



University of Essex

Review of the Experiences of Jewish Students and Staff at the University of Essex

Foreword

The University of Essex is a cosmopolitan, international university and we want to celebrate diversity and inclusivity in all its forms.

We have recognised that we faced a problem of antisemitism and we want to thank the independent external group for its support and guidance in helping us face up to this. Our Council and Senate have unanimously endorsed this report and we will be implementing all 33 recommendations.

There has been a great deal of institutional learning about what else we can and should do, to be inclusive and to ensure that the lived experiences of all our students and staff match the values of our University.

We will continue to challenge ourselves. Our Council has therefore agreed additional work should immediately be undertaken to review all areas where there could be discrimination. We want to ensure that we celebrate the diversity of all members of the University of Essex.

Judith Judd, Chair of Council
Jane Hamilton, Chair of Council Designate
Anthony Forster, Vice-Chancellor

The University of Essex

The University of Essex was established in 1963, welcomed its first students in 1964 and received its Royal Charter in 1965. There are three campuses at Colchester, Southend and Loughton and strategic partnerships with a number of institutions for delivery of education in other locations. The mission of the University is excellence in education and research, for the benefit of individuals and communities.

The current Strategic Plan period covers 2013-19, and has seen a range of significant achievements for the University:

- The University is in a group of dual intensive institutions recognised for both excellence in education (Gold Award, Teaching Excellence Framework 2017) and excellence in research (top 20 in Research Excellence Framework 2014);
- The University has successfully grown to about 16,000 students in size, attracting students from 140 countries to join its community and benefit from the its distinctive and transformative education;
- The University has grown its research power, increasing the community of academic researchers submissible to the REF 2021 to almost double the size of submission in REF 2014;
- The University is recognised internationally for its globally-important research with peaks of excellence in political science, social sciences, human rights and data analytics;
- The University contributes more than £500m annually to the national and regional economy, and its Knowledge Gateway research park is the location of choice for businesses who want to link to research expertise and graduate and student talent; the University is in the top five in the UK for technology-driven business partnerships (knowledge transfer partnerships);
- The University was conferred the prestigious Times Higher Education award of University of the Year for 2018: the citation recognised the commitment to putting student and staff success at the centre of all policies and practice.

Through the development of the new University Strategy for 2019-25, the University's community of staff and students articulated a clear sense of priorities around a distinctive mission and transformational research-led education. This distinctive character is clearly derived from founding statements¹ centred on being "freer, more daring, more experimental", and has since then articulated an identity based on being tenacious, bold, inquisitive, and impatient for change.

The University has made clear that it stands for inclusion, academic freedom, partnerships based on shared values, and a commitment to make a difference in the world by putting ideas into action to create benefit for others.

¹ Statement from by Sir Albert Sloman, first Vice-Chancellor of the University of Essex.

Brief Background to Allegations of Antisemitism

1. On 20 February 2019, the University of Essex was shocked to have allegations of antisemitism² brought to its attention. Two events brought the University into national view. These were the processes within the Students' Union (SU) regarding the establishment of a new Jewish Society for students (specifically the large number of votes registered against the society indicated signs of significant antisemitism), and the social media postings of a member of academic staff.
2. On 22 February, the Vice-Chancellor published a statement making clear four categorical actions:
 - a. That antisemitism and any other form of hate crime are antithetical to the values of the University and have no place on its campuses;
 - b. That the University was committed to the articles, principles and guidance of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) on antisemitism³;
 - c. That the University supported the establishment of the Jewish Society as a student society;
 - d. That in accordance with University procedures, an independent investigation of a member of staff had been initiated, and that a member of staff had been suspended.
3. The same day, the sabbatical officers, trustees and executive of the SU confirmed the establishment of the Jewish Society.
4. A large correspondence was received directly to the University or via social media platforms (including from staff, students, alumni, the public, and members of parliament). At first, this was mostly highly critical of the University, and then became more supportive. The Jewish Chronicle observed in an editorial (27 February) that the University's response had been "a model of its kind: there was no equivocation and no excuses."
5. A Review of the experiences of Jewish students and staff was launched, led by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) (see Annex A for Terms of Reference). The intention of this Review was to show and ensure that through implementation of its recommendations the University could live up to and exceed this observation.

² This Review adopts the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) spelling of "antisemitism". The IHRA observes: "hyphenated spelling allows for the possibility of something called 'Semitism', which not only legitimizes a form of pseudo- scientific racial classification that was thoroughly discredited by association with Nazi ideology, but also divides the term, stripping it from its meaning of opposition and hatred toward Jews." See <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/spelling-antisemitism>.

³ The IHRA working definition is as follows: "Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities." See <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/working-definition-antisemitism>

Actions Taken

6. The Review process was launched in February 2019 with a view to reporting before the end of the current academic year (end July 2019). Without waiting for the findings, the University has taken a number of actions.
7. A solidarity event was held on the squares at the Colchester campus on 28 February, at which the speakers included the Vice-Chancellor, the Presidents of the Students' Union and of the Jewish Society (Amy-Julie Fogiel), a representative of the Union of Jewish Students, and the Chair of the Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Centre. A message from the House of Commons Speaker John Bercow, both a Jewish alumnus and the University's current Chancellor, was read out. Some 500 staff and students stood together in solidarity and support.
8. The University appointed an independent Human Resources consultant provided by a law firm to lead the investigation of the member of academic staff. The investigation was launched on 25 February, and reported to the Director of Human Resources and the Registrar and Secretary on 20 March 2019. The outcome was as follows: "In summary, that there was a prima facie case to answer pursuant to the University's disciplinary procedure on the matter of the social media postings [which are] potentially grounds for gross misconduct and potentially a breach of trust and confidence." As a result, and in accordance with the Ordinances, the University launched its own disciplinary investigation, leading to a tribunal⁴.
9. The Students' Union changed its rules for the formation of new student societies, and following a student vote has established new processes for society ratification (see paras 48 below).
10. Stakeholders have agreed that the Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Centre should be renamed The Faith Centre (from 1 August 2019), and should have a particular brief on interfaith bridge building. The University has approved the appointment of a new Faith Centre Manager and increased the operating budget for the Faith Centre (see paras 47.1 - 47.7 below).
11. The University has appointed Elazar Symon and Alissa Symon from the University Jewish Chaplaincy in Cambridge as Jewish chaplains to the University community from the start of academic year 2019-20 (see para 47.6 below).
12. The University has confirmed a fixed location for the student Jewish Society to celebrate Shabbat on Fridays, with access to the neighbouring kitchen for food preparation and warming. The booking of the Lakeview Room has been confirmed for this and next academic years, and Campus Services have provided a dedicated food heating unit for the Society (see para 48.1 below).
13. The University has launched a Review of the Code of Student Conduct and Code of Student Conduct in Residential Accommodation. An additional full-time Proctor will be recruited to the Student Conduct team (see paras 52.1 – 52.7 below).
14. The University website now contains direct links to Faith, and individual profiles of students of Jewish and other faiths and none have been published online (see paras 53 below).

⁴ Under the University's disciplinary procedures contained in the Ordinances (<https://www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/charter-statutes-and-ordinances>), a tribunal was held on 10 May 2019. The member of staff was dismissed on 16 May 2019.

15. The University's Human Resources and Equality and Diversity Group has approved for recommendation draft social media guidelines for all University staff, with a view to implementation following consultation for 2019-20 academic year (see paras 55.1 – 55.2 below).

Review Process

16. This Review has focused on how the experiences of Jewish students and staff at the University of Essex can be improved. It has also sought to draw wider conclusions of relevance to all minority groups at the University to ensure that all communities, including from all faith groups, feel welcome at Essex. The core aim of the Review is to ensure that all students and staff are able to thrive at the University, and have positive experiences during their time at or associated with the three campuses.
17. The University appointed an Independent External Group to receive direct testimony from students and staff, and to advise on content and the recommendations of the Review. The group comprised:
 - Rabbi Baroness Julia Neuberger DBE, House of Lords, London;
 - Simon Johnson, Chief Executive, Jewish Leadership Council, London;
 - Mark Gardner, Deputy Chief Executive, Community Security Trust, London;
 - Rt. Hon Baroness Jan Royall, House of Lords and Principal, Somerville College Oxford.
18. The Review called for testimony and evidence from students and staff in two phases: i) directly to the DVC, and ii) to an independent account that fed directly to the Independent External Group. The Review also drew upon unsolicited comments made in February 2019. The DVC met in person or spoke personally with 52 students, staff, former staff and alumni to receive feedback and observations (including the former Vice-Chancellor, Sir Ivor Crewe), and received separate written evidence from a further 33 students, staff and alumni. Offers of help were received from alumni and from external Jewish (and other faith-based) communities.
19. It was the aim of the Review to be comprehensive and also to report within the 2018-19 academic year to ensure that all recommendations could be actioned before the next intake of students in 2019-20. A number of desired actions became clear during the period of the Review, and these have been implemented where rapid action was desirable and possible (see paras 6-15 above). The recommendations below make clear where actions have been completed.
20. The Independent External Group reported that there was no evidence or testimony reported to them that differed from the content and tone of all other evidence. They have reviewed in full all the evidence submitted from staff, students and alumni⁵.
21. The members of the Independent External Group have asked that the following statement made on June 4 2019 be included in this report (see also Annex B):
 - 21.1 *The Independent External Group is very impressed by the way that the University of Essex has addressed the serious issues that it faced earlier in the year. We are pleased to have been involved in what we believe to have been an exemplary process.*

⁵ No evidence has been kept on file by the members of the Independent External Group. The evidence packs have been deleted, as have all references to names or email addresses.

- 21.2 *The Independent External Group believes that the University responded rapidly to the allegations of discrimination against Jewish students caused by the vote against establishing a Jewish society. It quickly removed the discrimination, held events in solidarity, commissioned this Report, ensured that evidence was collected and considered, and that this Report was independently scrutinised.*
- 21.3 *We therefore consider that this report represents a model of the response that an institution such as a university should make to allegations of, or concerns about, antisemitism or any other form of discrimination. We urge other universities to learn from the spirit, actions and content of this investigation, whether in regard to Jewish concerns or those of any other group.*
- 21.4 *The approach taken by the University of Essex encapsulates best practice in addressing antisemitism and indeed any other form of discrimination. The recommendations follow through by advising on, or insisting on, actions to be taken. We are particularly pleased that the University has taken rapid and early action, without waiting to complete the Review or Report, and that the Students' Union has already changed its rules for the establishment of new student societies.*
- 21.5 *We sincerely hope that the implementation of these recommendations will better enable Jewish students at Essex to feel properly supported by the University, and that this helps to heal some of the hurt that they have felt.*
- 21.6 *With the very obvious exceptions of the threatened refusal to accept a Jewish society and the actions of a lecturer who has now, correctly, been dismissed, the other material that we reviewed from Essex students, staff and alumni was broadly similar to that experienced by Jews in other UK universities. It did not mark Essex out as being an especially hostile environment. It did, however, reinforce the need for all universities to be fully aware of their responsibility for the wellbeing of Jewish students.*
- 21.7 *We believe that the implementation by Essex of the 33 recommendations in the Report, which we welcome, would serve to address the complaints made in the evidence that we reviewed, and will make a considerable contribution to addressing cultural change.*
- 21.8 *As an Independent External Group, representing the Jewish community and going beyond it, we were very pleased to have been asked to advise on both the process and outcomes, to review the evidence and to comment on the Report. The fact that the University wished to involve us in this way is enormously welcome and the cooperation the University has given to us has been exemplary.*
- 21.9 *We would like to express our thanks and appreciation to Professor Jules Pretty and all those involved. We particularly wish to commend the rapid and fair responses that Prof Pretty and his team gave to the issues that we raised in our scrutiny of the process.*

University Policies and Practice Relating to Antisemitism

22. The University of Essex is proud of its history as a global university. It offers a transformational education to students from over 140 countries, and is in the top 20 for most international universities worldwide. This mix of cultures, histories, perspectives and preferences is core to the University's identity, as noted in the existing Strategic Plan (2013-19) and the next Strategic Plan (2019-25)⁶.
23. The University of Essex has made the following clear: it does not and will not tolerate antisemitic behaviour in any form and will act whenever it becomes aware of such behaviour.
24. The University has a zero-tolerance approach to harassment, bullying, hate crime and assault⁷, for employees, workers, contractors, students and visitors. The associated Guidelines support the University's People Supporting Strategy 2015-19 which states: "our aim is for the University to be a place where diversity is respected and valued, and where we all know that unacceptable behaviour is challenged in the appropriate way." The University has adopted and published its support for the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definitions of antisemitism: these are contained in the guidance on zero-tolerance⁸. Zero-tolerance means that the University i) will always take action, and ii) the action will be proportionate to the circumstances of the issue.
25. The IHRA has adopted a working definition of antisemitism that is now in use in over 30 countries. It defines antisemitism as "a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities." It also offers illustrative examples of how the phenomenon manifests itself in a variety of contexts and situations. Antisemitism is thus a form of racial and religious intolerance, and can be expressed in the ideas and activities of many groups. It relies on prejudice, stereotyping, conspiracy theories and various forms of discrimination, xenophobia, hostility and hatred⁹.
26. As a form of racism, antisemitism may be so normalised that its manifestation may be in the form of unconscious bias in everyday speech. It is expressed in such a variety of ways that it ranges from everyday prejudice, denigration, and harassment to acts of violence. Increasing literacy about antisemitism is necessary as is promoting clarity on key concepts, especially on the boundaries and overlaps between anti-Zionism and antisemitism, and criticism of the government of Israel and antisemitism. However, what appears to work better in fostering understanding and discarding stereotyping are peer to peer exchanges and developing effective relationships. People holding differing views may not always agree, but dialogue and interfaith bridge-building can foster an environment of tolerance and respect.

⁶ Strategic Plan links: 2013-2019 <https://www.essex.ac.uk/-/media/documents/about/strategic-plan.pdf>; Strategic Plan 2019-25 <https://www.essex.ac.uk/about/strategic-plan>

⁷ University of Essex: *Harassment and Bullying: Our Zero-Tolerance Approach*. At: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/information/equality-and-diversity/zero-tolerance-of-harassment-and-bullying>

⁸ On May 17th 2019, the Minister of State for the Department for Education, Chris Skidmore, called for all universities to "consider the question diligently" of adopting the IHRA definition; on the same day, UUK called for all universities to adopt the definition.

⁹ An accessible and recent guide on different forms and manifestations of antisemitism is provided by Deborah Lipstadt. 2018. *Antisemitism: Here and Now*. Schocken Books

27. Antisemitism is also a form of religious intolerance and discrimination. In this context too, it may range from non-recognition, harassment, incitement to discrimination and violence, to actual acts of violence. At an institutional level, ignorance of the traditions and practices of the Jewish faith may lead to unintentional but nevertheless serious violations of the human rights, particularly religious freedom rights, of members of the Jewish community. While such violations are not in themselves necessarily always antisemitic, they may impose unreasonable burdens on the members of the Jewish community, and can certainly create environments unreceptive to the needs of Jewish students. Thus literacy about Jewish practices, as is also the case for other religious groups, can help enable individuals and institutions to engage with diversity in a positive, respectful and effective manner.
28. A careful balance must be struck between being able to respond to the specific needs of each community and framing such responses in a general framework of non-discrimination and inclusion, i.e. the balance between the particular and the universal. On the one hand, if responses to antisemitism are subsumed within a general framework of combating prejudice and discrimination, particular needs might be missed through blind spots. On the other hand, if particular problems are not addressed through a general framework or policy that applies to everyone similarly situated, or is not perceived to be the case, then such measures might further heighten tensions. A means to address both could be found by promoting literacy about all groups who are part of the student and staff community, so that their specific needs can be met and to place awareness-raising about antisemitism within a wider framework of addressing all forms of prejudice. This would ensure that all individuals who participate in University life feel included and that effective systems are in place to prevent and respond to intolerance and discrimination based on identity.¹⁰
29. Academic freedom is an essential part of academic and University life and flourishes where there is tolerance of, and respect for, a wide range of views and beliefs. However, academic freedom cannot be used as an excuse for subjecting an individual or group to bullying or harassment or for committing a hate incident or crime.
30. The purpose of the University, as defined in the University Charter, is *the advancement of learning and knowledge by teaching and research and for enabling students to obtain the advantages of University education*. Our mission of excellence in education and research is built on the creation, communication, transfer and application of knowledge, ideas and innovation, in our curricula, in our research and in our ways of working, within and across our campus communities and with our global, national and regional partners.
31. The new Strategic Plan (2019-25) goes on to contain the following in the vision and priorities:
- The University is clear about what it stands for: transformational education and research, inclusion, academic freedom;
 - The University will put student success at the heart of its mission, supporting every student from every background to achieve outstanding outcomes;

¹⁰ An inclusive and holistic approach to addressing intolerance is agreed international best practice, including in the context of antisemitism: see UNESCO and ODIHR, *Addressing Antisemitism through Education: Guidelines for Policymakers*, Paris and Warsaw, 2018, p.28. Also Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Ministerial Decision 10/7 of 30 Oct 2007 which acknowledges 'the specificity of different forms of intolerance, while at the same time recognizing the importance of taking a comprehensive approach and addressing cross-cutting issues in such fields as, *inter alia*, legislation, law enforcement, data collection and monitoring of hate crimes, education, media and constructive public discourse and the promotion of inter-cultural dialogue, in order to effectively combat all forms of discrimination.' See <https://www.osce.org/mc/29452?download=true>

-
- The University's research will continue to focus on asking difficult questions, challenging conventional wisdom, tackling with rigour the questions that matter for people and communities;
 - The University's staff and students are dedicated to asking difficult questions, challenging received wisdom;
 - The University's campus communities foster a sense of belonging, well-being, inclusion and purpose, amongst each other and global and regional partners;
 - The University celebrates the diversity of its students and staff, nurturing communities of belonging in which all are accepted without exception, and promoting inclusion, well-being, resilience and empowerment to enable every member of the University to achieve their full potential;
 - The University seeks to ensure that every member of staff is supported, through induction and professional development, to be inspirational, inclusive and innovative.

32. The University has clear policies and practice on equality, diversity and inclusion. The University celebrates diversity, challenges inequality, and is committed to sustaining an inclusive and diverse community of students and staff. Some proof points include actions and accreditations for departments and the University for Athena Swan, being listed nationally in the top 100 organisations by Stonewall, and the closing of the gender pay gap (for equal pay for work of equal value).

Key Findings and Observations

33. This Review restates, for the record, that being Jewish is not monolithic. There are cultural, religious, political and ancestry components of Jewish identity, and these vary by individual¹¹. Some Jewish people consider themselves Jewish by religion, others of no religion (as secular or cultural Jews). These internal differences are not unique to Jewish communities - they exist within specific cultural and faith groups, and within groups with protected characteristics covered by the UK Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion, belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity). This is stated here to be clear that there will be different priorities for recommendations for action amongst Jewish students and staff.
34. The University of Essex has a relatively small number of Jewish students at its campuses in Colchester, Southend and Loughton (estimated to be fewer than 50 individuals). Three UK universities have more than 1,000 Jewish students (Birmingham, Leeds, Nottingham), and five have between 500 and 1,000 individuals (Bristol, Cambridge, Manchester, Oxford, UCL)¹².
35. It has become clear that students and staff at the University have suffered from a variety of forms of direct and casual antisemitism. This has been directed towards individuals and made in wider public and digital media. Some students and staff have reported antisemitic comments made in public forums (e.g. on mail lists or social media platforms), and have been concerned that no bystanders have intervened. A key common finding is that regardless of specificity of comments, some recipients have felt intimidated and frightened. It is no defence (from individuals or institutions) to indicate that such outcomes were not intended: if they were felt, then they are real.
36. Some Jewish students and staff have written to say they have not experienced antisemitism personally; a larger number of respondents indicated they have. Some have indicated that it is not the place of non-Jews to tell Jewish students or staff how they should interpret their Jewish identity. Others have noted that it is possible to be pro-Palestinian and not be antisemitic, and that it is possible to have a fully developed personal Jewish identity and also be pro-Palestinian. The Macpherson Report is the key UK national source of the view that the felt experience should define whether or not discrimination exists – and not observations made by outside observers¹³. The University agrees with this view. The Guardian journalist, Jonathan Freedland¹⁴, has also made this point with respect to men and women (“On sexual harassment we men need to be clear: the problem is not women, it’s us”).
37. Examples of antisemitism expressed generally or towards specific individuals have made some students and staff upset. A number, though, noted that they had not brought forward formal complaints in the past, feeling that that complaints would either not be acted upon, or individual perpetrators would not be sanctioned.

¹¹ See, for example, the Pew Research Center 2013 *A Portrait of Jewish Americans*. At URL <https://www.pewforum.org/2013/10/01/jewish-american-beliefs-attitudes-culture-survey/>

¹² Data from Union of Jewish Students, which represents the 8500 Jewish students in the UK and Ireland.

¹³ Macpherson W. 1999. The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Command of Her Majesty Cm 4262-I, February 1999. See https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/277111/4262.pdf

¹⁴ Freedland J. 2017. The Guardian. At <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/nov/03/stop-blaming-sexual-harassment-victims-confront-culprits-men-exploiting-power>

38. Attention was drawn to two boycott campaigns: the BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) global campaign, and the academic boycott of Israeli universities launched in 2015. Though these campaigns seek to set out narrow political objectives, it was further pointed out that in many cases they come across to Jewish recipients as antisemitic. The second campaign comes across as particularly antisemitic when it seeks to exclude Israeli academics who are opposed to their own government policies of the time.
39. Annex C contains a selection of representative quotes made by current students, staff and alumni in testimony to this Review.
40. This Review does not make quantitative observations on antisemitism at the University of Essex. It also does not report on the number of students or staff who reported antisemitism. The University accepts the existence of the problem, and sets out recommendations designed to eliminate antisemitism from the University, and to ensure the working, learning and living environment is conducive and supportive to people of all faiths and none.
41. The University has academics and professional services staff with a wide expertise of relevance to this Review. These include the Human Rights Centre (situated in the School of Law), and the appointment of an academic member of staff (Dr Ahmed Shaheed) as the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Faith. In 2021, it will be 40 years on from the UN Declaration on Intolerance and Discrimination, and a conference will be held at the University of Essex to mark this anniversary and to highlight progress made globally.
42. The University provides facilities and support for a Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Centre (MFCC)¹⁵. The University is proud of its vibrant and diverse multicultural community and recognises the importance that faith, belief and spirituality play in the lives of many people. Through the MFCC, the University offers pastoral care, a confidential listening ear, and spiritual support for anyone in the University community, whether they consider themselves religious or not. There are in addition a number of faith societies that students can join. Proposals for changes to the MFCC are made in paras 47 below.
43. Jewish students of the University have benefitted over the years from strong external support, particularly from the Union of Jewish Students. There was previously a student society for Jewish and Israeli students, but this had become inactive by 2013-14. The Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Centre formerly had active Jewish support and guidance (provided by Malcolm Weisman), but this again had become passive. There was at the time of the start of this review no Rabbinical presence in or support via the MFCC. Though not all faiths have chaplains at the MFCC¹⁶, the University should have acted where particular groups felt the need of such support (see paras 47 below).
44. In conclusion, the University has progressive equality, diversity and inclusivity policies and practice, yet had not addressed antisemitism sufficiently or explicitly enough, nor sufficiently promoted the positive support it offers to students and staff of all faiths.

¹⁵ The chaplains and faith representatives at the MFCC are listed here: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/faith/faith-representatives>

¹⁶ For example, the Islamic Society (ISOC) of the University does not have a chaplain, explaining that they 'create positive dialogue by bringing the wider community together' and that they are 'engaging with the wider community'. Members of the Islamic Society take turns to lead prayers and this includes staff, students and members of the wider public. See: <http://www.essexisoc.com/about-us/>

Recommendations

45. This Review makes 33 recommendations in 12 distinct areas, covering creating a tolerant and civil environment, faith provision and support, the student Jewish Society, staff training, bridge-building through educational offer, building on the work of the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, conduct and complaints, student recruitment and outreach, staff recruitment, communications and events (including support for Holocaust Memorial Week), social media guidance for staff, and food services. As indicated above (see Actions Taken), a number of these recommendations are already being implemented.

46. Creating a Tolerant and Civil Environment

- 46.1 The University has policies and practices on equality, diversity and inclusion, and on zero-tolerance to harassment and bullying, and makes clear its values. However, students and staff have made clear their concerns, both over the events that indicated the presence of antisemitism, and their own experiences over a longer period. Some feedback noted further concerns that a focus on Jewish students and staff (and this Review) could create polarisation and backlash. The University should increase its explicit efforts to cultivate an environment of civility, focusing on the values of inclusion. The University of Chicago Louis Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law¹⁷ notes the best way for university leaders to cultivate an environment of civility is “to speak frequently, personally and with specificity about the climate they seek.”
- 46.2 A key way to address harassment and bullying is to foster an inclusive and civil environment that prevents or minimises the occurrence of such incidents. This requires ground rules that are explicit, clearly communicated and consistently applied so that all staff and students know what is expected of them and what they can rely on. Prevention requires that the core values of the University are asserted on a continuing basis rather than invoked when an incident occurs. In line with the University’s commitment to academic freedom and to equality and diversity, this suggests a need to encourage openness to all ideas, viewpoints and identities; and to recognise that cultivating mutual respect, critical self-reflection, and effective relationships amongst peers helps to build bridges that foster an inclusive and civil environment.
- 46.3 It is also recognised that hate speech can escalate from levels that are protected in law, as in the case of prejudicial ideas, to discrimination and violent crimes. Thus, even in the case of expressions of prejudice that do not cross the threshold required for a regulatory response, doing nothing is not an option. Such expressions require prompt, specific, consistent and unequivocal responses through positive speech or more speech that rejects exclusionary discourses and fosters solidarity and inclusion.
- 46.4 The University should thus make clear that the “job is never done” with regard to equality, diversity and inclusivity. Staff and students change over time, and new views are regularly brought to the institution. At the same time, some campaigns that regularly feature the politics of the state of Israel (e.g. the student-led BDS campaign) are unlikely ever to result in single supported positions. The University will continue to

¹⁷ LDB *Best Practices Guide for Combating Campus Antisemitism and Anti-Israelism*. At <https://www.law.uchicago.edu/studentorgs/brandeis>

support Academic Freedom (within the law) and should continue to show leadership in seeking to build bridges between people and groups.

Recommendation 1: The University leadership at all levels and across all staff groups and grades, and within the Students' Union, should be proactive in speaking about the values of the University, emphasising equality, diversity and inclusivity, and thus embodying the values of bridge-building across groups of different faiths and none.

Recommendation 2: Human Resources (HR) should ensure that forthcoming work on the Race Equality Charter via the new Self-Assessment Team will address antisemitism and support for students and staff of all faiths.

47. Faith Provision and Support

47.1 The Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Centre at the Colchester Campus provides the locus of support and guidance for students all faiths. A Future of Faith Task and Finish Group was established in 2016 and its recommendations were approved by USG in June 2017. A MoU detailing the links between the University, the Students' Union and the MFCC was approved, including role designations for i) the MF Chaplaincy Chair; ii) University Chaplains; iii) Visiting Chaplains; iv) Assistant Chaplains and Chaplain volunteers; and v) the roles of local or national faith representatives. The review noted that a number of faiths were under-represented by chaplains at the University, including Jewish, Sikh, Hindu and Buddhist. The MFCC used to provide support to Humanists and Quakers, but also no longer does so. The Islamic faith community has space provided for daily prayers and washing facilities, but has no funded Islamic "chaplain"¹⁸ or faith representative.

47.2 The review also noted that, as part of the development of the Academic Section, a post would be developed within the existing Academic Section budget envelope to undertake a range of consolidated duties relating to our approach to faith and belief and the provision of services offered through the MFCC at the three campuses, including a small operating budget to support the running of the MFCC and associated activities. Subsequently, the new Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service, which was established in 2018, includes within its remit responsibility for oversight of the MFCC.

47.3 During the course of the Review, it has been noted that a number of universities have established very effective faith and interfaith centres to coordinate better bridge-building between people of different faiths and those of none¹⁹. This Review recommends that a change at Essex is required and that the MFCC be renamed "The Faith Centre".

Recommendation 3: The change of name to The Faith Centre and associated support is implemented and communicated by Academic Section, the Students' Union and Communications and External Relations (CER).

¹⁸ The MFCC currently uses the language of "chaplain" to represent the formal faith representative of all faiths, regardless of whether the term is used within each faith. Other terms for leaders include Rabbi, Clergy, Abbot, Gurdwara, Lama, Pujari.

¹⁹ A good example is the Xavier University (Cincinnati) Center for Interfaith Community Engagement: <https://www.xavier.edu/interfaith/>

47.4 This Review notes the importance of providing a focal point of leadership for the delivery of our support services for all faiths and none. It therefore recommends that a new post in the Academic Section be established as the Faith Centre Manager. The new Faith Centre Manager will provide continuous support and guidance to the Faith Centre, its chaplains and its various faith representatives, as well as providing an operational link to student societies. This post should commence from next academic year (from 1 August 2019).

Recommendation 4: Academic Section to lead on establishing, recruiting and embedding the Faith Centre (FC) Manager into the appropriate team in the Section and, working across the institution, into the wider day to day work of the University.

47.5 This Review recommends that the Faith Centre be allocated an increased annual operating budget, to be administered by Academic Section and the FC Committee, and coordinated by the FC Manager. This budget should commence from 1 August 2019.

Recommendation 5: Finance to allocate an increased and appropriate annual operating budget via the Academic Section budget.

Recommendation 6: Academic Section and FC Manager to bring forward proposals in the next Planning Round (2019-20) regarding any proposed changes to funding priorities within the Faith Centre.

47.6 This Review recommends that there is explicit and regular presence of a Jewish Chaplain for the Jewish community. The University Jewish Chaplaincy (UJC) provides support across UK universities for Jewish students of all backgrounds and affiliations. The regional centre is in Cambridge, where support is allocated for the Universities of Anglia Ruskin, Cambridge, East Anglia and Essex. The UJC chaplain Rabbi Mordechai Zeller visited the University in May 2019, together with the newly appointed regional chaplain, Elazar Symon, who has agreed a regular cycle of visits and support for the next and future academic years.

Recommendation 7: This Review recommends that i) the Chaplaincy Chair and FC Manager maintain links with Elazar and Alissa Symon, UJC regional chaplains, who should be invited to annual meetings of the FC; ii) the regular presence of Jewish Chaplains is advertised to Jewish students for the academic year 2019-20 and onwards; and iii) the FC Manager ensures the appropriate safeguarding checks are undertaken and completed.

47.7 The MFCC chaplains do not receive “all-staff” emails, even though there are other categories of non-paid staff who are listed in this email group (e.g. Emeritus and Visiting Professors).

Recommendation 8: Communications and External Relations (Comms) to ensure all relevant chaplains receive all-staff emails and communications.

48. The Student Jewish Society (and Ratification of New Student Societies)

48.1 The student Jewish Society has been established and is now active²⁰. Support is provided by the Students Union. The Society will develop a programme of invited talks and student engagement according to its own preferences. Following a request from

²⁰ Several alumni have noted that there was an active Jewish and Israel support society in the past.

the Jewish Society, the University has been able to provide a location for Shabbat celebrations on Fridays, with access to the neighbouring kitchen for food preparation and warming. The Timetabling team has ensured that the Lakeview Room in the Silberrad Centre is allocated to the Jewish Society for every Friday of this academic year (excepting the day of The End²¹), and will ensure this booking is extended for the next academic year. Campus Services have provided a dedicated food heating unit for the Society.

Recommendation 9: i) Timetabling to confirm Lakeview Room bookings on Fridays for the Jewish Society, ii) Campus Services to provide kitchen equipment support.

48.2 The Students' Union (both executive officers and elected sabbatical officers), Student Support team and Faith Centre Manager should continue to maintain close links with the Jewish Society to ensure their needs are met, including in the provision of security and support where a risk has been identified.

Recommendation 10: The Students' Union to provide continued advice and support to the Jewish Society.

48.3 Through the Faith Centre, interfaith bridge-building activities should be prioritised to seek ways of creating friendships and building social capital across and within groups of different faith.

Recommendation 11: Faith Centre Manager and Chaplaincy Committee to develop a clear programme of activities to increase interfaith understanding amongst the student body, working with the Students' Union.

48.4 The ratification process for new Students' Union societies has been amended following internal discussion and feedback from students. On Monday 29 April, the Societies Guild voted to dissolve the Societies Guild and adopt the SU Societies Terms of Reference at the Societies Guild AGM. It was clear that the democratic structure and constitution that was in place had become a source of barriers rather than of support to the membership. After a consultation period with the membership via two general meetings and a feedback session, a motion to dissolve the Societies Guild and to adopt a terms of reference for SU Affiliated Societies was passed at the AGM.

48.5 Societies will no longer have to go through an online ratification process and applications for new societies can automatically be approved assuming i) it does not duplicate any other SU recognised group; ii) the appropriate documentation is supplied; iii) it does not conflict with the Societies Terms of Reference and any SU documentation that supersedes it; iv) if a society is rejected as it is deemed too similar there will be an opportunity to appeal this decision by demonstrating how they are different from the group with which it conflicts. If this does not resolve the situation it can be put forward for ratification and members of the Students' Union will be able to vote.

²¹ The final Friday of the last exam week, during which all University buildings are locked.

49. Training for University and Students' Union Staff and Sabbatical Officers of the Students' Union

- 49.1 Academic and professional services staff at the University, and staff and elected sabbatical officers of the Student' Union, undertake a wide range of mandatory training as part of their duties. This includes training on equality and diversity, health and safety, information security, financial regulations, unconscious bias, safeguarding, and managing diversity. There is a need for current bystander training (with its focus on sexual conduct) to be expanded to include antisemitism, and for specific training on antisemitism to be made mandatory for all officer-holders of the University, and for the Students' Union to consider training for its staff and sabbaticals.
- 49.2 The Union of Jewish Students has offered antisemitism training to the incoming elected sabbatical officers of the Students' Union.

Recommendation 12: Expand the current bystander training for students and staff to include issues relating to antisemitism. Human Resources (HR) and Academic Section to work on amending bystander training offer.

Recommendation 13: Ensure that all office holders of the University (USG, Deans and Deputy Deans, Heads of Departments/Schools and Sections) undertake mandatory training on antisemitism. Organisational Development (in HR) to develop an appropriate training package, and USG to review uptake of training.

Recommendation 14: The SU should take up the offer of training from the UJS, and ensure that all future sabbatical officers receive appropriate induction and training.

50. Bridge Building through Educational Offer

- 50.1 A key component of the University's offer centres on a transformative education. This is a value proposition: whatever the economic, cultural or religious background of potential students, all are welcome at the University of Essex, and all can benefit from its educational offer. By definition, this recognises many different starting points in knowledge, values and worldviews. At the point of enrolment, new students will bring a rich variety of culturally-inherited views and values.
- 50.2 The University is currently taking part in an Advance HE project entitled *Towards Embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the Curriculum*²² whose aims are to i) support the enhancement of sector-wide understanding of what embedding EDI in the curriculum looks like; ii) explore the obstacles to and opportunities available for embedding EDI in the curriculum, developing a picture of institutional, departmental and subject readiness for change; and iii) identify and implement institutional, departmental and subject-specific EDI approaches to improve the learning and teaching experiences for their students. This will lead to an Action Plan in mid-2019²³.

Recommendation 15: PVC-E to lead on an Action Plan to be produced with recommendations on embedding equality, diversity and inclusion to be implemented in the curriculum for both new provision as it is established, and for existing provision as it is reviewed and developed through the standard quality assurance and enhancement processes.

²² See: <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/institutions/consultancy/edi-curriculum-project>

²³ A number of high quality online learning platforms are available, e.g. on the origins of antisemitism at: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/antisemitism>

Recommendation 16: Heads of Department and Directors of Education should draw the attention of staff and students to the provision that is available through the University's Flexible Working Policy, and University Timetable Policy, to support changes to the timing of teaching events where the timing of teaching does not support the observance of Shabbat and other Jewish festivals, as well as other important festival dates and times of other faiths.

51. Building on the Work of the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief

51.1 The United Nations appointed Dr Ahmed Shaheed of the University's School of Law to the prestigious position of UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief²⁴. Dr Shaheed will be presenting an Annual Report on this topic to the UN General Assembly in October 2019. The focus will be on addressing the challenges presented by antisemitism globally. A number of actions have been identified to use the mandate to promote work on tolerance, civility and addressing antisemitism at the University of Essex (See Annex D).

51.2 The Human Rights Centre at the University of Essex is a hub of human rights activity, bringing together a vibrant community of students, over 2000 alumni, more than 100 members from eleven disciplines, fellows and partners. The Centre plays a leadership role in identifying and responding to emerging and enduring human rights issues through research and practice. The Centre offers events and conferences on and off campus as well as delivering the summer school in Human Rights Research Methods.

Recommendation 17: The University to give support to Dr Ahmed Shaheed on implementing the proposed action plan (Annex D); with support from the School of Law, the Faculty of Humanities, and Academic Section via the new Faith Centre Manager.

52. Conduct and Complaints

52.1 The University launched a new Harassment Report and Support Service in 2017²⁵. The Harassment Report and Support Service can be accessed by employees, workers, contractors, students and visitors to the University. Reports of harassment or bullying received by a Harassment Support Worker will be passed on to Human Resources (where the alleged perpetrator is an employee, worker, contractor or visitor) or to the Student Progress Team (where the alleged perpetrator is a student) and appropriate action will be taken. Staff or students can also report a hate incident or crime to the University's Hate Incident Reporting Centre (HIRC). The HIRC can assist staff and students in reporting hate incidents or crimes to Essex Police.

52.2 Student complaint procedures, expectations and penalties are set out in the Calendar²⁶. These are supported by staff within the Student Conduct team, including one Proctor (term-time only) and one Associate Proctor (with a focus only on complaints arising from student accommodation).

²⁴ UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/freedomreligion/pages/freedomreligionindex.aspx>

²⁵ University of Essex: <https://reportandsupport.essex.ac.uk/>

²⁶ University of Essex governance calendar: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/university-calendar> The Code of Student Conduct in Residential Accommodation is p121; Penalties the Associate Proctor can impose are at para 37, p125; The Code of Student Conduct is from p130; penalties the Proctor can impose are at para 46, p135. Should a case be serious and referred to a Student Conduct Committee, the penalties they can impose are at para 74, p139.

- 52.3 A number of complaints on antisemitism have recently been made by students to the Student Conduct Office, and investigations have been undertaken by the Proctor. Problems have been identified on communications with complainants, quality of feedback on the outcome of investigations through correspondence, and delays in launching, completing and communicating on outcomes of investigations.
- 52.4 In January 2019, it was reported to Senate that the University was already undertaking a review of its approach to student conduct. The purpose of the review is to ensure that student conduct issues are tackled in a holistic way, making our standards of behaviour clear to students and ensuring effective enforcement of our Code of Student Conduct to enable timely outcomes that reduce further allegations of misconduct. This review will help to ensure that all members of the community have confidence in the University's approach to student conduct, and how it makes a positive contribution to nurturing a safer culture. This work will include appropriate staff training.
- 52.5 Reviews of the Code of Student Conduct and of the Code of Student Conduct in Residential Accommodation are currently underway. These Reviews are supported by a Task and Finish Group with representation from the Academic Section, Students' Union, Student Conduct Panel (academic staff and student members), Security, Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service, Human Resources, Accommodation and Information Assurance. The Task and Finish Group has drawn on the new good practice guidance from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, other sector guidance, and on learning from recent complex and sensitive cases which relate to sexual misconduct, harassment and hate crime, as set out in the University's Zero Tolerance Policy to inform its work. The new Code of Student Conduct will be introduced for the start of the academic year 2019-20. The Code of Student Conduct covers wide expectations of student behaviour, and will form the basis for a system of fair and transparent support for students who make complaints.
- 52.6 The Reviews are considering whether the principles, regulations and penalties contained in the Codes continue to be appropriate, proportionate and fit for purpose, with a specific focus on (i) the structures and operating procedures that support implementation of the Codes, (ii) how the Codes operationalise the University's zero tolerance approach and ensures effective support for those involved, (iii) ensuring the Codes reflect changes in external legislation, and (iv) how the Codes align with relevant policies and procedures that govern students' professional behaviours in relation to work-based and professional courses. The review is also considering how effective communication can support the operation of the Codes. This extends from the accessibility of the Codes themselves (use of language and structure), through to communication with individuals to ensure that all parties feel they are well supported and understand the reasons why decisions are made. The University is committed to keeping all parties informed of progress relating to a case and to being explicit about what communication an individual who reports an allegation can expect to receive at the conclusion of the case.

Recommendation 18: The review of both the Code of Student Conduct and enhancements to the operation of the Code by the Academic Section as well as the review of the Student Charter should be completed and implemented for the start of the first academic term of 2019-20.

- 52.7 This review notes that, alongside the review of the Code of Student Conduct and the related enhancement work, an additional post of Proctor has been approved through the 2018-19 planning round on recommendation of the Academic Registrar. The new post will increase the capacity in the Student Conduct team in processing allegations of misconduct to address the need for the timelier handling of allegations, engagement with the wider University community and our revised approach to reporting and analysis.

Recommendation 19: The new 1.0 FTE Proctor should be recruited to the Student Conduct team.

53. Student Recruitment and Outreach

- 53.1 Student recruitment material should make explicit that the University welcomes Jewish students (and students of all faiths) and detail the support available both prior to arrival at university and during the period of study. This will require changes to undergraduate and postgraduate prospectuses and other marketing materials.

Recommendation 20: Communications and External Relations (CER, Marketing) to implement changes to undergraduate and postgraduate prospectuses and other marketing materials.

- 53.2 The Welcome Countdown (weeks 5-4-3-2-1) and Welcome Week should contain explicit reference to students of different faiths, and detail what they can expect whilst studying for an Essex degree. The new Faith Centre Manager should coordinate the input of language, and ensure the FC has a high profile presence (e.g. on the squares at the Colchester campus) during Welcome Week. The dates of the Jewish high holidays, that fall in Sept/Oct²⁷, should be checked to ensure that events do not conflict or, if they must, that students are reassured that adequate alternative arrangements are made²⁸. The MFCC has requested production of a welcome video to be posted on the website and used within pre-arrivals correspondence.

Recommendation 21: Communications and External Relations and FC Manager (Academic Section) to coordinate Welcome Week countdown and involvement of the Faith Centre in Welcome Week activities.

- 53.3 Student profiles on the University website should include clear examples of Jewish students and students of other faiths.

Recommendation 22: Communications and External Relations (Recruitment and Marketing) to commission and upload appropriate student profiles from Jewish students, and students of other faiths and none²⁹.

²⁷ The dates for Yom Kippur in 2019 are 8-9th October, and for 2020 are 27-28th September; Rosh Hashanah (the Jewish New Year) is 29 September to 1 October 2019, and 18-20th September 2020.

²⁸ Note that the dates of Jewish festivals change each year.

²⁹ A Jewish student profile was published in May 2019: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/we-are-essex/inspirational/amy-julies-story>;

Other faith-oriented profiles now include members of the Islamic Society: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/we-are-essex/ambitious/ismas-story>; and <https://www.essex.ac.uk/we-are-essex/inspirational/rasheedats-story>

Humanist Society: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/we-are-essex/inspirational/davids-story>;

Believers LoveWorld Society: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/we-are-essex/love/euphrose-joseph-and-gabbys-story>;

Catholic Society: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/we-are-essex/heartwarming/karolinas-story>;

Jesus Alive Fellowship: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/we-are-essex/love/henrietta-and-tonis-story>;

- 53.4 The University website should contain clear messages of welcome and support for students and staff of all faiths, including explicit mention of Jewish students and alumni. The website should contain a link to “Faith” one click away from the launch page under the “Life” button.

Recommendation 23: Communications and External Relations (Marketing and Recruitment) should ensure the website is revised to offer support to students and staff of all faiths. CER and Faith Centre Manager (Academic Section) to ensure a link to Faith is made from the “Life” section on University website.

- 53.5 The banners on the Colchester campus carry welcome messages in a range of majority languages: a system should be developed to select and highlight the use of minority languages in communications, and priority should be given to the use of Hebrew and languages of other faiths.

Recommendation 24: Communications and External Relations (Comms) to develop and implement a system for selecting and rotating physical and digital banners in languages of students and staff.

- 53.6 The University of Essex is host to one of the countrywide National Collaborative Outreach Programmes (NCOP). The aim of the NCOP is to increase engagement with higher education from low-participation wards, schools and communities. The NCOP will now: i) reach out to specific communities (e.g. in Southend and Canvey Island) to encourage participation in NCOP and University of Essex based pre-university activities; ii) update the schools liaison website to ensure it refers to different faiths (initially to Jewish communities); and iii) liaise with local authorities in Essex to improve schools engagement within Jewish communities.

Recommendation 25: Communications and External Relations (Schools and Outreach) to implement approaches within NCOP and the University’s own Outreach to ensure engagement with schools in Jewish communities.

54. Staff Recruitment

- 54.1 Staff recruitment materials should make explicit that the University welcomes staff of all faiths and backgrounds (including Jewish staff), and detail the support available once employment has been taken up.

Recommendation 26: HR (Recruitment) should ensure that information on staff recruitment in online and job pack locations contains appropriate welcomes to potential staff of all faiths and backgrounds.

55. Social Media Guidance for Staff

- 55.1 Social media platforms offer a wide range of opportunities for the University and its staff to progress institutional and personal priorities. These outlets have been helpful for marketing, student recruitment, events, research, business links and public engagement. Many individual staff have personal social media accounts across a range of platforms.
- 55.2 There are, however, many potential traps, particularly as employees seek to navigate the differences and overlaps between messages with personal and/or institutional content. The University’s Human Resources and Equality and Diversity Group

considered new social media guidelines on 9 May 2019, and these will be approved by University Steering Group (USG) for implementation in academic year 2019-20. The guidelines will be communicated to all staff as an Annex to guidance on The Way We Work at Essex (approved by USG in 2019).

Recommendation 27: Human Resources to incorporate new Social Media Guidance into existing staff induction and communications processes, and ensure all staff are aware of the institutional expectations on them when using social media for both personal and institutional purposes.

56. Communications and Events

56.1 Attention should be paid to the explicit celebration of religion-based festivals in University communications. Each year, the enormoboards celebrate Christmas and send good wishes to all. These sites do not, however, carry similar messages for Hanukkah (22-30 December 2019; 10-18 December 2020) or for Ramadan (9th month of Islamic calendar: in 2019 from 5 May to 4 June; in 2020, from 23 April to 23 May), or indeed for key dates for other faiths³⁰.

56.2 Opportunities should be taken through Essex Weekly and Essex Diary to celebrate the activities of faith groups at the University.

Recommendation 28: Communications and External Relations (Comms) to ensure appropriate celebrations are made for key times for different faith groups, including the use of appropriate languages.

56.3 The University has marked Holocaust Memorial Day since 2007 (in 2020: 27 January) with a week of coordinated events, including the reading names on the squares, film screenings and discussions, co-services in the local community, and street theatre (e.g. on lessons from the Kindertransport).

56.4 The Dora Love Prize celebrates the work of Essex Honorary Graduate and Colchester resident, Dora Love³¹, a Holocaust survivor who spent much of her life raising awareness of attitudes that made the Holocaust possible. The year 2020 will be the 8th year of the prize, which is open to Year 7-10 students at schools in Essex and Suffolk. The prize is not endowed nor has been given regular support. The University should provide financial support to the Dora Love prize, as well as continue to provide organisational support for events at the Colchester campus associated with the awards evening.

Recommendation 29: Finance should allocate funding for the Dora Love prize; CER (Events) should provide organisational support for the Dora Love awards and evening.

Recommendation 30: Senior staff of the University and the Students' Union should ensure appropriate broad-based attendance at the key event associated with Holocaust Memorial Day.

56.5 Consideration should be given to ensuring as far as is reasonably possible that major University events in the future are not organised on Friday evenings and Saturdays, as these will by definition exclude observant Jewish students and staff.

³⁰ Note: the dates for Hanukkah and Ramadan change each year.

³¹ Dora Love died in 2011: See <https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/history/events/the-dora-love-prize>

Recommendation 31: Communications and External Relations (Comms and Events) should include this guidance in practice, and liaise with Departments and Sections as appropriate.

57. Food Services

- 57.1 Food and refreshment services at the University are offered by both Campus Services (Essex Food) and the Students' Union. The primary challenge for Essex Food has been to strike the right balance between the provision of food for minority markets and to offer a diverse range of dishes to the more mainstream market, and this within the constraints of space and commercial sustainability.
- 57.2 In addition to these challenges, there are logistical and operational considerations around production and preparation of specific foods, such as Kosher, that need strict separation from other tasks. Currently there is no specific provision of Kosher food in University or SU shops and outlets. Previously, a kosher kitchen was available to the Jewish Society of the University in East Lodge (near Wivenhoe House).
- 57.3 Essex Food provides a wide range of vegetarian and vegan options in all outlets. (recognising the growing expectation of students and staff for both). In addition Essex Food has launched "The Vegan Greek" on square 4 in one of the catering huts, which focuses solely on the provision of vegan fayre. Halal meat is available in two locations at the Colchester campus (Canteen and Buffalo Joes), and all chicken purchased is now Halal. Buffalo Joes also has a supplementary range of Halal products and is set up to manage the preparation of these.
- 57.4 Essex Food has investigated the provision of Kosher food, but initial enquiries have not been promising. Fresh meat suppliers are in short supply, and prices are prohibitively high. There is however potential for ready cooked meals to be offered once demand has been gauged. Essex Food will also investigate more traditional Kosher items such as bakery goods that do not pose the same preparation and production challenges.
- 57.5 Essex Food has recently completed a series of focus groups with staff and students, and the feedback from this and an earlier university-wide food survey suggests they cater well for minority groups, and the clear message has been to focus on vegetarian and vegan offers together with an overall requirement for freshly prepared healthy options.

Recommendation 32: Essex Food (EF) and the Students' Union should discuss these findings with relevant student societies to map out an agreed plan to ensure the University is providing appropriate foods and refreshments, as well as managing expectations and supporting the diversity of the university campuses. EF and the SU should at the least provide baked kosher goods before and during key Jewish festivals (e.g. during Pesach/Passover; and Chanukah/Hanukkah), and should discuss with Jewish and Muslim students how vegetarian catering might be emphasised and kept separate.

Recommendation 33: Essex Food should consider the possibility of providing a kosher kitchen facility for observant Jewish students.

Conclusions

58. A large number of people within and outside the University contributed to the work of this Review. A total of 33 recommendations have been made for immediate implementation.
59. This Report of the Review is commended to the University Steering Group and then to Senate (the academic decision-making body) and to Council (the governing body) for endorsement, support and approval.
60. The University Steering Group should receive a half-yearly review on implementation of these recommendations in December 2019, and then determine how often further updates should be received.

Professor Jules Pretty, Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Lucy Johnson, Assistant Registrar

6 June 2019

Annex A

Review of the Experiences of Jewish Students and Staff at the University of Essex: Terms of Reference

Review lead

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, University of Essex

Timetable

Interim oral reports to University Steering Group by 30 April and to the University Senate and Council by mid-May. Final report to Council by 11 July 2019.

Aims

1. The Review will gather information on the experiences of Jewish students and staff at the University of Essex. It will draw upon best practice and expertise outside the University as well as inside.
2. The Review will identify ways in which the University can have greater confidence that the experience of Jewish students and staff reflects the University's unequivocal commitments and values to equality, diversity and tolerance.

Recommendations

The Review will:

- Make recommendations to the University's Council on actions that the University should take to address all issues of concern that arise from the review;
- Identify mechanisms so that Council will be able to satisfy itself that through clear actions the University is having a positive impact on the lived experience of Jewish students and staff;
- Draw any wider conclusions of relevance to all minority groups at the University to ensure that all communities, including minority faith communities, at Essex feel welcome.

Annex B

Statement from members of the Independent External Group

1. The Independent External Group comprised:
 - Rabbi Baroness Julia Neuberger DBE, House of Lords, London;
 - Simon Johnson, Chief Executive, Jewish Leadership Council, London;
 - Mark Gardner, Deputy Chief Executive, Community Security Trust, London;
 - Rt Hon Baroness Jan Royall, Principal, Somerville College Oxford.
2. The University wishes to thank all members of the Group for their advice, support, guidance and external challenge during the process of this Review.
3. The Independent External Group made the following Statement on 4 June 2019:
 - 3.1 *The Independent External Group is very impressed by the way that the University of Essex has addressed the serious issues that it faced earlier in the year. We are pleased to have been involved in what we believe to have been an exemplary process.*
 - 3.2 *The Independent External Group believes that the University responded rapidly to the allegations of discrimination against Jewish students caused by the vote against establishing a Jewish society. It quickly removed the discrimination, held events in solidarity, commissioned this Report, ensured that evidence was collected and considered, and that this Report was independently scrutinised.*
 - 3.3 *We therefore consider that this report represents a model of the response that an institution such as a university should make to allegations of, or concerns about, antisemitism or any other form of discrimination. We urge other Universities to learn from the spirit, actions and content of this investigation, whether in regard to Jewish concerns or those of any other group.*
 - 3.4 *The approach taken by the University of Essex encapsulates best practice in addressing antisemitism and indeed any other form of discrimination. The recommendations follow through by advising on, or insisting on, actions to be taken. We are particularly pleased that the University has taken rapid and early action, without waiting to complete the Review or Report, and that the Students' Union has already changed its rules for the establishment of new student societies.*
 - 3.5 *We sincerely hope that the implementation of these recommendations will better enable Jewish students at Essex to feel properly supported by the University, and that this helps to heal some of the hurt that they have felt.*
 - 3.6 *With the very obvious exceptions of the threatened refusal to accept a Jewish society and the actions of a lecturer who has now, correctly, been dismissed, the other material that we reviewed from Essex students, staff and alumni was broadly similar to that experienced by Jews in other UK universities. It did not mark Essex out as being an*

especially hostile environment. It did, however, reinforce the need for all Universities to be fully aware of their responsibility for the wellbeing of Jewish students.

3.7 We believe that the implementation by Essex of the 33 Recommendations in the Report, which we welcome, would serve to address the complaints made in the evidence that we reviewed, and will make a considerable contribution to addressing cultural change.

3.8 As an Independent External Group, representing the Jewish community and going beyond it, we were very pleased to have been asked to advise on both the process and outcomes, to review the evidence and to comment on the Report. The fact that the University wished to involve us in this way is enormously welcome and the cooperation the University has given to us has been exemplary.

3.9 We would like to express our thanks and appreciation to Professor Jules Pretty and all those involved. We particularly wish to commend the rapid and fair responses that Prof Pretty and his team gave to the issues that we raised in our scrutiny of the process.

Annex C

Selection of Quotes from Staff, Students and Alumni

Students

Student A: "Jewish people are highly diverse: we are not all one type."

Student B: "There are no consequences for antisemitic actions. We have no sense that there are consequences."

Student C: "Everyone is so paranoid [in Colchester]."

Student D: "Though undoubtedly difficult, it is in choosing to disengage from the psychological trap of the "us" versus "them" dynamic, and in the acknowledgement of our mutual dependence and common humanity that antisemitism (or any other form of racism) can be addressed and, perhaps, overcome."

Student E: "Certain kinds of criticism, or "anti-zionism" can be antisemitism or could indicate the person is likely to be antisemitic. However, I have not personally experienced any of that at Essex.... Being Jewish has religious, cultural, and ethnic elements. It's not the place of non-Jews to tell us what we should focus on."

Student F: "The majority of my family are practising Jews... As tensions surrounding Jewish communities and anti-Semitism rise, I cannot help but feel worried about experiencing anti-Semitic views on my day-to-day life... I cannot truly say that I feel a sense of belonging, or even say that I feel completely safe as a Jewish and 'Jewish looking' student at the University... Once more I thank you for the opportunity to express my views on my life as a Jewish student at the University of Essex and look forward to continuing my studies here, hopefully feeling safer in doing so."

Staff

Staff A: "When I hear conspiracy theories about Jews, being behind world power or pulling the strings, it is not just offensive, it is scary. It triggers fear."

Staff B: "Antisemitism may be from a small number, and may have arisen from attitudes imported to the University, but I was very upset" [at the voting against the Jewish Society, and the social media postings].

Staff C: "All threats have echoes in the past."

Staff D: "I have worked at the University since 2010, and have experienced two instances of direct antisemitism. One colleague said, 'as a Jew' I would 'know where to find the bargains.'"

Staff E: "The member of staff [under investigation] had been posting unpleasant antisemitic articles for some time. No one within the University community felt they should or were able to report him."

Staff F: "I am a Jewish member of staff and have never been subjected to, or witnessed, any antisemitism in this University."

Staff G: "It is possible to be pro-Palestinian and not antisemitic." (Jewish member of staff)

Staff H: "The recent reports about our campus have come as a shock to me, based on my experience of having been a student here as well as a member of staff: One of the things I am most proud of about Essex is that it is a place where there is respect and tolerance of all religions, and space to discuss both the politicised and depoliticised

aspects of religion whilst retaining that respect for each other's beliefs and cultural practices that come from the various belief systems on campus."

Staff I: "My hope is that the University would do all that it can to promote open and inclusive debates on Israel/Palestine, whereby students and staff – Jews and others – can freely voice criticism of what they regard as past and present injustices."

Staff J: "I am Jewish and Israeli. I grew up on a Kibbutz in Israel. My grandparents were all Eastern European (Germany and Lithuania) who immigrated to Israel in the 1930s as Marxists/Zionists... While I am worried by the current rise of antisemitism and the great confusion between anti-Israel, anti-Israeli-government and antisemitism, I do not believe I experience any of this at work."

Staff K: "Staff involved in student recruitment have noted that the lack of kosher food [on the Colchester campus] deters prospective students... On applicant days, they are disappointed and are no longer interested in attending [the University]."

Alumni

Alumnus A (2011 graduand): "I was a Staff Member and an MA student at the University of Essex. I had one of my worst experiences of aggression and intimidation for being Jewish and defending my national affinity to Israel while I was at Essex. Although I had a wonderful time at Essex, grew immensely academically and professionally, and had great colleagues and friends, I felt a sense of relief and security when I returned back to my community in North London. I don't believe this is how it should feel. I would like to do what I can to ensure that Jewish/Israeli students and staff in the future feel welcome at Essex."

Alumnus B (2018 graduand): "As a graduated Jewish student this news is very upsetting to me. I reported anti-Semitism at East15 in my first year there and there was nothing done with it ever, so this news unfortunately doesn't surprise me at all. I probably wasn't the only Jewish student at East15 but it almost felt like a bad thing to be Jewish so no one talked about it. I hope this will finally change this. I would've loved to see East15 take more of a position on the news that just came out, but unsurprisingly no one has said anything. None of the student graduates or 'official Facebook page'. I hope that one day anti-Semitism will finally be taken seriously and you will actually take an active stand against it."

Alumnus C (2001 graduand): "I earned my masters in Jung and Post-Jungian Studies in 2000. I am Jewish. I did not experience any anti-Semitism from anyone while I was there. I am not happy with what is happening in Israel and its treatment of its neighbour, Palestine and I am a Jew. It is so strange we can be so maligned and so mistreated when we are so few."

External

External academic A: "This is just a short note to offer my praise and support for your principled and courageous stand in support of the Essex U Jewish Society. Our whole community stands in admiration of you... If I can lend my help or support to you or the Jewish Society in any way, I would be delighted."

Annex D

Proposed Actions Led by UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief at the University of Essex

Statement of actions proposed by Dr Ahmed Shaheed, School of Law and UN Special Rapporteur

The ways in which the UN mandate can be helpful for the University in addressing the immediate question of tackling antisemitism and the broader challenge of fostering a more inclusive environment on campus include the following:

- 1) The annual report to the UN General Assembly in October 2020 will be on addressing the challenges presented by antisemitism globally, I could convene an event on campus in November ahead of the *International Day of Tolerance*³² to generate awareness of the global dimensions of intolerance, including antisemitism, and to develop a programme that fosters an ongoing engagement with all forms of intolerance.
- 2) I will be holding a consultation on antisemitism in London with Jewish communities in the UK as part of my preparation for the UN report. I could involve our Jewish Student Society in this activity in London or hold a separate consultation on campus - though the latter could be too close to exams.
- 3) One of the ways in which Special Rapporteurs can be helpful is to use their 'convening power' to pull together experts to discuss specific issues. The SR presence can be used to *develop a five-year rolling programme* at Essex from the academic year 2019-20 through to 2023-24. Such a programme can annually highlight or commemorate key international milestones that address issues of antisemitism, intolerance and discrimination pegged on to five very important milestones on themes that are closely inter-related. What I envisage is a series of student-facing activities that enables the cohort of each year to engage with issues related to all forms of intolerance from slightly different angles. As a five-year programme we can develop links across other universities in the UK and assist students convene one mini-conference or similar event each year.
 - a. The *75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz* as a key theme running through academic year 2019-2020, with Holocaust Remembrance given a special focus. [My October 2019 UN report on antisemitism could also contribute to some of these activities]. The year can also look at more recent mass atrocities such as the situation in Myanmar or in China, or recent atrocities such as against the Yazidis.
 - b. The *10th anniversary of the UN Human Rights Council's 2011 landmark resolution (resolution 16/18) addressing hate speech*³³, which for many is one of the most important achievements of the Council. '16/18' ended the decade long debate in UN fora on defamation of religion versus freedom of expression, and identified a plan of action for promoting inclusion, pluralism, respect, harmony and the rule of law.

³² The date annually is 16 November but this year it will need to be marked earlier in the week to avoid the weekend.

³³ The actual title of the resolution runs into 3 lines: "Combating Intolerance, Negative Stereotyping and Stigmatisation of, and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against, persons based on religion or belief."

Resolution 16/18 is also closely related to the 2011 *Rabat Plan of Action* that focuses on how to respond to incitement to religious, racial or ethnic hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility and violence. The notion that hate speech requires a response with counter speech is one of the central ideas associated with this Action Plan. I am doing a lot of work on both 16/18 and the Rabat Plan of Action, and some of that can be done on campus and engage students in that (Academic Year 2020-2021).

- c. The 40th anniversary of the 1981 UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. The role of the Special Rapporteur was created to monitor the progress achieved in implementing this Declaration. (Academic year 2021-2022). A major conference on campus can engage students and experts from the UK and elsewhere.
- d. The 30th anniversary of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (Academic year 2022-2023). This Declaration is again related to the theme of addressing intolerance, and broadens the focus through a set of inter-related issues, thus enabling the University to build a wider programme that leaves behind a good legacy and can be sustained.
- e. Reflections on recent mass atrocities (Academic year 2023-2024). A year that focuses on comparatively recent mass atrocities such as the Rwandan Genocide (April 1994), highlighting the dangers of incitement to violence; or the Yazidi Genocide (August 2014) focusing on religious intolerance. In addition to my UN mandate (which would end in 2023) the Essex Transitional Justice Network can play a vital role.