

Publication date:

31 March 2026

Policies on Antisemitism and Jewish Life at UK Universities

Introduction

Cite this document:

Intra-Communal
Professorial Group. (2026).
Policies against antisemitism
and provision for Jewish
students and staff at UK
universities. London: ICPG.

Author for

correspondence:

Intra-Communal
Professorial Group
icpg@icpg.org.uk

Antisemitism has long been a feature of university life for the UK's approximately 9,000 Jewish students, but this situation has deteriorated since the 7 October 2023 Hamas terror attack on Israel and subsequent Israeli military actions in Gaza. As noted by British charity Community Security Trust (CST), the 2022/23 and 2023/24 academic years saw a total of 325 reported university incidents of antisemitism in the UK, an increase of 117% from the 2020–2022 period [1]. This situation has a profound impact on the everyday experience of Jewish students and staff. Jewish students have reported feeling afraid of confrontations and threats, alone and unprotected by universities, afraid to come on campus, and shunned by university groups [2]. UK universities have a legal duty to prevent antisemitism under the 2010 Equality Act, and Jews are protected as both a religion/belief and ethnicity. This summary of research findings aims to provide an overview of the existing policies at UK universities, and to identify gaps where universities could better support and protect their Jewish students and staff.

Background

The findings included here are summarised from a research report put together by a team based at the Intra-Communal Professorial Group (ICPG). The ICPG is the only Jewish academic sector-wide staff network, consisting of over 110 academics. It was created in March 2024 to address the surge of antisemitism in UK universities.

The research report used data gathered from publicly-available materials on university websites between October 2023–2025.

1 CST. 2024. [Campus Antisemitism in Britain 2022-2024](#).

2 ICPG. 2024. [“I Have Never Felt Less Protected as a Jew”: Antisemitism at UK universities since 7th October 2023](#).

The sample of 50 UK universities was selected based on randomised geographical sampling across 145 universities in England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland [3]. Data were primarily gathered from official university websites, using a combination of Google searches, built-in website search functions, and manual navigation through website menus. The key findings are listed below:

1. *Policies and procedures*: only 12% of universities included a definition of antisemitism in their student and/or staff codes of conduct, resulting in an important lack of accessible guidance.
2. *Reporting and responding*: less than a fifth of universities allowed individuals to report an incident as specifically “antisemitism” so there may be confusion around recording the scale of the problem.
3. *Training and awareness-raising*: universities overwhelmingly do not provide specific training on recognising and addressing antisemitism, demonstrating a lack of proactive awareness-raising.
4. *Support for Jewish students and staff*: provision of kosher food catering, prayer spaces, and specific religious policies, remains limited and inconsistent across universities.
5. *Promoting and protecting academic freedom*: universities do not consistently distinguish between protest and hate speech, meaning a lack of clarity in the difference between antisemitism and activism.

Findings and Supporting Evidence

Policies and procedures: only 12% of universities included a definition of antisemitism in their student and/or staff codes of conduct, resulting in an important lack of accessible guidance.

Our research found that 42% of the sampled universities did not provide any full definition of antisemitism in their online material. Even when a definition was given, antisemitism was not consistently classified, being defined interchangeably as a matter of religion/belief, racism, or both. Twenty-two per cent of universities defined antisemitism only as a faith-based discrimination, thereby excluding Jews who do not practice their religion. Information is not integrated into wider university policies, as only 12% of universities included a full definition of antisemitism in their student and/or staff codes of conduct. There is a broad lack of guidance and when it is present, it is difficult to find, meaning university community members may not understand what antisemitism is and how it manifests.

Reporting and responding: less than a fifth of universities allowed individuals to report an incident as specifically “antisemitism” so there may be confusion around recording the scale of the problem.

On the homepage to report an incident, only 26.1% of universities had separate sections for hate crime and discrimination, not distinguishing between everyday discrimination and

³ This comprised 141 members listed by Universities UK as of June 2024, in addition to four further institutions given in an ICPG-run student survey in the summer of 2024.

more serious incidents. The two universities that specifically mentioned antisemitism on their homepage classed it as a hate incident. Only 15.2% of universities allowed individuals to report an incident specifically as “antisemitism”, resulting in potential confusion for students trying to report an incident and for the subsequent monitoring of antisemitic incidents for the analysis of broader patterns and trends.

Training and awareness-raising: universities overwhelmingly do not provide specific training on recognising and addressing antisemitism, demonstrating a lack of proactive awareness-raising.

Twenty per cent of universities stated that they have offered or will offer specific training addressing antisemitism. But important gaps remain. Only three of these universities (6%) also offered this training to students as well as staff, despite findings that Jewish students fear antisemitism more from students than staff (74% vs 31–33%). None of the universities clearly indicated the frequency and recurrence of the training sessions or provided access to the training material, limiting its broader accessibility.

Support for Jewish students and staff: provision of kosher food catering, prayer spaces, and specific religious policies, remains limited and inconsistent across universities.

Universities generally provided broad faith-based support. For instance, 90% of sampled universities provided access to a multi-faith prayer space and 74% had religious observance policies. There were examples of Judaism-specific support: 78% of universities reported having a Jewish chaplain and 68% had a JSoc with a clear online presence. However, there were limitations to providing a welcoming environment for Jews on campus. Twenty-four per cent of universities indicated that they provided kosher food on campus, only 40.5% of the universities with religious observance policies provided guidance specific to Judaism, and only one university provided a Jewish-specific prayer space.

Promoting and protecting academic freedom: universities do not consistently distinguish between protest and hate speech, meaning a lack of clarity in the difference between antisemitism and activism.

Eighty-four per cent of sampled universities mentioned academic freedom in a freedom of speech (FoS) policy or another one. Of those with an FoS policy, only 10% mentioned antisemitism. Despite the prominence of the Israel and Palestine conflict in the media and the tendency to conflate Jews with Israel, only 38% of sampled universities provided guidance for students and staff around protest, so the line between antisemitism and protest can easily blur and make Jewish students and staff feel unsafe.

Conclusion

The above findings indicate that, despite existing institutional measures to address antisemitism and provide a welcoming environment for Jews on campus, important gaps remain in the ability of universities to: 1) specifically define and address antisemitism, rather than broader discrimination; 2) make specific provisions for Jews, rather than broader faith communities; and 3) proactively address developing risks to Jewish communities on campus.

Further Information

For more information about this research, tools and guidance on addressing antisemitism in universities, see ICPG's full list of publications at: <https://www.icpg.org.uk/publications>