthodox people. This is not fully recognised by Jewish society leaders, most of whom are not religious.

“Maybe they see it as too much of a religious thing, but I don’t know where that religious stigma comes from.”

5.5.8

The Jewish society provides little in the way of a structured education programme, especially in smaller Jewish societies. Students are comfortable doing ‘Jewish things’, but there is not much reflection about what it means to be Jewish. Some students who are not society activists feel that the Jewish society has a stigma attached to it and that anything put on by the society will not attract them. This mirrors many young people’s attitude to the Jewish community as a whole, which constantly struggles to engage a large number of Jews.

“Literally if someone mentions Jewish society and an event I say no way, I never go to them.”

“It’s an image of being slightly boring types.”

5.5.9

Some students feel left out by what they see as the intimidating atmosphere of the Jewish society. This prevents many students from attending. More students would go to Jewish society events if they were approached in the right way.

“I suppose if someone asked me would I come and help this one time and see what it was like, then maybe I would have.”

5.5.10

The feeling that Jewish societies are ‘cliquey’ is often not recognised by the activists within the society. There is little attempt to address the problem of welcoming new students, especially in bigger societies.

“Jewish society people are very cliquey, they all know each other, and you feel quite alienated and an outcast if you turn up at an event.”

“Unless you’re on the committee or spend a lot of time hanging around Hillel and know everyone, then you don’t feel comfortable.”

5.5.11

Jewish students do not always know that their Jewish society is affiliated to UJS. Students therefore often feel separate from the national organisation and its events and activities, and yet between 50-70% are registered members of UJS.

5.5.12

The Jewish society usually acts as an effective political organisation in terms of securing Jewish delegates to NUS conference and mobilising activists against expressions of anti-Semitism and/or anti-Zionism on campus. In recent years there has been a substantial reduction in the level of anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism on the vast majority of campuses and the feeling is that the universities are

highly sensitive to ethnic and racial issues. However, some more religious students feel there is an insensitivity to Jewish needs concerning the setting of exams at times that cause problems for observant Jews and there is a need to be vigilant about a new "Jews for Jesus" campaign and the activities of extreme Islamic groups. The successful political efforts of the Jewish societies are frequently due to nationally co-ordinated campaigns, and the advice and support of UJS.

5.6 Hillel Houses

5.6.1

The hub of Jewish life is usually the Hillel House, accommodating residents and, in larger universities, a post-graduate warden. In larger Hillels you may find a synagogue, meeting rooms, a cafeteria and a Jewish society office. In smaller Hillels there is often only a communal lounge/dining area and possibly a meeting room.

5.6.2.

Students who had lived in a Hillel House during their first year were generally positive about Hillel and several stated that it had allowed them to become part of Jewish student life in their particular university and to form lasting friendships.

5.6.3

The buildings themselves are often seen as uncomfortable and uninviting. Some Hillel residents found the rules of the house constricting and the facilities below standard.

"They need a lot more open space where people can sit down and talk, not have so many rules like you can't smoke in your bedroom. You're at university; you're getting away from all of that."

"The lounge doesn't have settees – it's got uncomfortable chairs. I know that sounds like a really stupid point, but just minor details like that make it slightly uncomfortable."

5.6.4

There are internal residency issues within some Hillel Houses that need to be resolved. There are disputes over kashrut and the observance of Shabbat, which affect life in Hillel Houses.

"There's a whole thing with Hillel, it's not always religious people who live here. But the religious people who do live here tend to try and take over."

5.6.5

Visitors had come to Hillel as the home of the Jewish

society, only to feel unwelcome and intimidated. This is a huge problem for Jewish life across the country and is due to Hillel's dual role as a place of residence as well as a student centre. Hillel residents found it frustrating and difficult to be welcoming to outside students, especially when feeling their own home and living space were being constantly invaded.

"There's a big issue that the people who are living here sometimes get uppity or portray the feeling that they don't want all these people coming in here, it's our home, this is our house."

5.6.6

A few students, mainly those who were actively involved in organised Jewish life and had lived in a Hillel during their first year, did not share the feeling that the Hillel House was uninviting and thought of it as a secure and generally good place to live.

5.7 Chaplaincy

5.7.1

The regional chaplain is a resident of the major university towns and travels to smaller satellite campuses within his region. The chaplain spends the large majority of his time in the major campus and the rest of his time at the smaller societies. The chaplain is prominent around campus, especially amongst the religious students. He is usually orthodox.

The chaplains are the people who are the face of Jewish student provision and are working every day in the field with a sizeable number of Jewish students. Their work falls into many categories including counselling, education, and social programming and religious services. This varied role has developed, as a committed response to student needs in the absence of other human resources.

5.7.2

There is a wide range of views expressed about chaplaincy from students who know of the service (mainly Enthusiasts). For some the fact that the chaplain is a rabbi is a problem, as they think that such a person has a "hidden agenda". For some students the presence of a rabbi at Freshers' Fairs is a disincentive to joining the Jewish society.

"I think the initial thing is getting past the fact that he's a Rabbi, who wears black and has a big, black beard and wears a hat."

"He's approachable, and if you've got a problem he'll be there for you until your problem's over. He's a counsellor and so he's a friend basically."

"I was worried when I first saw him hanging out at the Jewish society stall. I was thinking here we go, it's going to be preaching or whatever, looking down on you a bit if you're not wearing your kippah."

5.7.3

Some students, especially those who are less involved or not involved at all, are quite critical and know little or nothing about the role of chaplains.

"I just felt like he was out to convert me or something."

"I've got no idea about it and I've never really gone into that."

5.7.4

Some students feel that there is a need for someone with a less religious persona to work in the Jewish student community. For some the sight of a "man in a black hat" was enough to dissuade them from wanting any contact. They feel that there should be someone else who could relate more to them as regular students.

"He's not the sort of person I'd talk to because I've never really had relationships with rabbis."

5.8

Local communities

5.8.1

There are some links between the student and local community. The chaplain, Jewish society activists, and local Jewish communal figures attempt to build a network of home hospitality opportunities.

5.8.2

Students who contact their local community are positive in their views about them. Some students are aware that the local community is there if students need them, but do not necessarily want a great deal of home hospitality.

"We don't have much to do with them but when we go to synagogue the older community are very friendly, and they invite us back for lunch and stuff after synagogue."

5.8.3

Local communities often feel that students do not respond to their offer of home hospitality. However, students did not necessarily want regular visits arranged, although they appreciated the invitations.

5.9

Conclusion

With most resources located in the central agencies, it is surprising how successful local provision has been. However, progress has clearly been stifled because of this centralisation, leaving local energies insufficiently resourced to widen their appeal. Facilities, professional support and local funding are inadequate to take on the challenge of providing the variety of programmes able to appeal to a broader cross-section of the Jewish student population.

6

Analysis and Recommendations

Overview

From this Review's limited but intensive coverage of Jewish student life in the UK, a number of key areas suggest themselves for further and more detailed consideration by those responsible for establishing policy at a national level. Our findings show that communal resources are spread unevenly with an emphasis on central provision to student Enthusiasts. Through our assessment and recommendations we wish to offer ideas to improve facilities, services and support to engage a more diverse cross-section of the Jewish student population.

Our recommendations fall into 6 categories:

- 6.1 Strategic Co-ordination
- 6.2 Activities
- 6.3 Student Leadership
- 6.4 Personnel
- 6.5 Facilities
- 6.6 Resources

6.1 Strategic Co-ordination

6.1.1

There is a need to define the aims and objectives of the key agencies of student provision. A clear mission statement will enable students and the community to understand more clearly the mandate and operations of each organisation and the relationships between them. These statements should be distributed widely.

All Jewish student providers should define and publicise clear aims.

6.1.2

There is a need for a co-ordinated strategy for student provision at a local and national level. One organisation needs to carry the responsibility to champion the community's goal of nurturing Jewish commitment amongst Jewish students. The Hillel Foundation is the natural agency to drive forward any recommendations and to design and implement a long-term strategy for Jewish students. It should invite representatives from UJS, GRET and the UJIA to form a new Hillel Board of Directors.

The Hillel Foundation should:

- *Amend its constitution if necessary to prepare itself to fulfil this broader role.*
- *Start discussions with UJS, UJIA and GRET to find agreement on the workings of a reconstituted Hillel Foundation.*

6.1.3

The new Hillel Board of Directors will provide the focus for the identification of needs, the development of a comprehensive multi-year plan and the raising of funds. Its main functions should be to:

- Ensure the strategic co-ordination of services, the deployment of assets and the reallocation of resources so as to guarantee that long-term objectives are established and achieved.
- Liaise closely with chaplaincy and other student service providers.
- Secure long term funding and the professional accountability of those resources for the benefit of Jewish students.
- Train and support staff who are active in the student field and develop professional standards.
- Provide and administer a fund to support local Jewish societies with a bias towards new ideas and innovation, under UJS's guidance.
- Guarantee UJS's independence.

The Hillel Foundation, UJS, the UJIA and GRET should start discussions to create the new Hillel Board of Directors.

6.1.4

Such an ambitious plan necessitates that the Hillel Foundation has a high degree of credibility in the community. It is recognised that Hillel currently does not have the human and financial resources to fulfil all these objectives. In the interim a Campus Steering Group should be established immediately from the members of the Review Body, subject to the agreement of the sponsoring organisations. It will be responsible for the strategic co-ordination of programmes and activities throughout the campus arena so as to ensure long term objectives are established and achieved. It will also be charged with the responsibility to begin implementation of the recommendations of this Review. It should transfer

its mandate to the new Hillel Foundation when the members of the Steering Group agree that Hillel is appropriately set up to fulfil the role outlined.

The Review Body should establish the Campus Steering Group immediately.

6.1.5

There are many organisations that are involved in providing support and resources for Jewish students. Rather than working in consultation with each other, organisations are developing programmes that are sometimes already provided elsewhere or which are sometimes in conflict with each other. This can lead to limited energies being expended on competition and often slows the development of a wide range of new stimulating activities for Jewish students.

The Campus Steering Group should invite chaplaincy and all organisations involved in the field of student provision throughout the country to an initial policy forum. The purpose will be to allow the key providers to liaise and discuss plans for the year ahead. Whilst respecting the autonomy of each organisation, projects can be designed and promoted that are mutually beneficial and create synergies in provision.

The Campus Steering Group should convene a policy forum of campus providers by May 1999.

6.1.6

If overall provision for Jewish students is to improve, the focus of attention needs to be devoted to the main centres of Jewish student population. It should be a priority to provide actively for a small number of key campuses with a large Jewish public. Whilst not neglecting campuses with small populations, it is in these major campuses that efforts to improve resources and overall programmes will be most effective. Relevant findings will be applied in time to all campuses across the country. The key campuses should be actively promoted amongst sixth-formers considering their university applications.

The Campus Steering Group should consider recommendations on promotion of and resource allocation to main centres of student population by autumn 1999.

6.1.7

In each centre of Jewish student activity there should be a local committee. Representatives of the Jewish society, the Hillel committee and members of the local community should form this body. These committees should plan ahead for future years and ensure that there is co-operation and understanding by all parties concerned and resolve any difficulties. The main aim will be to manage

the resources and support activities in the field of Jewish student provision in that locale.

The Campus Steering Group should encourage the establishment of such committees where they do not already exist.

6.2 Activities

6.2.1

Jewish societies' programmes are unable to attract students in sufficient numbers who are not regular attendees. Unintentionally, they can be alienating and a "turn off" to some students who might otherwise become involved. A substantial number of Jewish students attend one Jewish society event in their first university term but often do not attend again. The programme on offer is insufficient to retain these students. Whilst good marketing is often regarded as the key to attracting Jewish students on the assumption that "they don't know what they are missing," this evidence suggests that they know what is on offer and do not want to participate on those terms.

UJS should establish a list of inhibiting factors to Jewish society participation. This should be cross-referenced with an analysis of membership retention patterns and used in leadership training for autumn 1999.

6.2.2

Jewish societies are currently unable to provide an adequate range of stimulating activities. It is often only at national UJS events that students have the opportunity to encounter a wide variety of educational ideas. Activities need to cater for the many different interests of the student population. The following fields should be fully explored and exploited for their power to involve: social, cultural and entertainment events; charitable work; music, drama and the arts; educational courses and programmes; sports; political campaigns; and religious activities.

The Campus Steering Group should establish a task group, led by students, to consider innovative programming ideas starting in spring 1999.

6.2.3

UJS need to develop and implement a national strategy for Jewish education. UJS should work with JPMP, the UJIA Educational Resource Centre, mirroring the relationship that the UJS Campaign team has with GRET, to design an educational curriculum for the future. It needs to ensure a diverse range of Jewish educational opportunities across subject matter and teaching styles.

UJS and JPMP should assemble a team in spring 1999 to begin developing an educational strategy.

6.2.4

Various campus service providers are successful at involving students in Jewish activity. Amongst others, the L'Chaim Society, Aish HaTorah and Limmud have had some success at attracting student participation. With dramatically differing ideologies and theories of how one best fosters interest, they have inspired involvement. For example, the L'Chaim Society does not believe that it is realistic for an estranged Jewish student to make a leap of faith from alienation to commitment. Thus they have organised high profile activities that allow alienated students to show interest with their non-Jewish friends, in the belief that through fun, exciting, topical programmes they will sow the seeds of Jewish exploration. Aish HaTorah, through the low price Jerusalem Fellowships Israel trips, strives to ignite enough Jewish pride so that participants will resist the attractions of an assimilated lifestyle. Limmud have developed a network system that brings students, together with recent graduates, into the organising vanguard of an educational festival that has Jewish learning at its core. UJS and Jewish societies should capitalise on this experience and expertise and work out mutually beneficial arrangements with a variety of providers to ensure enhanced provision.

By summer 1999, UJS should establish guidelines for Jewish societies who can then liaise with other campus service providers.

6.2.5

The continuing success of individual Jewish societies in providing for Jewish students throughout Great Britain is remarkable considering the meagre direct funds they receive to organise their activities. It is at the individual Jewish society level that we need to stimulate the most significant developments in provision.

Despite the large amount of money invested nationally in Jewish student provision, individual Jewish societies operate on relatively small budgets. This is one of the factors that can curtail a society's ability to put on regular events that stimulate students to attend. There is a need to direct funds to encourage and enable societies to be ever more innovative in their activities. The Campus Steering Group should encourage the establishment of such committees where they do not already exist. The Campus Steering Group, with UJS leadership, should establish clear criteria for applications to the fund and ensure that these are being spent fairly and appropriately.

The Campus Steering Group and UJS should establish a fund for Jewish societies by spring 1999.

6.2.6

With the new flexibility in undergraduate degrees there is more scope for the development of academic Jewish studies. Larger numbers of students studying Jewish subjects might well galvanise heightened interest in Jewish concerns. A plan should be drawn up by a group of academics and the Hillel Foundation to promote undergraduate Jewish studies to sixth-formers in Jewish and non-Jewish secondary schools and amongst participants in gap year programmes in Israel. Jewish students should also be made aware of the courses available at Leo Baeck College and the London School of Jewish Studies (formerly Jews' College). Currently, an unknown number of students on a variety of degree courses write papers and theses on Jewish themes. A group of academics, organised by the Hillel Foundation, should make efforts to publish the best student work to stimulate further interest in academic Judaica.

The Hillel Foundation should organise a small academic team, by summer 1999, to devise and implement ways of promoting academic Jewish studies.

6.2.7

Friday night meals are a key point of contact for students. They are expensive and local Hillel House committees should provide subsidies. A campaign needs to be initiated to ensure provision of Friday night meals for all those that want them. Meals should be social and cultural events. Ideally, Jewish students should have to pay no more than £3.00 for their Friday night meal.

The Hillel Foundation should promote the provision of Friday night meals at affordable prices.

6.2.8

Some students find the communal Friday night meal intimidating. Assistance should be given to key activists to host small Friday night dinners in their own homes. This will allow students to take tentative first steps outside the formal and ritualised Jewish society arena and meet other Jewish peers in a more intimate and welcoming environment.

The Hillel Foundation and UJS should find three Jewish societies of varying sizes and pilot subsidised meals in student homes.

6.2.9

Jewish societies should be aware of some students' unease at entering Hillel Houses. If targeting non-affiliated audiences, they should be encouraged to hold meetings and activities elsewhere.

UJS should support Jewish society leadership to make assessments as to the best venues to attract large participation, with immediate effect.

6.2.10

Specialised Jewish activities need to cater for specific student interests and career aspirations. There are hundreds of Jewish medical, law and business students and UJS should initiate separate interest groups based on these vocations to be run by students themselves. For example, a Jewish Student Medics Association could concentrate on issues linking Judaism with Medical Ethics, etc. These societies might well attract non-Jewish students through the quality of their programme. If this is the case, then these programmes may stand a chance of involving students classified as Outsiders.

UJS should pilot two specialist student interest groups in 1999.

6.2.11

UJS has experienced difficulty in organising activities for Jewish students in specific areas that may prove fruitful in promoting involvement. Jewish students may respond well to volunteer options in Jewish Care, Norwood Ravenswood, World Jewish Relief, and Tzedek amongst others. Additionally there is room to consider vacation internships with Jewish communal agencies in the UK, Israel and the USA. For example the political officer may well benefit from time spent with AIPAC, the American Jewish lobby; and the magazine editor could benefit from shadowing the Jewish Chronicle or the Jerusalem Report.

UJS should create internship options for summer 1999 and volunteer projects by the end of the year.

6.2.12

UJS has encountered difficulties recruiting students to participate in Israel Experience schemes over many years. In the recent past Aish HaTorah has successfully organised programmes for hundreds of students and young adults. They have adopted a policy of offering significant subsidies in order to attract participants. The range and nature of Israel Experience programmes for students is limited at present and is in need of a thorough review.

UJS should revise their Israel Experience programmes in consultation with the UJIA/Jewish Agency Israel Experience Unit and other service providers.

6.3 Student Leadership

6.3.1

The available evidence repeatedly points to the critical significance of peer student leadership. Students are the most effective means by which to involve larger numbers of other students. UJS must remain a peer leadership

organisation. In contrast to the United States of America, Jewish students in the UK have for decades diligently organised their own affairs and imaginatively sought to grapple with the evolving challenges. This Review endorses UJS's independence and seeks to empower the student executive to continue the tradition of being an autonomous body working with the Jewish community.

The Campus Steering Group should ensure that UJS's independence is not compromised.

6.3.2

Peer leadership is more effective with training, guidance and high quality professional support. Many incoming officers have very little training in how to run Jewish activities at university. This leads to a level of disorganisation and a lack of innovation. An advanced scheme of training needs to be introduced to help Jewish societies overcome problems, improve activities, and generate new ideas and to ensure a quality programme. This work should respond to the strategic planning agenda of the Campus Steering Group.

UJS staff should aim to train and empower every Jewish society leader. JPMP should be used to train UJS staff to undertake this task.

6.3.3

UJS and Jewish societies are unable to develop long term strategies due to the short-term nature of student leadership. UJS personnel are only in office for a year and the voluntary Jewish society officers often change even more frequently. This situation is compounded by the lack of historical memory in a Jewish society. Rarely does one team of officers adequately pass on the accumulated knowledge and wisdom as to how things get done, and done well. Thus for student leaders to be fully effective they need to be trained. UJS will be able to provide specialist training weekends with greater ease if Jewish society committees are elected at standardised times of the year.

UJS 1998 Conference should determine the feasibility of standardising Jewish society election times and plan training seminars for new leadership accordingly.

6.3.4

During the last few years UJS has become steadily more professional in its outlook. Whilst this is a welcome step, the UJS sabbatical officers must continually strive to involve more students in planning and executing the projects of the organisation. The publications, conferences, seminars and programmes have many possibilities for students to take responsibility for their organisation. For example, the UJS magazine should be brought to print stage by Jewish student journalists and

graphic designers. Most members of the office team should operate as facilitators and give UJS back to its members. It is they who will bring in others, from their own enthusiasm and energy.

UJS should take urgent steps to involve many more students in organizing its central activities.

6.3.5

Some of the most committed members of the Jewish student population are those who have strong allegiances to various youth movements and participate in their respective national leadership structures. Many have charisma, experience and knowledge. A perennial tension exists over how this human resource can best be utilised on campus. It even manifests itself in some quite practical ways – such as the annual overlap of the UJS and youth movement conferences, reducing the leadership pool from which UJS can draw.

There is a degree of tension between the UJS role as a unified umbrella organisation for Jewish students and the major youth movements with their clear ideological perspectives and motivations.

UJS should liaise with the Zionist Youth Council during spring 1999 and explore together the work that should be jointly undertaken for the benefit of Jewish students.

6.3.6

Many students whilst at school are affiliated to a synagogue. UJS should assume responsibility for ensuring that synagogue lists of those going off to university for the first time are transferred to the UJS database. Similarly, UJS should liaise with the Zionist Youth movements, the Israeli yeshivot and universities to ensure that gap year programme graduates are routed into the mainstream of Jewish society activity. These will form a pool of able people for future leadership positions.

UJS should establish mechanisms to access synagogue lists and Israel gap year graduates for mobilisation efforts for academic year 1999-2000.

6.4 Personnel

6.4.1

The ratio of full-time staff working with Jewish students who are based in national head offices rather than at a local level is too high. Of the forty-six, only seventeen are operating in the field. This imbalance needs to be redressed. Whereas two-thirds of British Jewry lives in the London conurbation, a majority of Jewish students are based outside of the capital. The national British trend for decentralisation should be mirrored with many more

Jewish student providers basing themselves in the key areas of student residence. The deployment of personnel should more accurately reflect the major centres of Jewish student population. A group should identify training needs and programmes to meet them, develop supervision mechanisms and write a professional code of conduct for those working with Jewish students.

UJS and the Hillel Foundation, using JPMP as a facilitator, should convene a grouping including the chaplaincy services and other student providers to plan comprehensively the redistribution, professionalisation and enhancement of personnel resources, for summer 1999.

6.4.2

There is a need for workers in the field who provide support and advice for Jewish societies. These should be based in centres of major Jewish population and support Jewish societies in the region. These fieldworkers should be graduates themselves with a proven track record of leadership, but not necessarily within UJS. They should ensure that there are a diverse number of activities available to students as well as to encourage and inspire innovative ideas amongst students. New regional fieldworkers must be the link to educational resources, materials and speakers. They should act as the advisers, trainers and educational specialists, encouraging a more dynamic approach to student provision.

UJS should conduct an audit of central tasks in order to redistribute some national office functions within current budgets to enable the creation of additional fieldworkers by summer 1999.

6.4.3

These fieldworkers should be managed by UJS. Strong candidates should be headhunted according to a job description and person specification. Successful fieldworkers should have a financial incentive for continuing for another year, or given the opportunity to pursue a part time Masters programme, provided it does not interfere with their commitments as a fieldworker.

UJS should draw up a job description and person specification for the fieldworkers. The Campus Steering Group should start raising funds with a view to increasing the number of fieldworkers in the long term.

6.4.4

A General Manager of UJS needs to be appointed to provide a level of continuity in the ever-changing environment of the student world. The General Manager will be able to advise the elected executive on ongoing projects, funding issues, event organisation and office administration. The University Student Union should be

viewed as the model for this system. The UJS officers must remain sovereign.

UJS should draw up a job description and person specification for a General Manager. The Campus Steering Group should ensure the availability of funds and UJS should recruit a person from the summer, 1999.

6.4.5

There are many students who have been personally motivated and moved by chaplains. Chaplains inspire some students and provide necessary religious, educational and counselling services. The role of chaplains is not fully understood. At present they are providing pastoral, educational and in many cases social care for students. With so many roles, it is very difficult for one person to have the focus and expertise to effectively carry out this complex range of responsibilities. There are no clear guidelines for the management of chaplains and no means of assessing their success. There is also no career structure that offers new opportunities and challenges. The constant financial strain on the chaplaincy services creates uncertainty about the ability to continue from year to year. This makes it difficult to design and implement long-term strategy, even in the largest and most established orthodox chaplaincy service. It also does not help the recruitment of personnel. To ensure that there is sufficient quality control of chaplaincy services, which may in turn aid the raising of funds, we endorse the following recommendations of the National Jewish Chaplaincy Board:

- All chaplains should commence with a probationary year
- A three-year contract, renewable once, should then be given
- Thereafter there should be yearly contracts
- London, Leeds and Manchester chaplains should be regarded as senior positions and Birmingham, Glasgow, Cambridge and Bristol as the entry positions. This will allow individuals to see working in chaplaincy as a long-term option with a career path, with the attendant salary increments and training requirements.

During 1999, the National Jewish Chaplaincy Board and other chaplaincy services of all denominations should establish professional guidelines with job descriptions, initial and in-service professional training, effective evaluation mechanisms and a long-term funding strategy.

6.4.6

We endorse the National Jewish Chaplaincy Board recommendation to begin a process of accreditation of local boards. Each local board should have to gain accreditation from the national board, and if they do not live up to the standards set out in clear guidelines, then

the accreditation will be removed and the National Board empowered to seek a replacement. Local Chaplaincy Boards should meet frequently and student representatives, chosen by the students themselves, should be prominent members.

National Jewish Chaplaincy Board should have a local board accreditation system in place by autumn 1999.

6.4.7

Some students are "put off" by the appearance of some chaplains at events and inadvertently connect this with the totality of organised Jewish student life. National Jewish Chaplaincy Board chaplains have become known as the "UJS chaplains". This creates the image of UJS as orthodox when it is in fact cross-communal. Whether or not the small non-orthodox chaplaincy service expands, as it should do, progressive chaplaincy should share the same status and access within UJS.

UJS should provide greater access for non-orthodox chaplaincy services.

6.4.8

There are many opportunities to utilise additional human resources. Educators working locally can be invited to work with students on specific projects. Communal rabbis can be invited to help with campus activities, particularly in smaller Jewish student populations. Jewish academics are a potential educational resource for Jewish societies. Academics, active in the local community, can also act as a point of contact between students and the community. The expertise of Jewish crisis counselling specialists, such as Miyad, or the welfare workers at Jewish Care and Norwood/Ravenswood can also be accessed alongside the university welfare services.

UJS should maintain an up to date annotated list of experts that can be readily available for local student activity.

6.5 Facilities

6.5.1

Hillel Houses are a central base for students at 22 universities. They offer a venue for Jewish students to meet and operate as the physical base for the Jewish society. They need to provide kosher food, a residential home for those students that wish to live in a strong Jewish environment, make space for the Shabbat and religious needs of Jewish students of all denominations and they are the principal centre of Jewish life on campus.

Hillel Houses are struggling to balance the roles of house of residence and centre of Jewish student life. They

provide a good service as houses of residence, yet they sometimes fail as centres of Jewish student life as the facilities are not conducive to social or educational events. They are perceived as the domain of the religious and/or many students feel uneasy entering other people's homes uninvited. Local Hillel committees need to ensure that houses are meeting students' needs and should undertake feasibility studies in the larger centres, separating the social and cultural 'drop-in' centre from the residency facility. It may, in some cases be appropriate to relocate or redesign premises.

The Hillel Foundation must review all of its facilities to ensure that the needs of as broad a group of Jewish students as possible for both a residence and a student centre are being appropriately met.

6.5.2

The relationship between national Hillel and local Hillel committees appears to be in some cases rather loose, undefined and needs to be clarified. A charter of affiliation needs to be created to ensure that there is sufficient liaison between local committees and the national organisation. The central organisation should maintain close links with all the Hillel committees in order to sustain a national strategy.

The Hillel Foundation should agree a charter of affiliation with its local Houses.

6.5.3

The central London Hillel House at Endsleigh Street provides accommodation for UJS, AJ6 and the London chaplain, the student shaliach, BBYO and the B'nai B'rith (who are joint owners). However, it is expensive to maintain, and relatively few students use it for activities. This has been the case for many years. UJS feel that there is also a pressure to hold events in the building, despite their belief that the facilities are unattractive to students or unsuitable for particular types of event.

Endsleigh Street Hillel House does not fulfil its role as a vibrant student centre, despite continued attempts to make it so. It is vital that activities are run in the most suitable venue.

The Hillel Foundation should seriously consider the sale of the Endsleigh Street premises or a relocation of space within the House to generate income. The income from this sale could then be invested in other areas of Jewish student provision.

6.6 Resources

6.6.1

Both UJS and Jewish societies need to be able to take advantage of the range of information technology now readily available through the internet and e-mail. UJS and the Hillel Foundation should use university computer facilities to draw up a plan for maximising the new technologies for the benefit of individual Jewish students, Jewish societies, Hillel Houses, chaplaincy services and university student unions.

UJS and the Hillel Foundation should, during 1999, design and cost an information technology strategy for linking Jewish students, societies and Hillel Houses.

6.6.2

There is sometimes a lack of communication between local communities and Jewish societies. Local communities need to be utilised by the Jewish society for assistance with events, from good ideas to logistical support. There are individuals in local Jewish communities who can help formulate a long term strategy for student provision and develop ideas on marketing and fundraising. There are many former UJS activists around the country who could assist as mentors to student activists.

The Hillel Foundation and UJS should establish a database and match available communal expertise with student need in time for next year's incoming Jewish society leadership.

6.6.3

The total of £1.95 million is a considerable investment. These monies are not all available to be redistributed in line with the recommendations of this Review. The four sponsoring agencies are committed to maximising the use of their resources in the most effective way possible. The recommendations contained in this Review do not require an extraordinary investment. The extra resource needed is manageable.

All recommendations in Section 6 need to be specifically costed, existing resources and their uses assessed and relocated, and avenues explored for meeting the shortfall. The New Hillel Foundation should proactively market the needs of Jewish students at both a national and a local level on the basis that "someone else's child is in your care, whilst your child is in someone else's care."

The Campus Steering Group during 1999 should compile a three year budgeted programme of Jewish student provision and make arrangements to secure appropriate funding.

6.7**Conclusion**

In this Review we have made thirty nine recommendations for action. We can offer no guarantees that masses of Jewish students will come flocking back to make major Jewish commitments. Yet we have sought to allocate responsibility to appropriate communal agencies in order to ensure that the insights and understandings that we have amassed do not evaporate.

The Campus Steering Group and subsequently the New Hillel Foundation will be the central co-ordinating body. It will not seek to restrict the activities of service providers but it will seek to ensure that the most effective means are employed to implement the established objectives. We urge all bodies providing services to Jewish students on campus wherever possible to associate with the Group to ensure maximum coordination and cooperation.

We are convinced that these ideas for action when grouped together can make a difference in raising the number of Jewish students who will choose to be part of our people and our community. The path described in this document will, together with other innovations in Jewish education for children and adults, enable us to live, inspire and teach about Jewish culture and faith so that it is compelling. We offer these reflections with the conviction that Every Student Matters.

7

Appendices

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Rabbi Shmuley Boteach
(L'Chaim Society)

List of Organisations who provided written submissions to the Review:

Acton Street Hillel
Aish HaTorah
Association of Jewish Sixth Formers
Assembly of Masorti Synagogues
Birmingham Hillel
Birmingham Jewish Society
B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation
Bnei Akiva
The Board of Deputies of British Jews
Brighton and Hove Hillel Foundation
Brighton and Sussex Universities Jewish Society
Bristol Hillel
Cambridge University Jewish Society
Cardiff Jewish Society
Community Security Trust
City University Jewish Society
Group Relations Educational Trust
Habonim Dror
Jewish Care
Jewish Lads and Girls Brigade
Leeds University Jewish Society
Leicester Hillel
Limmud
The London Jewish Chaplaincy Board

Manchester Hillel
 Manchester Jewish Society
 Manchester Metropolitan Jewish Society
 Middlesex University Jewish Society
 National Jewish Chaplaincy Board
 Noam
 Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University Jewish Society
 Reform Synagogues of Great Britain
 Salford Jewish Society
 Sheffield Jewish Representative Council
 South Manchester Synagogue and Torah Fund
 South Western Region Chaplaincy Board
 Surrey University Jewish Society
 Union of Jewish Students
 Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues
 United Jewish Israel Appeal
 University of Central England Jewish Society
 Yorkshire and Humberside Jewish Chaplaincy Board

List of Individuals who provided written submissions to the Review:

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 Golda Smith
 Lisa Breger
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