



Senate

<b>Paper Title</b>	Adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Association Definition of Antisemitism
<b>Outcome requested</b>	The Senate is asked to <b>approve</b> the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Association (IHRA) Definition of Antisemitism with the additional caveats recommended by the Home Affairs Select Committee in 2016 and stated in the attached Statement at Appendix A.
<b>Points for Senate members to note and further information</b>	<p>The Senate is asked to note the following:</p> <p><b>The Race Equality Action Group</b></p> <p>1. The University recently established a Race Equality Action Group which will oversee the implementation of a wide-ranging Strategy and underpinning Action Plan to progress the University’s race equality agenda. REAG’s composition includes staff from across all levels of the University and has strong representation from the Students Union to inform and shape our priorities.</p> <p>REAG has identified five specific areas of activity to target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding and celebrating race and ethnicity</li> <li>• Addressing the ethnicity pay gap and supporting career progression for people from ethnic minority backgrounds</li> <li>• <b>Investigating and addressing issues around racial bullying and harassment</b></li> <li>• Reducing the student attainment gap</li> <li>• Developing inclusive curricula</li> </ul> <p>2. We are working directly with relevant communities and student societies as an early action to counter racial harassment, discrimination and hate crime, which REAG regard as a priority area of work. We are currently working with the Jewish Society and Islamic Society to adopt definitions of Antisemitism and Islamophobia. We hope that an early adoption of such statements will encourage other students’ societies to also work with REAG to publish similar statements. I am pleased to report that the Definition of Antisemitism is ready for consideration by Senate and we plan to bring forward the statement on Islamophobia to the next meeting of Senate. REAG has agreed that it is important to bring forward statements as they are ready, rather than wait until we have a suite of statements. This is because, we believe that it important for the University to publish statements that are a visible demonstration of our stand against all forms of racial harassment, discrimination and hate crime to provide</p>

assurance to our diverse communities.

3. In discussions with the SU VP Communities, who is a member of REAG, I understand that the Students Union are also considering the adoption of these statements and that this is being progressed through its own governance and decision-making structures. The importance of promoting race equality is very much a shared agenda.

#### **Freedom of Speech Policy**

4. The University is progressing this work with full reference to its Freedom of Speech Policy. Freedom of speech within the law for all staff, students and visiting speakers is guaranteed by Queen Mary's Freedom of Speech Policy which was most recently reviewed and approved by Senate in 2019.  
<http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/media/arcs/policyzone/Freedom-of-Speech-June-2019.pdf> . Thus, freedom of speech will not be affected by adoption of the statement and definition. The Freedom of Speech Policy explicitly states that it is set within the context of the University's values and our commitment to promoting a strong collegial community, as well as diversity and inclusiveness.

#### **Proposal to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Association (IHRA) Definition of Antisemitism**

5. There has been a concerning rise of antisemitism in society and on campuses in the UK.

6. According to Community Security Trust, the charity that monitors antisemitism in the UK, 2019 witnessed over 1,800 reported incidents, the highest level ever recorded in the UK. This figure continued to demonstrate a worrying trend making this the fourth year in a row that figures have hit record levels.

7. Incidents of antisemitism on campus are also on the rise, with a 60% increase in incidents recorded across all Universities in 2019.

8. In terms of societal attitudes and beliefs, a recent poll conducted by the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust found that 5% of UK adults do not believe that the Holocaust took place and further, that one in twelve believe that its scale has been exaggerated.

9. This unprecedented rise in antisemitism in the UK has led many within the Jewish community feeling anxious, especially students who are often away from home and their community for the first time in their lives.

10. It is on this basis that the University has been approached by the Jewish Society to ask if Queen Mary will consider adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Association (IHRA) Definition of Antisemitism.

	<p>11. The adoption of the Statement would be consistent with the University's values. It would make explicit that antisemitism has no place in our University and also provide a clear working definition that can be applied when dealing with complaints under the University's policies.</p> <p>12. It is accepted that a statement or definition will not resolve the challenges presented by racism of any form, however, it is one of many ways in which to promote greater understanding, awareness and tolerance across our university community through a deeper knowledge of how racism can manifest itself and therefore be addressed.</p>
<b>Questions for Senate to consider</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Senate is asked to <b>consider</b> and <b>comment</b> on the proposal to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Association Definition of Antisemitism with the additional caveats recommended by the Home Affairs Select Committee in 2016 as stated the attached Statement.</li> <li>2. The Senate is asked to <b>approve</b> the adoption of the IHRA Definition attached at Appendix A, subject to any recommendations as advised by Senate.</li> </ol>
<b>Regulatory/statutory reference points</b>	The Equality Act 2010
<b>Strategy and risk</b>	The central tenet of the Queen Mary Strategy 2030 is to become the most inclusive research-intensive university in the world.
<b>Reporting/consideration route for the paper</b>	Senate to approve.
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<b>Sponsor</b>	Sheila Gupta, Vice-Principal, People, Culture and Inclusion

### **International Holocaust Remembrance Association Definition of Antisemitism**

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.

To guide IHRA in its work, the following examples may serve as illustrations:

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.

- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

**Antisemitic acts are criminal** when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries).

**Criminal acts are antisemitic** when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property – such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries – are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.

**Antisemitic discrimination** is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.

Queen Mary wish to adopt this statement with the additional statements recommended by the Home Affairs Select Committee in 2016:

- It is not antisemitic to criticise the government of Israel, without additional evidence to suggest antisemitic intent.
- It is not antisemitic to hold the Israeli government to the same standards as other liberal democracies, or to take a particular interest in the Israeli government's policies or actions, without additional evidence to suggest antisemitic intent.