

UJS Best Practice Guidance – Overview for Vice Chancellors

The Union of Jewish Students (UJS) has published best practice guidance for universities and students' unions to support Jewish students and tackle antisemitism on campus. This overview is intended to give senior leadership teams a short explanation of the guidance, its intentions, and its contents.

Institutions have a responsibility to ensure that Jewish students can: participate fully in campus life, practice their faith, express their identity, and feel safe, respected, and included within their university community. This guidance sets out a framework of practical recommendations to achieve that aim.

Each recommendation supports institutions navigating complex issues, seeking to protect Jewish students and uphold the open character of university life. It draws on UJS' close engagement with Jewish students and Jewish Society leaders, alongside regular constructive work with universities, students' unions, government, sector bodies, and communal partners.

We recognise that this is a detailed piece of guidance, drawing on best practice from across higher education. It is not intended to be exhaustive, but to provide practical support that will be useful to different teams and functions across an institution.

Although this guidance is focused on Jewish students, many of its recommendations will also be relevant to Jewish staff. Additionally, the recommendations are not exclusive to the Jewish community. Many will also help institutions strengthen support for other marginalised groups and improve campus cohesion more broadly and should inform similar approaches where appropriate.

The recommendations are grouped around four core areas: inclusion, policies and processes, education, and response.

Inclusion

- Institutions should ensure Jewish religious practice, cultural identity, and communal life are properly recognised and supported across the university experience. This includes practical considerations of Shabbat and Jewish festivals, kosher food, accommodation, enrolment, and timetabling, as well as ensuring Jewish students have access to appropriate pastoral and chaplaincy support. It also means giving Jewish Societies the visibility, space, and institutional backing they need to function effectively, and ensuring Jewish identity is reflected within EDI work, interfaith activity, and wider approaches to campus cohesion.

Education

- Institutions should take responsibility for building understanding of antisemitism, Jewish identity, and Jewish student life across their communities. While they should be consulted, Jewish students should not be expected to carry the burden of educating others. This work should be embedded through staff training, student induction, professional education, and institutional awareness-raising, including support for Holocaust education and October 7th commemorations. Institutions should also ensure staff understand the boundaries between academic freedom, legitimate debate, and

antisemitism, including the appropriate place of personal political views within teaching and learning environments.

Policies and processes

- Institutions should have clear, trusted, and proactive systems in place to support Jewish students' safety and confidence. This includes robust approaches to security for Jewish students, societies, and events; clear expectations around official and personal social media use; effective processes for managing external speakers and extremist activity; and accessible reporting routes that students trust. Codes of conduct should make clear that antisemitic behaviour is unacceptable and will be acted upon.

Response

- Institutions should respond to incidents, protests, and periods of heightened tension in a timely, proportionate, and reassuring way. This includes clear communication with Jewish students and staff, appropriate action where conduct crosses legal or disciplinary lines, and close coordination with JSocs, UJS, Jewish chaplains, CST and, where necessary, the police. Institutions should be prepared to respond to protests, encampments, occupations, antisemitic incidents, extremism, and the glorification of terrorism in a way that protects Jewish students, upholds institutional responsibilities, and ensures students are not left to navigate fear or hostility alone.

At its heart, this guidance is about supporting Jewish students. Since October 7th 2023, the rise in antisemitism on campus has been one of the most serious challenges facing university leaders. Many institutions have already shown real leadership in response, and we are grateful for the strong and collaborative relationships we have built across the sector.

This publication reflects what Jewish students tell us makes a meaningful difference, as well as the expertise and experience of partners across higher education and the Jewish community. It is not legal guidance, and institutions should of course continue to act in accordance with their legal duties.

We hope this guidance provides reassurance, practical support, and a basis for continued partnership. UJS looks forward to working with institutions to help ensure Jewish students are safe, included, and able to thrive on campus.