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The antisemitism crisis faced by Jewish academics in the UK



November 2026



About ICPG

The Intra-Communal Professorial Group (ICPG) was created in 2024 as a charitable organisation dedicated to combating antisemitism in higher education. It brings together 140 academics from 45 UK universities, spanning disciplines from STEM to the Humanities. Its main activities are to provide a network for Jewish academics, conduct and sponsor research, and offer recommendations to the UK higher education sector.



Professor Brad Blitz, President of the ICPG

Foreword

We must defend our staff and universities from the scourge of antisemitism

Universities occupy an influential space in public life and in the formation of professional and social attitudes. In the past few years, they have also attracted attention as sites of protest, some of which have been of an antisemitic nature. This report examines the ways in which Jewish academics have been exposed to antisemitism in UK universities since 7 October 2023, and how they have responded.

While antisemitic incidents in other public bodies have received increasing attention through crime statistics and reports concerning organisations such as the NHS and BBC, the extent and nature of antisemitism within universities has received comparatively little systematic consideration. Students have rightly attracted attention, both as victims of hate and associated prejudice and, in some cases, as participants in contentious campus activity (Freedman and Vaughan, 2024; Union of Jewish Students, 2026). Beyond the images of encampments and protests, however, the place and role of academics have been overlooked. It is this gap that the present report seeks to address.

This report builds on the evidence presented by the Intra-Communal Professorial Group (ICPG) to Parliament on 30 June 2026 (ICPG, 2026). That briefing, Antisemitism on UK University Campuses documented contemporary forms of antisemitism affecting Jewish students and staff including: (1) exclusion and boycott of Jewish and Israeli scholars; (2) doxxing, death threats and threats of physical violence; (3) attacks on academic freedom, including cancellation, suppression, no-platforming and deplatforming; (4) politicisation of teaching and the classroom; (5) extremism, blood libels and Holocaust denial, distortion and inversion; and (6) institutional and governance failure. The present report extends this work by providing systematic survey evidence on the experiences of Jewish academics themselves.

Between July and October 2026, the ICPG surveyed more than 100 Jewish academics drawn from its network. The aim was to understand the scale and nature of antisemitism they had faced in the workplace since 7 October 2023, and their views of how their universities and unions had responded. Questions focused on eight areas: (1) respondent profile; (2) campus climate; (3) experiences of antisemitism; (4) sense of safety; (5) academic freedom; (6) wellbeing and retention; (7) career and professional standing; and (8) institutional and union responses. This survey was supplemented with testimonies that explored in greater depth how antisemitism negatively affected ICPG members' participation in academic life, the contexts in which it manifested in academic settings, and its relationship to institutional culture and university governance.

This document should also be read alongside the Union of Jewish Students' report Time for Change, which highlights students' experiences (Union of Jewish Students, 2026). Here, we supplement that student perspective with the experiences of academic staff to build a fuller picture of antisemitism on UK university campuses.

The purpose of this report is not simply to catalogue incidents. It is to examine how antisemitism affects the working lives of Jewish academics and what these experiences reveal about their sense of safety, academic freedom, professional standing, wellbeing and retention, and the responsibilities of universities and trade unions. In doing so, this report provides a new evidence base for understanding the experiences of Jewish academics and our place within UK higher education – a place we will defend against the scourge of antisemitism, as educators, knowledge-producers and committed members of the UK academic community.

Brad Blitz is Professor of International Politics and Policy at University College London and President of the ICPG.

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Executive Summary

This report draws on two sources. The first is a survey of members of the Intra-Communal Professorial Group (ICPG), distributed via email and WhatsApp to 140 members and conducted between July and October 2026. In total, 106 members responded, 68% of whom held senior roles (38% professors or chairs and 30% senior lecturers or associate professors). Respondents included Jewish academic teaching staff, researchers, administrators and managers. The survey design was independently reviewed by a social statistician with expertise in questionnaire design.

The second source is a set of 10 testimonies collected by the ICPG from Jewish academics, which explore, in their own words, the impact of antisemitism on their careers and personal wellbeing.

Participants in both the survey and the testimonies were self-selected, and survey respondents came from a single organisation and therefore the findings cannot be generalised to Jewish staff across UK higher education. They offer insight into the experiences and concerns of those who took part.

This report was peer-reviewed by three social scientists who are not part of the ICPG network and was presented to an independent working group for comment.

Key findings:

1. Antisemitism has become entrenched in UK academia.

- Almost seven in ten (69%) Jewish academics said they had experienced antisemitism at work.
- Some 42% reported they experienced antisemitism from their colleagues.
- More than three quarters (76%) of Jewish academics say antisemitism at universities has increased since 7 October 2023.
- Three in five academics (60%) have seen antisemitic posters, banners, badges, stickers or graffiti on campus.

2. Antisemitism is driving academics out of their profession.

- Nearly half (45%) of Jewish staff said they are considering leaving their current post, or UK academia altogether, because of antisemitism.
- More than half (59%) say antisemitism has had a considerable or severe impact on their personal wellbeing.
- Almost half (49%) believe that reporting antisemitism will have professional repercussions.

3. Jewish academics are being silenced and made to feel unsafe.

- More than two thirds (68%) have avoided discussing certain topics with colleagues for fear of repercussions.
- More than a third (37%) feel unable to address certain topics freely in their teaching for fear of being targeted.
- Almost a fifth (19%) said they have been excluded from professional networks and collaborations as a result of antisemitism.

4. Universities and trade unions are failing Jewish staff.

- Almost two thirds (64%) believed universities do not take complaints about antisemitism seriously. More than a third (39%) say antisemitism has been institutionally sanctioned or tolerated by management.
- More than four in five (83%) say the University and College Union (UCU), the sector's largest trade union, does not take antisemitism seriously.
- More than half (53%) had either quit their union or reduced participation because of antisemitism.

Summary of Recommendations

1. Government to commission an independent review of antisemitism in higher education by 31 March 2027, complementing Sir David Bell's review of schools and colleges, with Jewish staff and students embedded in its terms of reference and report within 12 months.
2. Universities that have not yet done so to adopt the IHRA working definition of antisemitism in full by 31 July 2027, consistent with the Government's acceptance of Sir David Bell's recommendation for schools and colleges and with the OfS's own adoption of the definition, and all universities to publish how they apply it in complaints and disciplinary processes, recognising that it does not alter the legal definition of harassment, by the start of the 2027/28 academic year.
3. The OfS to ensure by September 2027 that the training already required under condition E6 covers, where relevant, contemporary antisemitism, with universities reporting annually the proportion of relevant staff trained.
4. Universities to publish by 31 July 2027 how they are meeting their duty under the Employment Rights Act 2025 to prevent harassment of staff by third parties, with the EHRC issuing sector-specific guidance by 30 October 2027.
5. The OfS to build on its existing advice with dedicated guidance on managing protests before its new free speech conditions take effect in April 2027, protecting teaching, research and safe access to campus.
6. Universities to address antisemitism explicitly in their Prevent risk assessments (Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, s. 26), including in decisions on external speakers, and events, to act on Prevent concerns raised by staff, with the OfS reporting on this in its annual Prevent monitoring from 2028.
7. Universities to provide confidential reporting routes, protection from retaliation and practical support for staff targeted by antisemitism by the start of the 2027/28 academic year.
8. UKRI and other funders to clarify by 31 May 2027 that excluding scholars from grants because they are Jewish or Israeli is discrimination, and to report annually on cases raised.
9. OfS to use its existing powers to investigate proactively, use its full range of sanctions and publish annual data on antisemitism-related investigations from 2027; the Government to review by 30 November 2027 whether the maximum fine is an adequate deterrent.
10. Universities to resolve antisemitism complaints within 90 calendar days and publish anonymised data on disciplinary outcomes annually from 2027/28.

11. Government to formalise its requirement for universities to publish data on antisemitism, covering staff as well as students, with the first data published by 31 December 2028.
12. Universities to require those responsible for EDI, complaints and discipline to declare relevant interests by 31 July 2027, with governing bodies managing conflicts.
13. OfS, and Charity Commission, to publish guidance by 31 July 2027 on how charity law applies to universities' institutional statements and political activity, with clear routes for raising concerns. Universities to publish their own policies on institutional statements by the start of 2027/28.
14. The EHRC to consider investigating whether UCU has met its obligations to Jewish members under the Equality Act 2010, and to announce its decision by 31 May 2027.

Introduction

Since October 2023, the United Kingdom has experienced unprecedented levels of antisemitism. The Community Security Trust (CST), which records antisemitic incidents across the UK, logged a total of 11,554 incidents in 2023, 2024 and 2025. Its statistics reveal the three highest annual totals since its records began in 1984 (Community Security Trust, 2026a). Police reporting in England and Wales confirms this disturbing trend: in 2025/26 police recorded 3,162 religious hate crimes against Jewish people, 117 for every 10,000 Jewish people and the highest rate of any faith group (Home Office, 2026).

Universities have seen a particularly sharp increase in antisemitic activity: the CST recorded 272 university-related incidents in the 2023/24 academic year alone, against 53 the year before (Community Security Trust, 2026b). The CST campus report, published on 30 September 2026, records a further 178 university-related incidents across 2024/25 and 2025/26; the 95 incidents in 2025/26 were 79% above the level before the Israel–Hamas war (Community Security Trust, 2026b). What is most concerning about this data is the inclusion of university staff as perpetrators of antisemitism: staff were responsible for 16 of the 178 incidents (9%), up from 3% in 2020–22 and 7% in 2022–24 (Community Security Trust, 2026b).

To date, most reporting on campus antisemitism has focused on students' experiences (Freedman and Vaughan, 2024; Union of Jewish Students, 2026). There is a growing body of evidence that Jewish students have retreated from university life, or into exclusively Jewish spaces: one survey found that, since 7 October 2023, nearly two-thirds of Jewish students had avoided certain buildings or campus areas, and roughly a third had avoided certain classes, lecturers or other staff (Freedman and Vaughan, 2024). The recent Union of Jewish Students report, Time for Change, documents the appalling abuse faced by Jewish students, and includes the striking finding that one in five students polled by JL Partners across 170 UK institutions reported they would be reluctant, or unwilling, to house share with a Jewish student (Union of Jewish Students, 2026). Yet what this and other reports largely omit is equally significant: the experiences of academic, administrative and professional staff.



The daily programme on the first day of the Oxford Action for Palestine encampment, 6 May 2024. Photo: Kiri of Karitane (2024a), CC0, via Wikimedia Commons.

This is a serious oversight. Staff share in the governance of universities. They are responsible for meeting students' needs, and hold pastoral, disciplinary and governance responsibilities at all levels. Academics also occupy influential positions across professional and public life. They serve on professional and regulatory bodies, advise the Government,

contribute to public inquiries and expert panels, and lead learned societies and subject associations. They also educate those entering the professions, including teachers, doctors, lawyers, social workers and civil servants, among others. The ideas and norms that take hold among university staff, therefore shape how antisemitism is understood and addressed in practice among professionals across multiple disciplines, public policy and civil society more broadly. The question of staff is, accordingly, one of national, not merely institutional, importance.

Staff may also allow their activism to shape their teaching at the expense of impartiality (Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, 2025). More worrying is the climate of intimidation created by activists. Studies in the USA have found that Jewish staff have been targeted by boycott, smear, and doxxing campaigns from fellow academics, administrators, and college staff since October 2023 (Anti-Defamation League and Academic Engagement Network, 2025a, 2025b). As we record below, these incidents are not limited to the USA, and UK-based academics have faced similar mistreatment. Here, too, we find many academics have issued public statements and are on record participating in organised campaigns, including some that commit signatories to refuse formal or informal engagement with Israeli universities, and that seek institution-wide mobilisation (BDS at UCL, 2024). The role played by staff may legitimise attitudes on campus which leak into the student cohort and the wider academic community. This is the context in which antisemitism has been normalised and excused.

Beyond their role as educators and administrators, university staff sit on governing bodies that determine policy, interpret codes of conduct, and must weigh equality obligations against academic freedom and freedom of speech duties. Whether an institution's stated commitments on antisemitism are realised in practice therefore, depends substantially on these individuals, including their understanding, their political attitudes, and their willingness to act against antisemitism.

In the absence of evidence about staff, universities, regulators and policymakers have been unable to get to grips with the problem and determine where institutional responses are inadequate. This gap has become increasingly evident in light of the recently published Independent review into antisemitism in schools and colleges in England by Sir David Bell, which revealed that many schools and educators failed to properly identify and name antisemitism as a particular and unique kind of hate (Department for Education, 2026a).

The ICPG has been working to address this gap. In June 2026, the ICPG submitted a briefing to Parliament on antisemitism on UK campuses (ICPG, 2026), which identified:

1. exclusion and boycott of Jewish and Israeli scholars;
2. doxxing, death threats and threats of physical violence;
3. attacks on academic freedom, including cancellation, suppression, no-platforming and deplatforming;
4. politicisation of teaching and the classroom;
5. extremism, blood libels and Holocaust denial, distortion and inversion; and
6. institutional and governance failure.

An extract on the typologies of antisemitism identified is included in Annex 2.

This report extends that evidence base and presents the findings of a rapid research project drawing on a survey of ICPG's members and further testimonies. In so doing, it seeks to give voice to Jewish staff and to provide the evidence that universities, regulators and policymakers have so far lacked.

Chapter 1: Antisemitism has become part of academic working life

Three years on from the 7 October attacks on Israel, Jewish staff at universities report a sustained and escalating pattern of antisemitic conduct. While contemporary campus antisemitism need not take the form of explicit statements of hatred or physical threats towards Jewish people, the impact has been no less profound.

This report demonstrates that everyday antisemitism operates through political targeting, intimidation in teaching spaces, and institutional tolerance of extremist discourse. Jewish staff and students have been targeted not only for being Jewish, but for what they are presumed to represent politically.

While antisemitism in universities is not a new problem, this research makes it clear that since October 2023 it has reached levels not previously recorded in the CST data (Community Security Trust 2026a, 2026b). **An overwhelming 76% of respondents say antisemitism has increased since October 2023, including 50% who say it has spiked "significantly".**

- Almost seven in ten (69%) said that they had experienced antisemitism.
- Some 42% reported they experienced antisemitism from their colleagues while 28% were targeted by students.
- Some 71% described the antisemitism they experienced as indirect or ambient – a general hostile climate, while 41% said they felt unsafe on campus because of their Jewish identity.



"I was labelled a killer of brown children."

"A colleague went on a tirade to me about how we all know who really controls these companies and who controls these wars. In the context of the conversation it was obvious he was referring to the Jews."

"An Israeli student who was thrown out of his accommodation by other students on the grounds he had served in the IDF. A hostile social media campaign against the same person."



Post on X by Areeb Ullah reporting a protest by UCL staff calling on UCL to divest from Israeli universities and companies, 15 May 2024. Placards read "UCL staff stand with Palestine – cut the ties" and "Condemn scholasticide". Source: Ullah (2024).

- The same proportion (41%) had altered their route to work or avoided parts of campus for reasons of personal safety. Some 9% had been the subject of physical intimidation.
- Almost half (46%) believed that external groups were radicalising students.

Since October 2023, Jewish academics have regularly been subjected to unsolicited and aggressive challenges about their political views, including on Zionism, regardless of the subject they are teaching (ICPG, 2026).

Some academics have described incidents in which students wearing political symbols including keffiyehs, t-shirts, badges or stickers, have appeared to position themselves visibly in lectures, causing Jewish teaching staff to feel intimidated.

Three in five (60%) respondents to our survey reported seeing antisemitic posters, badges, stickers or graffiti, while a similar number (58%) saw encampments or protests using antisemitic language or imagery. Some 48% said antisemitic speakers had visited their university.

Asked if antisemitism had affected the environment in which they teach, 37% said they felt unable to address certain topics freely in their teaching for fear of being targeted.

"Direct threats to behead a professor because of prior service in the IDF and a campaign calling for the dismissal of another colleague on the same grounds."

"A PhD student I mentor said she no longer wished to be mentored by me because I held different views about October 7th (she did not know my views, only that I am Jewish). She said that she expected everyone to overtly and publicly denounce Israel, and that if I was silent, she could not interact with me."

Case study: Boycotts of Israeli Academics and Institutions

The Oxford Action for Palestine (OA4P) encampment – supported by over 500 staff and 2,000 students – demanded that the university terminate all institutional connections with Israeli universities, ending exchange programmes, joint projects, and conferences. By June 2024, 23 college Junior Common Rooms (JCRs) and Middle Common Rooms (MCRs) had passed motions in support, including Balliol, St Anne's, Corpus Christi, Jesus, Somerville, University College, and Wadham. More than 170 faculty and staff signed a separate open letter endorsing the boycott demands (ICPG, 2026). These demands – that Israeli academics be excluded from exchange and research partnerships purely on the basis of national affiliation – were described in the student open letter as "widespread institutional discrimination against Israeli academics" (Oxford since 7/10 open letter 2024).

While Oxford's administration did not formally adopt a boycott, sustained pressure created an atmosphere that contributed significantly to the hostile environment reported by Israeli scholars.



The list of demands at the Oxford Action for Palestine encampment outside the Oxford University Museum of Natural History, 13 May 2024, including a call to "boycott Israeli genocide, apartheid and occupation". Photo: Kiri of Karitane (2024b), CC0, via Wikimedia Commons.

Chapter 2: UK campuses risk becoming a no-go zone for Jewish scholars

The hostile environment on UK campuses against Jewish staff has reached such crisis levels that almost half of the Jewish academics who participated in the survey (45%) said that antisemitism had led to them considering quitting their post or leaving UK academia altogether.

This startling figure comes against a backdrop of discriminatory gatekeeping, including:

- Explicit calls to boycott Israeli and Jewish academics from conferences, journals, editorial boards, and joint funding applications.
- 'No Zionists on campus': Public declarations used to signal the exclusion of Jewish and pro-Israel colleagues from academic spaces and events.
- Shadow boycotts: Israeli and Jewish scholars quietly removed from conference programmes or grant applications, frequently without notification and without their knowledge.
- Coercive participation: Staff actively pressured to sign public pledges or boycott letters, creating a hostile environment in which refusing to exclude Jewish or Israeli colleagues carries professional risk.
- Institutional divestment and pressure campaigns: Calls to sever ties with companies, organisations, or universities characterised as 'Zionist', used to exclude Jewish-affiliated institutions from academic collaboration.



"My lecture was invaded and I was threatened. The heads of the student union and UCU demand I be removed to protect student mental health."

"A colleague in my university who is Israeli was ghosted by their entire department after October 7th. This colleague is extremely left-wing so there was no reason other than their identity. A colleague called another university and pressured them to cancel a talk my colleague was planning to give."

"My line manager tried to have my position withdrawn. It was without a doubt due to its direct link to Zionism and Zionists. Thankfully the attempt was thwarted. But only after legal action was in place."

"A colleague said 'It's a shame the Nazis didn't finish the job'."

Respondents to the survey reported being excluded from conferences, journals, grant panels, and collaborative projects. Nearly one in five (19%) of respondents believed they had been excluded from professional networks and collaborations, and the same proportion from social gatherings, while 42% had self-censored their academic or public commentary to avoid being targeted. Around one in ten (9%) believed they had been passed over for promotion. One in ten (10%) reported either being excluded from academic conferences or feeling unable to attend.

At one university in the east of England, a staff member was the subject of anonymous complaints that made use of photos taken from a private social media account to launch a smear campaign based on false evidence. The staff member was subjected to a campaign of doxxing and their family subject to intimidation, all using false information. Police claim they were unable to trace the sender, and the matter remains unresolved (ICPG, 2026)

At Coventry University, a Jewish assistant professor with dual British and Israeli citizenship asked to speak publicly as an expert on the Israel–Hamas war but was told they were not senior enough, although colleagues on the same grade with pro-Palestinian views were permitted to do so. The staff member also reported that a student who had made threats against MPs threatened them, and that the university did not act on a Prevent referral. Their contract was not renewed (ICPG, 2026).

More than half of the participants (59%) report a severe or considerable impact on wellbeing, while just 5% said it had no impact. Almost a third (31%) reported suffering fear or anxiety; 27% were unable to focus on work and more than half (56%) said they had lost their sense of professional identity or belonging. One in four (25%) reported losing sleep as a result of antisemitism. More than a third (35%) felt their dignity had been undermined.

Almost a third (32%) said they felt it necessary to avoid social gatherings with colleagues. More than two thirds (68%) said they avoided certain topics of conversation for fear of repercussion.

Case Study:
Professor Michael Ben-Gad
City St George's, University of London

Professor Michael Ben-Gad, a British-Israeli economist, has been the target of a sustained campaign organised by City Action for Palestine (CAP). The campaign began on 10 October 2025 – the day the Gaza ceasefire took effect – with Instagram posts denouncing him as a "terrorist" and "war criminal" because he had studied and worked at Israeli universities and had completed compulsory national service in the IDF from 1982-1985. Professor Ben-Gad is the son of Holocaust survivors from Vilnius and Warsaw.

The initial CAP posts demanded the termination of what they called "the Ex-IOF terrorist's contract", and public apology from the university.

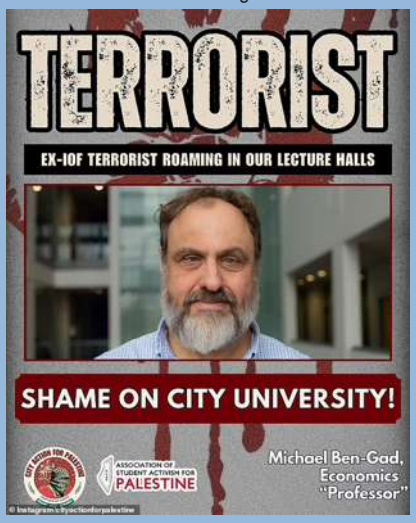
The campaign material used as its background motif the bloody red hand associated with the 2000 Ramallah lynching, in which two captured IDF reservists were murdered.

Later that month, masked protesters entered one of Professor Ben-Gad's economics lectures, interrupted the class, and shouted that he had "blood on his hands." Both Professor Ben-Gad and a security guard present confirmed that one protester threatened to have the professor's "head chopped off". Police were called to campus. The university condemned the disruption and affirmed its support for Professor Ben-Gad while increasing security around his teaching. More than 1,600 academics, writers, and public figures subsequently signed an open letter defending his academic freedom, arguing that attempts to remove him because of his Israeli nationality and military service constituted intimidation and set a dangerous precedent.

Subsequent campaign posters featured digitally altered images of Professor Ben-Gad presented in Israeli military uniform, implying he was an active combatant. At a University Senate meeting – where he serves as an elected member – he faced criticism from the heads of both the Students' Union and the UCU branch, who did not criticise him for the campaign against him, but criticised him for defending himself publicly rather than appeasing the demonstrators with an apology. On Friday 6 November 2026, City Action for Palestine held another demonstration in the main building of City St George's, University of London. Protesters



Professor Michael Ben-Gad confronted by a protester during his economics lecture at City St George's, University of London, October 2025. Still from video footage.



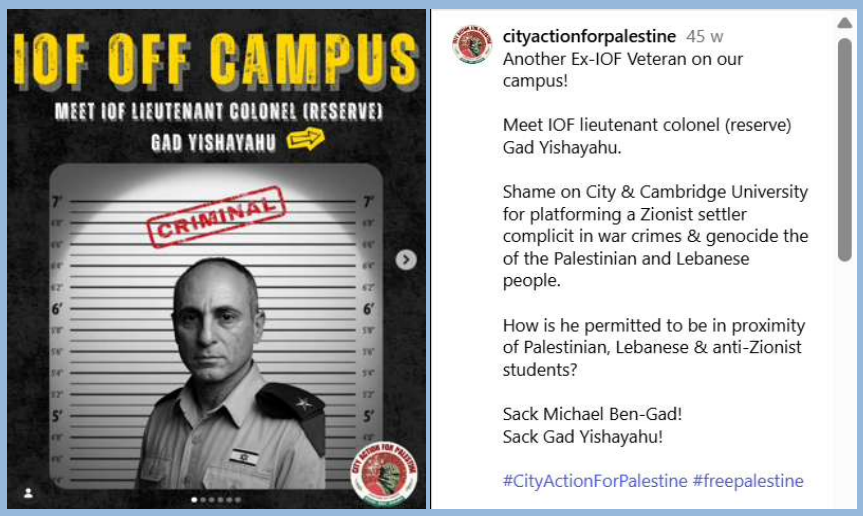
Campaign poster by City Action for Palestine and the Association of Student Activism for Palestine targeting Professor Michael Ben-Gad, October 2025. Source: City Action for Palestine (2025a).

demanded that Professor Michael Ben-Gad be sacked and ‘sent to the Hague’ for his service in what they term the ‘Israel Occupation Forces.’ Other academics were also singled out for either expressing support for Ben-Gad or criticism of Hamas and Hezbollah. Colleagues believe one was singled out because of their Jewish-sounding surname.

Case study: Dr Gad Yishayahu

Dr Gad Yishayahu, a visiting lecturer in International Relations at City St George’s, became the subject of a campaign in late 2025. Student activists associated with City Action for Palestine objected to his research on Israeli security and foreign policy and to his links with Israeli academic and policy institutions, as well as his work liaising between the British and Israeli governments.

Campaign material circulated online and on campus called for the university to sever ties with him. Posters and social media posts portrayed him as complicit in Israeli government actions and as a “criminal”.



Instagram post by City Action for Palestine labelling Dr Gad Yishayahu a “criminal” and calling for his dismissal, alongside that of Professor Michael Ben-Gad, 16 December 2025. Source: City Action for Palestine (2025b).

Unlike the Ben-Gad case, Dr Yishayahu’s lectures were not physically disrupted – likely because he was required to deliver his classes with two security guards stationed outside his lecture hall for the entire term, and students were required to show identification before entering.

Chapter 3: Universities are failing to act

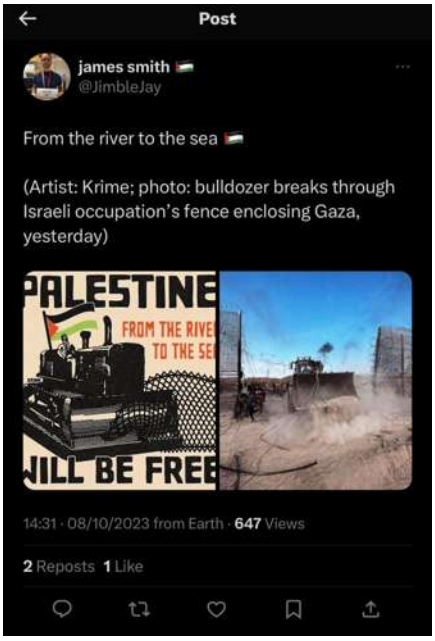
Jewish staff complain that the normalisation of antisemitism has been underpinned by a failure on the part of universities to take meaningful action to counter its spread. This concern has been raised since the first anniversary of 7 October (Freedman and Lanir Zafir, 2024).

Jewish staff report that an activist 'tail' is 'wagging the dog', and that universities are taking their lead from activists, rather than their own rules and policies.

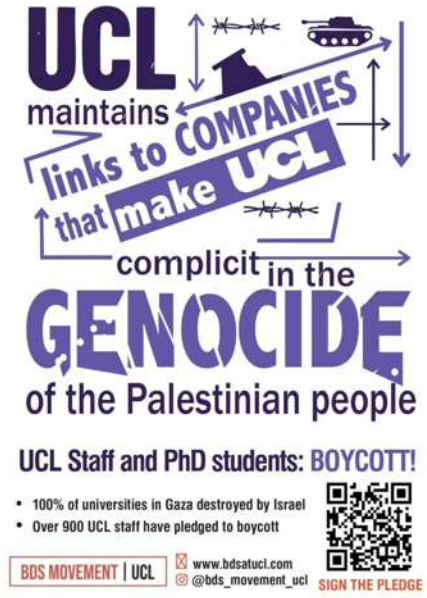
Our survey revealed concerns over the absence of effective, safe mechanisms for Jewish staff and students to report antisemitic conduct without fear of professional or academic retaliation.

- Almost two thirds (64%) of respondents felt that complaints regarding antisemitism weren't being taken seriously by universities.
- A similar number (61%) believed Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) staff didn't treat antisemitism equally with other discrimination compared to just 13% who felt they did treat it with the same seriousness.
- Almost half (49%) believed they would face professional repercussions if they did report antisemitism, compared with 21% who did not.
- Half (50%) felt isolated or professionally unsupported.
- More than a third (39%) say antisemitism has been institutionally sanctioned or tolerated by management.

The University of Manchester illustrates how complaints procedures can fail those who rely upon them. In February 2025, a member of staff complained following the occupation of a university building, which five Students' Union groups had promoted. A complaint shared with the ICPG revealed that the organisers were never disciplined. Instead, the complainant was required to name the individual(s) responsible for the incident (see ICPG, 2026).

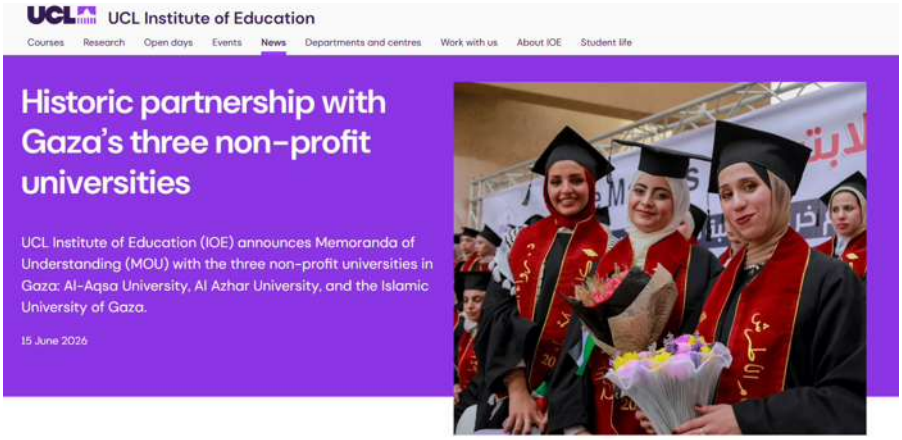


Post on X by Dr James Smith, a lecturer at the UCL Institute of Epidemiology and Health Care, 8 October 2023, the day after the Hamas attacks. The post reads "From the river to the sea", alongside an image of a bulldozer breaking through the Gaza border fence on 7 October. Source: Smith (2023).



Campaign poster by BDS at UCL urging UCL staff and PhD students to boycott, and stating that over 900 UCL staff have pledged to do so. Source: BDS at UCL (2026).

At the University of Edinburgh, Jewish staff first raised concerns in November 2025 about masked protests in which students were prevented from leaving university buildings. The university's EDI Director told two Jewish staff members and two Jewish student leaders that the incident about which concerns were raised did "not amount to hate speech or to discrimination" and that no action would be taken. At a March 2026 staff meeting, a statement describing criticism of Palestinian "freedom struggles" as part of a project to "exterminate the Arab people" was applauded, and no action followed. A banned student group later booked university rooms for chanting lessons and banner-making workshops timed for the anniversary of 7 October in 2026 (see ICPG, 2026).



UCL Institute of Education announcement of Memoranda of Understanding with Al-Aqsa University, Al Azhar University and the Islamic University of Gaza, 15 June 2026. Source: UCL Institute of Education (2026).

University leaders have a duty to set the tone in tackling bigotry on campus, and to state clearly that the rules will be enforced. However, respondents believed their universities fell short of that standard, with two thirds (66%) recording that institutional messaging is ambiguous or inadequate.

The findings come against a backdrop of staff promoting academic and cultural boycotts, expressing support for the 7 October attacks and extremist individuals or organisations. A case in point is what happened at University College London following the Hamas attacks in southern Israel on 7 October 2023.

On 8 October 2023 – one day after Hamas attacked Israel – Dr James Smith, a lecturer in the UCL Institute of Epidemiology and Health Care, posted on X: "From the river to the sea," the first line in the call for the annihilation of the State of Israel, as repeated in the image he shared. Smith also accompanied the post with a photo of a bulldozer breaking through the Gaza fence on 7 October, the breach that preceded the killing of some 1,200 people in southern Israel that day (Smith, 2023). That individual faced no disciplinary action over this.

A few weeks later, the UCL branch of the UCU passed a motion containing the slogan "intifada until victory" (UCL UCU, 2023) (See Chapter 4). More than 400 staff later signed a pledge by BDS at UCL (BDS at UCL, 2024) to boycott Israeli universities. A website was launched featuring named staff testimonies about why they support BDS. That pledge was updated and now includes over 900 named staff.

During the war between Israel and Hamas, UCL activists further pressed to establish new relationships with Gazan universities while simultaneously calling on the University to withdraw from further collaboration with Israeli institutions. This campaign was directed by UCL academics, in concert with the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) (BDS at UCL, 2024).

UCL's Institute of Education (IOE) publicised its commitment to supporting universities in Gaza following the signing of MOUs with Al-Aqsa University, Al Azhar University, and the Islamic University of Gaza (UCL Institute of Education, 2026). The University claimed that "The MOUs create a framework for long-term, equitable partnership with universities in Gaza,

supporting academic collaboration, institutional resilience and the continuation of teaching, learning and research" (UCL Institute of Education, 2026).

The memorandum with Al-Aqsa University was signed by representatives of both institutions in August 2025 (UCL Institute of Education and Al-Aqsa University, 2025), though it was not announced until June 2026. It was signed while hostages, some with close family connections to the UK, were still held in Gaza, and before the UK Government formally recognised the a Palestinian State on 21 September 2025 (Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street and Starmer, 2025).

Case study: EDI – a lack of impartiality

The head of UCL's unit responsible for equality, diversity and inclusion is a trustee of a charity that is being investigated over concerns that funds raised may have been diverted to Hamas (Civil Society, 2025).

The Charity Commission is currently investigating the UK charity Save One Life (Heller, 2026), over a cash distribution programme in Gaza (Jewish Chronicle, 2025; Civil Society, 2025). One of Save One Life's trustees is Addeel Khan, who has also been named as the charity's Director of Communications and Strategy (Jewish Chronicle, 2025). Since September 2024, Khan has worked at University College London (UCL) as Director of Equity, Inclusion and Culture where his portfolio includes combatting antisemitism (UCL, 2024).

Save One Life's website openly states that it works with the Hamas-controlled Ministry of Social Development in Gaza to deliver cash to "those most in need". Khan has publicly stated that Save One Life has "checks and balances" and that all beneficiaries are vetted based on lists provided by the Hamas ministry (Jewish Chronicle, 2025). The organisation said it does not work with terror groups (Civil Society, 2025). Images available online showed cash envelopes being distributed in the Hamas stronghold of northern Gaza (Sawer, 2025; GB News, 2026).

The Charity Commission first opened a regulatory compliance case in June 2025 (Jewish Chronicle, 2025), which it closed before reopening in September 2026, reportedly focusing on the proper monitoring of how funds raised in the UK are used in Gaza (GB News, 2026; Jerusalem Post, 2026). The case is not a statutory inquiry and the Commission has made no finding that Save One Life has funded Hamas, allegations that the charity openly denies on its website (GB News, 2026). Nonetheless, Jewish staff at UCL have raised concerns about Khan's potential conflict of interest, which they maintain cannot be managed. He remains in post.

Chapter 4: Unions are fuelling the problem

Further to the ICPG parliamentary briefing, which raised the problematic relationship between the union and its Jewish members (ICPG, 2026), the survey sought to gather more information about the degree to which Jewish academics felt represented. The topic of union membership was also explored in the testimonies.

Overwhelmingly, Jewish academics reported feeling abandoned and betrayed by their unions, with nowhere to turn.

- Almost two thirds (65%) said they did not believe their union represented the interests of Jewish academics fairly or robustly.
- Some 53% reported how the negative climate affected their involvement in the union, with some 39% of respondents reporting they had already quit their union, and a further 14% saying they had reduced participation.
- Just 31% remained union members at the time of the survey.

These experiences are not confined to the UK. A 2026 study of higher education unions in the United States found recurring patterns of antisemitism and conflict over Israel, Zionism and Jewish identity, with Jewish members reporting hostility from union leaders and fellow members when they raised concerns about antisemitism, expressed views on Israel or challenged anti-Israel advocacy within their unions. The study called for Jewish faculty to be able to participate, dissent and be represented without fear of exclusion or retaliation (Academic Engagement Network and Anti-Defamation League, 2026).

The UCU, which represents over 120,000 staff, was singled out for criticism.

- Some 83% of Jewish staff we surveyed said the UCU wasn't taking antisemitism seriously.
- Just 5% believed the UCU was taking antisemitism seriously.
- More than half (59%) of academics surveyed said they had observed motions or policies put forward by their union which they considered discriminatory, and almost half (48%) separately felt unable to raise concerns through union channels.
- Some 43% reported feeling marginalised or dismissed when raising issues relating to antisemitism.
- Almost half (46%) had observed antisemitic communications or imagery in union communications or at union meetings.

Case study:
UCU is a "toxic, bullying, antisemitic union"

Professor David Hirsh, who teaches sociology at Goldsmiths, University of London, resigned from the UCU in July 2025, calling it "toxic" (Sugarman, 2025).

His decision to quit came in response to comments from Jo Grady, general secretary of the UCU, in which she described a government decision to proscribe Palestine Action as a terrorist organisation as an "escalation of its crackdown on the Palestine solidarity movement" and a "deeply sinister development" (Sugarman, 2025).

In a statement, Professor Hirsh accused the UCU of "running a campaign in support of Palestine Action, which is an antisemitic network that specialises in spreading red blood libel symbolising paint around buildings where Jews work[1]." He added: "It falsely teaches people to believe that Israel has been running a state organised campaign of systematically and deliberately murdering civilians on a huge scale, like the Nazis did. And it fights to deprive Israelis of the capacity for self-defence, even when it has seen what kind of threats exist to the lives of Israelis." (Sugarman, 2025).

His statement went on to say: "I finally feel I have no choice but to resign from the union. Most Jews I know resigned from the union years ago. I stuck with it because I did not want to be driven out of a union I felt I had a right to be in. There are a negligible number of Jews left in the union who are willing or able to bear witness to the antisemitic culture, or to organise against it. There are still anti-zionist Jews, who parade their Jewish identities in the hope of protecting the union from criticism of its antisemitism. And there must be plenty of Jews who, for one reason or another, want to be a member of a union, but are afraid to speak up.

"I hate the idea that when there is a strike in the future, I will have to go to work, and people will ask me why. And I will say it's because I couldn't bear contributing to an antisemitic organisation any longer, I couldn't bear being a member of one anymore… But actually, it is the union that has excluded Jews, it is not Jews who have withdrawn solidarity with their colleagues."



Professor David Hirsh, Goldsmiths, University of London, who resigned from the UCU in July 2025. Photo: London Centre for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism

Footnote: *For many Israelis and Jewish communities, the red hand imagery evokes the 2000 Ramallah lynching, where two Israeli reservists were killed by a mob and a participant named Aziz Salha famously displayed his blood-soaked hands from a window. (Salha was later imprisoned by Israel, released in a 2011 prisoner exchange, and killed in a 2024 Israeli airstrike). Consequently, critics view the symbol not as a generic protest, but as a painful reminder, provocation, or glorification of anti-Jewish violence.*

Case study:
UCU branch backs “intifada until victory”



UCL UCU branch policy webpage, listing motions passed by the branch, including Motion 23/24/07 of 27 October 2023. Source: UCL UCU (2026)

On October 27 2023, the University College London branch of UCU passed motion 23/24/07 – calling for “a Socialist Federation of the Middle East – Intifada until victory!” (UCL UCU, 2023). The motion was carried (51% for; 36% against; 14% abstentions).

For many Jews, the term intifada evokes a campaign of violence including suicide bombings against Jewish civilian targets during the Second Intifada (2000-2005). The phrase was included as a sign-off in a broader resolution to mobilise on behalf of Palestinians.

UCL issued a statement describing the motion as “incoherent and disturbing” and accusing the branch of using language that “clearly incites indiscriminate violence” (UCL, 2023). Then Education Secretary Gillian Keegan wrote a piece for the Conservative Home website calling the motion “irresponsible and deeply wrong” adding that “the promotion of conflict and glorification of terrorism will never be tolerated” (Keegan, 2023). UCL was not an isolated case. In a House of Lords debate in May 2025, Baroness Deech told peers that the UCU’s Oxford branch had voted for a motion calling for an intifada ‘until victory’ (Hansard, 2025).

Case study: University of Manchester UCU calls for an “end to Zionism”

On 27 October 2026, University of Manchester UCU set up a stand inside the Nancy Rothwell Building where they called to “end Zionism”.

A Jewish member of staff, who identifies as Zionist, saw this as a direct threat. “How else are they going to end Zionism if not by eliminating me?”, they asked.

They therefore approached the stall to inquire who gave the organisers permission to be inside the building. The response was that they did not need permission because they are with the UCU.

Activists distributed leaflets that explicitly targeted Raphi Bloom, a Jewish community leader in Manchester, who was attacked for being Zionist. The academic reported the case to the building manager and via the University’s online report and support portal.

In response, the building manager apologised and explained that the UCU stand had not been booked in advance and that the university had no prior knowledge of it. Colleagues from the People Directorate attended, the UCU members left shortly afterwards, and the Directorate subsequently met UCU to ensure appropriate procedures are followed in future.

Yet, this was not the first time that the UCU abused its position in the University of Manchester. A few weeks beforehand, they posted flyers inside teaching and learning notice boards calling on staff to boycott Tel Aviv University.

The University Leadership reported that they subsequently talked to the UCU and explained to them that such behaviour was inappropriate and that they need to follow procedures if they want to erect a stall inside a University building.

The UCU activists faced no consequences. The academic who complained has been advised they will have a meeting with the Vice-President for Social Responsibility.



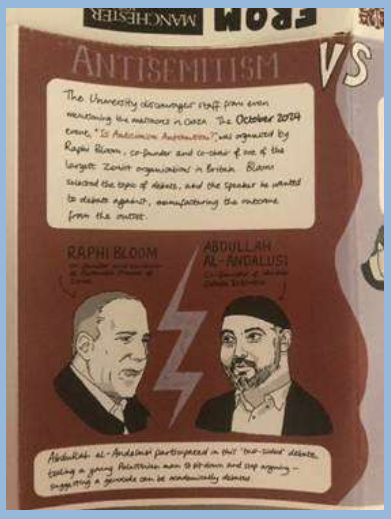
Stall erected by UCU activists



Flyers calling for a boycott



Defiant UCU members at the University of Manchester



Flyers depicting Manchester Jewish Community leader Raphi Bloom

Conclusion

This report exposes how Jewish academics are affected by the alarming rise of antisemitism at UK universities, and the urgent need for change. Years of neglect have allowed this crisis to become normalised. Jewish academics have been failed by those who have allowed a climate of hostility to take hold on UK campuses. Unions that are meant to support university staff have been fuelling the problem through their own activism.

The human cost is stark. Our survey shows that many Jewish staff are fearful of their working environment, censor what they teach and limit their interactions with colleagues. Almost half have considered leaving their post or UK academia altogether. These findings are especially troubling: universities that cannot protect their own employees from antisemitic harassment cannot credibly claim to uphold their commitments to academic freedoms. When Jewish scholars are forced to self-censor, or worse, are driven from university campuses, UK higher education as a whole is diminished.

Universities must embrace a duty of care towards their staff. Too many have treated antisemitism as a reputational inconvenience to be managed, rather than a serious failing to be confronted. Complaints have gone unanswered, procedures have proved inadequate, and those responsible have rarely faced meaningful consequences. The fact that a police presence is required to protect university staff and students (Union of Jewish Students, 2026), highlights the normalisation of what is a highly irregular state of existence, and which betrays the promise of equality.

In May 2026, following the publication of the Union of Jewish Students' Time for Change report (Union of Jewish Students, 2026), the then-Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, announced that universities would be required to publish the scale of antisemitism on their campuses and the action taken against it, warning that there would be "zero tolerance for inaction" (Williams, 2026). His words were welcome. But our survey, conducted in the months that followed, shows that for Jewish staff little has changed. Such commitments must now be matched by decisive action.

The means to act are now largely in place. In October 2026, the Government accepted all 27 recommendations of Sir David Bell's review of antisemitism in schools and colleges (Department for Education, 2026b); higher education should be held to the same standard. Since 30 October 2026, universities have been under a legal duty to take all reasonable steps to prevent the harassment of their staff by third parties, including students and visiting speakers (Employment Rights Act 2025, s. 21). The OfS now hears free speech complaints from staff, and from April 2027 will be able to intervene where universities fail to protect freedom of speech and academic freedom (Office for Students, 2026b). The Equality and Human Rights Commission has the power to hold trade unions to account for how they treat their Jewish members. What has been missing is the will to use these tools on behalf of Jewish staff.

We therefore urge the Government, regulators, universities and trade unions to adopt the recommendations set out below without delay.

Recommendations

Recommendations addressed to the Office for Students apply to registered providers in England. We invite the regulators in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to consider equivalent measures.

Recognising antisemitism

Our findings show that antisemitism is too often not recognised by those responsible for addressing it. Some 61% of respondents said EDI staff do not treat antisemitism as seriously as other forms of discrimination, and at the University of Edinburgh, concerns raised by Jewish staff and students were dismissed as not amounting to hate speech or discrimination (ICPG, 2026). Sir David Bell's Independent review into antisemitism in schools and colleges in England, published on 21 October 2026, identified the same failure in schools and colleges (Department for Education, 2026a), and the Secretary of State told Parliament that half of Jewish teachers had experienced or witnessed antisemitism (Hansard, 2026). The Government accepted all 27 of the review's recommendations on the day of publication, and has commissioned Sir David to review progress after one year (Department for Education, 2026b). No equivalent review has been commissioned for higher education.

1. The Government to commission an independent review of antisemitism in higher education by 31 March 2027, complementing Sir David Bell's review of schools and colleges and its one-year progress review. The input of Jewish staff as well as students should be embedded in its terms of reference, and it should report within 12 months of being commissioned.
2. The first of Sir David Bell's recommendations, accepted by the Government, is that schools and colleges be encouraged to adopt the IHRA working definition of antisemitism and its examples, which he concluded would improve understanding of antisemitism and confidence in addressing it (Department for Education, 2026a; 2026b), and the OfS has itself adopted the definition (Office for Students, 2021). Higher education should be held to the same standard. Universities that have not yet adopted the IHRA working definition (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, 2016), including its examples, to do so in full by 31 July 2027. All universities to publish, by the start of the 2027/28 academic year, how they apply it in complaints and disciplinary procedures, recognising that it does not alter the legal definition of harassment, and alongside their duties on freedom of speech and academic freedom. The OfS to keep its published list of universities that have adopted the definition (Office for Students, n.d.) up to date, reviewing it at least annually.

3. Since 1 August 2025, condition E6 has required universities in England to ensure that students are appropriately informed and relevant staff appropriately trained on harassment, with OfS guidance citing mandatory, evidence-based training as one way to show this (Office for Students, 2025). The OfS to make clear, through updated guidance on condition E6 issued by 1 September 2027, and building on its November 2025 letter to providers (Ahmed, 2025), that this training should, where relevant, cover contemporary antisemitism, including online and coded forms, and the distinction between legitimate political criticism and antisemitism. This should apply to all relevant staff, including those working in EDI and those who handle complaints and investigations, and should draw on the Government's £7 million investment in antisemitism training for staff in schools, colleges and universities, announced in May 2026 (Williams, 2026). Training should be delivered by organisations with recognised expertise. From the 2027/28 academic year, universities to report annually the proportion of relevant staff who have completed it.

Protecting Jewish staff

Antisemitism comes from colleagues (42%) as well as students (28%). Some 41% have altered their route to work or avoided parts of campus, 19% have been excluded from professional networks and collaborations, 49% fear professional repercussions if they report antisemitism, and 45% are considering leaving their post or UK academia. The campaigns against Professor Michael Ben-Gad and Dr Gad Yishayahu show how staff can be targeted by students and outside groups, with universities left to respond after the event. Almost half (46%) believe external groups are radicalising students, 48% say antisemitic speakers have visited their university, and at Coventry University a Prevent referral was not acted on (ICPG, 2026).

Since 30 October 2026, employers have been under a new legal duty, introduced by section 21 of the Employment Rights Act 2025, to take all reasonable steps to prevent their employees being harassed by third parties. Unlike the provisions repealed in 2013, this duty covers all protected characteristics, including race and religion, and a single incident may be enough to give rise to a claim. Students, visiting speakers and external campaign groups all fall within its scope. Universities therefore already have a legal obligation to protect Jewish staff from much of the harassment documented in this report. What is missing is clarity about what meeting that obligation looks like in a university setting: regulations specifying reasonable steps are not expected until 2027/28 (Irwin Mitchell, 2026), and no sector-specific guidance exists.

4. Universities to publish, by 31 July 2027, how they are meeting their duty under the Employment Rights Act 2025 to take all reasonable steps to prevent harassment of staff by third parties, including students, visiting speakers and external groups, and how they address harassment of staff by colleagues. The Equality and Human Rights Commission to issue sector-specific guidance on what reasonable steps mean in higher education, including in relation to protests, online campaigns and disruption of teaching, by 30 October 2027, one year after the duty came into force, and to examine compliance.

5. Universities in England have been under strengthened duties to secure freedom of speech since August 2025 under the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023, and the OfS reissued its free speech guidance in August 2026 (Office for Students, 2026a). The OfS to build on its November 2025 letter on the harassment and intimidation of Jewish students and staff (Ahmed, 2025) by issuing dedicated guidance on managing protests, separate from its free speech guidance, before its new free speech conditions of registration take effect in April 2027. The guidance should require universities to prevent repeated disruption to teaching and research and to ensure safe access to campus for students and staff, consistent with their freedom of speech duties and applied in a viewpoint-neutral way.
6. Universities in England have been subject to the Prevent duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 since 2015, monitored by the OfS. A strengthened OfS monitoring framework applies from 1 January 2027 (Office for Students, 2026c). However, Prevent does not record antisemitism as a distinct category (Hansard, 2026), and our findings show that staff concerns are not always acted on. The Government has accepted Sir David Bell's recommendation that schools and colleges work with the Home Office and Prevent to identify when antisemitism may be linked to radicalisation (Department for Education, 2026b). Higher education should be held to the same standard. When antisemitic incidents fall below the Prevent threshold, they should be handled through harassment and disciplinary procedures (Recommendations 4 and 10). Where antisemitism forms part of a risk of radicalisation, this should be assessed and acted on accordingly.
7. By the start of the 2027/28 academic year, universities to provide confidential routes for reporting antisemitism that are independent of line management, to allow incidents to be reported specifically as antisemitism, to protect complainants from retaliation, and to offer practical support, including security measures and workplace adjustments, to staff who are targeted. The number of reports received should be published annually as part of the data set out in Recommendation 11.
8. Universities UK has long opposed academic boycotts as inimical to academic freedom (Times Higher Education, 2015). By 31 May 2027, UKRI and other research funders to make clear that excluding scholars from funded research, including collaborations, grant panels and peer review, because they are Jewish or Israeli is discrimination under the Equality Act 2010, and to act on reported cases. Funders to report annually the number of cases raised and their outcomes.

Holding universities to account

Almost two thirds (64%) say complaints about antisemitism are not taken seriously, 39% say antisemitism has been institutionally sanctioned or tolerated by management, and 66% describe institutional messaging as ambiguous or inadequate. At the University of Manchester, the organisers of a building occupation were not disciplined, and the complainant was instead required to name those responsible (ICPG, 2026). Because nearly half of respondents fear repercussions for reporting, complaints alone will not reveal the scale of the problem.

The regulatory tools to act already exist or are imminent. Condition E6 protects students from harassment (Office for Students, 2025). Since 1 September 2026, staff have been able to bring free speech and academic freedom complaints directly to the OfS, and from April 2027 new conditions of registration will allow the OfS to intervene where universities breach their duties under the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 (Office for Students, 2026b). The silencing and exclusion of Jewish staff documented in this report engages those duties directly.

9. The OfS to make full use of its existing power to investigate on the basis of monitoring intelligence where evidence indicates a university is failing to address antisemitic harassment of students under condition E6, or failing to protect the freedom of speech and academic freedom of Jewish staff under its new free speech conditions, rather than relying on complaints alone. The OfS to use the full range of its sanctions under section 15 of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017, including monetary penalties up to the maximum permitted under the Higher Education (Monetary Penalties and Refusal to Renew an Access and Participation Plan) (England) Regulations 2019: 2% of the university's qualifying income or £500,000, whichever is higher. In addition to publishing individual investigations under Regulatory advice 21 (Office for Students, 2026d), from 2027 the OfS to publish annually the number of antisemitism-related investigations it has opened and their outcomes. The Secretary of State to review whether the maximum penalty remains an adequate deterrent and to report by 30 November 2027.
10. Universities to apply their disciplinary procedures for students and staff consistently to antisemitic harassment, with sanctions up to exclusion or dismissal for serious or repeated cases. Complaints should be resolved within 90 calendar days, the benchmark the Office of the Independent Adjudicator sets for student complaints (Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education, 2022), and anonymised data on outcomes published annually from the 2027/28 academic year. University leaders to state clearly and publicly that these rules will be enforced.
11. In May 2026, the then-Prime Minister announced that universities would be expected to publish the scale of antisemitism on their campuses and the steps taken to address it (Williams, 2026), and the Government has since accepted Sir David Bell’s recommendation that schools and colleges record antisemitic incidents as a specific category (Hansard, 2026). The Government to put the higher education commitment on a formal footing in time for the 2027/28 academic year, with incidents recorded as a specific category, reporting covering staff as well as students, and the first data published by 31 December 2028.
12. By 31 July 2027, universities to require those responsible for EDI, complaints and discipline to declare relevant interests, including political commitments bearing on antisemitism, with governing bodies responsible for managing any conflicts that arise and reporting on them in their annual corporate governance statements.
13. Most universities in England are exempt charities regulated by the OfS as principal regulator; others, and all students' unions, are registered with the Charity Commission. Charity law prohibits support for political activities, unless they further the charity's purposes. By 31 July 2027, the OfS, in consultation with the Charity Commission, should publish guidance for higher education providers on applying this law to institutional statements, the use of university resources and communications, and

political activity by staff acting in an official capacity. The guidance should be consistent with providers' freedom of speech duties under the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023. The Charity Commission to confirm by the same date that the guidance applies equally to registered-charity providers and students' unions. Both regulators must set out a clear route for staff and students to raise concerns and by the start of the 2027/28 academic year, universities must publish their own policies on institutional statements, impartiality and handling of biases. From 2028, the OfS to report annually on concerns received and action taken, including referrals to the Charity Commission.

Trade unions

Some 83% of respondents say UCU does not take antisemitism seriously, and just 5% say it does. Almost half (46%) have seen antisemitic communications or imagery in union communications or at union meetings, 59% have seen motions or policies they considered discriminatory and 48% felt unable to raise concerns through union channels, and 43% felt marginalised or dismissed when raising antisemitism. More than half (53%) have quit the union or reduced their participation. Branch motions calling for “intifada until victory” at UCL (UCL UCU, 2023) and Oxford (Hansard, 2025), and a UCU campaign to “end Zionism” at Manchester in October 2026, show that these concerns are not confined to individual experience.

Trade unions have obligations under the Equality Act 2010 not to discriminate against or harass their members, and the Equality and Human Rights Commission has statutory jurisdiction over them. The Commission has previously used its investigatory powers where a membership organisation failed to address antisemitism, most notably in its investigation into the Labour Party (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2020).

14. The Equality and Human Rights Commission to consider using its statutory powers to investigate whether the University and College Union has met its obligations to Jewish members under the Equality Act 2010, including in relation to branch motions, union communications and the handling of complaints, and to announce its decision by 31 May 2027. UCU to cooperate fully and to publish an action plan within six months of the Commission’s decision.

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Annex 1:

Methodology

Design

In May 2026, the ICPG initiated a survey of its members. The Principal Investigators, Professor Brad Blitz and Dr Rina Kreitman, reviewed recent surveys of academic staff conducted in the United States (Anti-Defamation League and Academic Engagement Network, 2025a) and drafted an initial set of questions, which were tested on a small group of participants from the ICPG network.

Approach

A full questionnaire was developed into a self-completed online survey and piloted in June 2026. It was then distributed to the ICPG's network of more than 140 members between July 2026 and October 2026, and in total, 106 members responded, 68% of whom held senior roles (38% professors or chairs and 30% senior lecturers or associate professors). Respondents included academic teaching staff, researchers, and administrative and professional staff, both male and female, reflecting the diversity of roles and occupations in the university sector. Respondents represent a sample reflecting the life-cycle of professional academia: post-doctoral scholars, contract researchers, lecturers, associate professors, full professors, senior managers, those with emeritus status, and professional staff, participated in the survey.

The survey combined closed, multiple-choice questions with optional open questions that invited respondents to describe their experiences in more detail. The online survey was also anonymous, and no personal or identifying information was collected, in line with UK GDPR. The qualitative element of the study comprised these open responses together with case studies and incident reports volunteered by respondents.

Data were collected and summarised using the online survey platform Typeform, and further analysed in Microsoft Excel to identify overall percentages and trends; all percentages were based on the 106 respondents. The analysis is descriptive: no weighting or tests of statistical significance were applied. The methodology and findings were reviewed by an independent statistician.

Survey data was supplemented by publicly reported cases and evidence previously submitted in the ICPG's parliamentary briefing (ICPG, 2026). The ICPG research team had previously invited members to provide narrative accounts of the challenges they faced, which informed the testimonies included in both the ICPG parliamentary briefing and the final report, above. Some of the testimonies were collated with further email correspondence to produce the case studies of UCL and Edinburgh in particular.

The full report was reviewed by three independent referees who provided feedback on the methods used, the presentation of findings, their scope, and the conclusions of this study.

Limitations

The findings should be read with several limitations in mind. Respondents were drawn from a self-selecting, non-random sample of ICPG members. Those who chose to join the ICPG network, and to respond, may have had more direct experience of antisemitism than Jewish university staff in general. However, because there are no published data on the number of Jewish staff in UK higher education, it is not possible to assess how representative the sample is. The results should therefore be treated as indicative; the findings from the survey rest on a small number of responses.

Further, survey responses are self-reported and reflect respondents' own experiences and perceptions. Because the survey was anonymous, individual incidents could not be independently verified. For this reason, the report also draws on publicly reported cases, which can be checked against published sources. We note that the survey was conducted at a single point in time and cannot measure change over time directly. Where the report refers to trends, it draws on respondents' own assessments and on external data such as the CST's incident records.

Similar limitations may apply to the small number of testimonies, and the selected case studies, both of which speak to personal experiences. The fact that such experiences have been echoed in situations, as widely reported in the press, and the above mentioned US studies, nonetheless, indicates the importance of this research, and how it corresponds with wider trends. This study provides the first systematic analysis of the experiences of Jewish staff in UK universities since October 2023. Its findings are consistent with incident data recorded by the CST and with studies of academic staff in the United States.

Annex 2:

Typologies of Antisemitism on UK campuses, from Antisemitism on UK University Campuses, Parliamentary Briefing prepared by the Intra-Communal Professorial Group (ICPG), 30 June 2026 (ICPG, 2026).

1. Exclusion and Boycott of Jewish and Israeli Scholars

- Overt boycott calls: Explicit calls to boycott Israeli and Jewish academics from conferences, journals, editorial boards, and joint funding applications.
- 'No Zionists on campus': Public declarations used to signal the exclusion of Jewish and pro-Israel colleagues from academic spaces and events.
- Shadow boycotts: Israeli and Jewish scholars quietly removed from conference programmes or grant applications – frequently without notification and without their knowledge.
- Coercive participation: Staff actively pressured to sign public pledges or boycott letters, creating a hostile environment in which refusing to exclude Jewish or Israeli colleagues carries professional risk.
- Institutional divestment and pressure campaigns: Calls to sever ties with companies, organisations, or universities characterised as 'Zionist', used to exclude Jewish-affiliated institutions from academic collaboration.

2. Doxxing, Death Threats and Threats of Physical Violence

- Academic staff have received death threats by post, online, and in person.
- Staff have been threatened physically on campus.
- Some staff have required bodyguards and police protection.
- Staff and students – and their family members – have been doxxed online by other university staff and students, as well as by anonymous organisations and individuals.

3. Academic Freedom: Cancellation, Suppression, No-platforming and Deplatforming

- Cancellation of lectures and public events: Lectures, seminars, and public events featuring Israeli or Jewish-affiliated speakers cancelled or disrupted under political pressure. Staff have been no-platformed in person; and deplatformed online.
- Blocking exchanges: Staff refusing to support or actively obstructing student participation in academic exchanges with Israeli universities, acting against university policies.

- Discriminatory gatekeeping: Jewish and Israeli scholars excluded from conferences, journals, grant panels, and collaborative projects on political rather than academic grounds, despite making important scientific contributions – risking delays to research in areas such as cancer treatment.
- Extremist guest speakers: Staff inviting individuals who promote antisemitism or express support for proscribed organisations as academic guests, lending institutional legitimacy to extremist viewpoints.

4. Politicisation of Teaching and the Classroom

- Classroom disruption: Academic staff removing students from scheduled teaching to attend political protests, framed as participation in 'social justice'.
- Partisan teaching materials: Political messaging – including calls to attend protests or adopt political positions – embedded in lecture slides, reading lists, or course materials.
- Penalising dissenting students: Staff disadvantaging students who decline to adopt anti-Israel positions, including in assessed work, seminar participation, or research supervision.

5. Extremism, Blood Libels, and Holocaust Denial, Distortion and Inversion

- Support for proscribed organisations: Staff making public statements expressing support for Hamas, Hezbollah, or other proscribed terrorist organisations.
- Academic staff participating in the flotilla to Gaza alongside known extremists.
- Academic staff engaging in blood libels.
- Platforming Holocaust denial: Claims that Holocaust denial constitutes legitimate academic free speech, creating institutional cover for one of the most serious forms of antisemitic expression.

6. Institutional and Governance Failure

- EDI leadership engaging with extremists: Senior equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) officers communicating with, endorsing, or supporting extremist individuals or organisations and anti-Israel activist campaigns - including amplifying their messaging and facilitating platform access – in direct contradiction of the institution's stated duty of care to Jewish staff and students.
- Conflicts of interest: Failure by senior management to investigate conflicts of interest arising from political commitments, such as personal pledges to advance a boycott against Israeli institutions, by staff in positions of authority or compliance.
- Failure to demonstrate neutrality: University staff engaged in efforts to build relationships with Palestinian universities while simultaneously campaigning to withdraw from cooperation with Israeli institutions.
- Failure of duty of care: Absence of effective, safe mechanisms for Jewish staff and students to report antisemitic conduct without fear of professional or academic retaliation.

Illustrative Examples of Contemporary Campus Antisemitism

1. Harassment through Political Targeting

- Jewish academics are regularly subjected to unsolicited and aggressive challenges about their political views – including on Zionism – regardless of the subject they are teaching.
- Students wearing political symbols seemingly position themselves visibly in lectures to signal political dissent, which causes Jewish teaching staff to feel intimidated.

2. Coercive Political Attribution

- Jewish staff and academics confronted with images of casualties and asked to account for or condemn actions of the Israeli government – on the implicit assumption that they bear collective responsibility for the Israeli State's conduct.
- Jewish colleagues presumed to speak for, or be represented by, the Israeli government without consent or invitation.
- Jewish staff asked to remove their university website profiles 'for their own protection'.

3. Extremist Statements in Institutional Settings

- Across UK universities, academics have witnessed extremist statements.
- Institutional Non-Response
- Across UK institutions of higher education, senior management have failed to investigate or act upon extremist statements made in formal institutional settings, including staff meetings.
- Absence of any disciplinary or procedural response, normalising extremist discourse within the institution.

4. Ambient Antisemitism

- Defaced or torn-down posters, stickers, media reports, online comments, and public demonstrations, whether explicitly antisemitic or not, create an overarching environment that many Jewish staff and students find uncomfortable, offensive, alienating, and frightening.
- Material placed in the workplace creates an atmosphere in which Jewish people feel afraid to announce their identity, express any view on the Middle East, or declare their Zionism.
- Accusations of dual loyalty: the implication that because someone is Jewish, they are not well placed to take on roles such as Vice Dean of EDI, Student Welfare, or disciplinary panel member, on the assumption they would automatically favour Jewish students.


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