

National Council Meeting Report - 20/08/2025

Introduction

UJS National Council, according to the [UJS Constitution](#), exists to scrutinise decisions made by the President, ensure the President upholds the core values of UJS, and provide feedback from students to the President about matters relating to UJS. We are committed to serving and representing you, the Jewish students of the UK and Ireland. As part of that work, and in accordance with UJS policy '[Your Union 3: Ensuring an Accountable UJS](#)', we will continue to publish detailed reports after each of our meetings. The reports are designed to ensure the transparency of National Council's work, allowing students to scrutinise how we use our elected roles to support Louis and hold him to account. Each report will be accompanied by a response from the President, and will be posted on the [National Council page](#) on the UJS website. The National Council page includes a contact form, through which students can reach out to us. We will also provide updates via UJS social media following each of our meetings. It's an honour to serve as your National Council this year and we are really looking forward to hearing from you. We hope that our work ensures UJS democracy is as **transparent, accountable and inclusive** as possible!

Elie Glaser
Chair, UJS National Council 2025/26

Meeting Agenda, 20th August 2025

Our Objectives This Year

The first part of our 20/08/2025 meeting was spent setting our objectives for the year ahead. In order to best play our role as representatives of all Jewish students, we agreed upon the following three clear objectives for the year ahead:

National Council 25/26 – Objectives

1. **Create a more visible, accountable, accessible and active National Council.**
2. **Ensure UJS policy is monitored and student experience remains front-of-mind all year round.**
3. **Amplify a more diverse range of student voices to broaden UJS democracy.**

Actions We Will Take

Attention then turned to how to achieve these objectives. We set out the following plan for National Council activity this year:

1. Regular National Council meetings will be held **once per month**. Emergency meetings can be called as required by Louis, UJS President, or Elie, National Council Chair, if there is a matter that requires urgent discussion, such as a controversial statement or event. This will surpass the constitutional obligation to meet at least six times per academic year. All meetings will have an agenda written by Elie, and minutes will be taken.
2. The National Council Chair will write a report after each meeting and publish it on the [National Council webpage](#). This will be accompanied by **monthly social media updates** before and/or after meetings, encouraging student engagement with the National Council and increasing our visibility.
3. The National Council webpage will also include a **contact form** for students to use to get in touch with the National Council with questions for us or for us to put to the President. National Council members will continue to work to find out the views of Jewish students in their network. The contact form will be monitored at least once per month. The monthly social media updates will signpost students to the National Council contact form, making student engagement with the National Council more accessible.
4. Between each monthly meeting, National Council members will aim to speak to approximately five students from a diverse range of campuses, backgrounds, opinions, and levels of UJS engagement. At the start of

each meeting, each member will present what they have learned about students' views of UJS activity. The contact form will **ensure a diversity of perspectives is heard** each month. Additionally, we will aim to ensure that at least one of every 5 students we speak to each month is from a small or regional Jsoc. At every meeting, we will reassess the diversity of the range of students spoken to, allowing this to guide future selection in order to maximise the breadth and variety of students we engage with.

5. Each regular meeting, **Louis will update National Council** on recent and future UJS activity. Questions will be put to him by National Council members. Particular areas for focussed questioning will be derived from UJS policy, current affairs, and current student attitudes.
6. In accordance with UJS policy '[UJ33 A More Transparent UJS](#)', the National Council will ensure that the Sabbatical Officers continue to monitor the **Policy Tracker**. This will monitor the extent to which each UJS policy has been implemented. The National Council will oversee the Tracker and request updates at each meeting.
7. Following the steps of last year's introduction of a new National Council framework, we aim to host an event at the 2025 Convention to a) receive in-person feedback to put to Louis and his team and b) advertise what the National Council role entails for those considering standing for election for 2026/27.

Recommendation for Next Year's National Council

In order to further National Council's visibility and student engagement, we recommend for next year that an explanation of National Council's role is included in the Freshers booklet.

Recent and Future UJS Activity

As with all of the coming year's National Council meetings, we heard an update from Louis on recent and future UJS activity. The National Council then responded with questions and scrutinised UJS's actions and plans. The key points of Louis updates and our questioning are below.

Louis has five priorities for the year:

1. Engagement: Recapturing Jewish Pride

- **Events:** Plans are underway for Jewish Experience Week (JEW), a UJS Chanukah party, and a Rabbi road trip initiative. Booze4Jews will be held in Leeds this year. JEW will take place in the first week of February, following Holocaust Memorial Day.
- **Convention** will be in November this year, which is beneficial for inclusion and practicality. This way, convention does not clash with exam dates for students in Scotland, Ireland and Bristol.
- **Sports:** Arianna has now started planning for sports engagement.
- **Social Action:** Samantha L is working on social action engagement, including building a volunteering network and collaborating with HIAS+JCore on refugee advocacy.
- **Interfaith:** Tamzin has produced an Interfaith Guide for Jsocs. Interfaith week is in November.
- **Inclusion Work:** UJS is planning a period poverty campaign, titled “let my people flow”. Eve has met with various charities to understand how UJS can be more inclusive. This will inform an upcoming cultural review that considers how we can make UJS more inclusive for students on a structural level.
- **EUJS:** Matty Fisher has been elected as an EUJS Vice-President. UJS are excited to collaborate with the new EUJS board and President, Hanna Veiler.
- **The basics:** UJS Sabbatical Officers are reaching out to Jsoc Presidents and having initial calls. UJS aims to create and maintain the most effective and supportive relationships with Jsocs possible.

2. Antisemitism – Getting on the Front Foot

- **Vice Chancellors:** UJS have already met with many university Vice Chancellors and provided them with an initial Good Practice Guide on how to support Jewish students, including taking on UJS’s antisemitism awareness training.
- **Best Practice Research:** UJS is looking at developing a year-long research project into best practice in combatting antisemitism for universities.
- **Student Unions:** Engagement continues with Student Union CEOs and Sabbatical Officers, particularly regarding scenario planning for Freshers events.
- **Antisemitism Awareness Training (AAT):** AAT has already begun. UJS has recently received a £1 million grant for AAT and has now recruited for a bid-delivery team. The team’s goal is to deliver considerably more AAT, to a higher quality, to more people, in more places.
- **Freedom of Speech Guidance:** UJS has engaged with Arif Ahmed, Vice Chancellors, lawyers, and other stakeholders regarding the

Government's new Freedom of Speech guidance. Louis has recorded a podcast episode with Arif Ahmed, the Government Director for Freedom of Speech, clarifying ambiguities. The podcast clarifies that Jewish student freedom of religious expression must be protected.

- **Campaigns:** The UJS Campaigns Forum will begin in October or November and will focus on empowering and supporting Jsoc committees to combat antisemitism on their campuses.
- **Parliamentary Engagement:** UJS has already engaged with numerous significant political figures.
- **IHRA:** IHRA's importance and the need to adopt it is consistently covered in UJS's meetings with Vice Chancellors.

3. Leadership – Building Strength from Crisis

- **Fellowship** applications launched beginning of September.
- **Attendance** at Committee Training (followed by Pizza in the Park) increased this year by 25%.
- **Development and Training:** There are exciting plans for development and training, including online seminars and specific campaigns training.
- **Schools:** Plans are underway to develop resources to support sixth formers' university decisions, as well as parents' evenings for future students.

4. Communications – Excite and Inspire

- **Tone:** UJS aims to excite and inspire the Jewish community in all its messaging. This will be done particularly through social media, as well as the core messaging behind every UJS activity.
- **Newsletters:** Newsletters have renewed energy and feedback on them has been very positive.
- **Press:** Louis has been interviewed by Jewish News and the Jewish Telegraph. He also plans to connect with national press to increase Jewish student representation.
- **Year Launch:** Plans for a Year Launch event with MP Sarah Sackman are underway. All Jsoc Presidents, National Council members and fellowship graduates will be invited. UJS plans to publish weekly update videos on social media once the academic year begins.
- **Inspiring the Community:** Louis has spoken to the Board of Deputies' CEO forum and is continuing to represent students at communal events, raising UJS's visibility.

5. Israel – Brave, Hopeful Spaces

- **October 7th**: Plans are underway for supporting Jsocs with national and local October 7th ceremony plans. UJS has been in contact with Vice Chancellors and Student Unions regarding support for Jewish students on October 7th.
- UJS supported the community's march for the hostages in August, but were deeply disappointed by the treatment of Rabbi Josh Levy and Rabbi Charley Baginsky, which does not reflect UJS's cross-communal position. UJS released a statement following the incident expressing this.
- **Israel Strategy**: UJS aims to lead through creating space for productive dialogue.

President's Response

National council is a crucial part of the UJS family, and plays a vital role – holding me and my team to account. After all, UJS is a democratic organisation, and we exist to represent and serve Jewish students. To have five brilliant National Councillors, elected by their peers, supporting me to do the best by my mandate is a real privilege.

I really enjoyed our first meeting – it was a great opportunity to share our work so far and our future plans, as well as debate the key issues facing Jewish student life. It's been a brilliant start to the UJS year, with really successful in-person events and great plans in the works, as Elie has outlined above.

I'd encourage every Jewish student to get involved. Reach out to National Council, discuss with them how UJS can be even better. I'm really keen to hear from you.

Louis Danker

UJS President 2025/26

[Members of National Council can be found here.](#)