

R-24-08: Motion on Combatting Antisemitism

Owner: SRC

Review Date: October 2024

This SRC notes that:

1. Reports of antisemitic incidents in the UK have reached a record high in 2023.ⁱ
2. There have been 68 reported antisemitic incidents in Scotland in 2023 for a population of roughly 6000, a ratio of approximately one incident per 88 Jews.^{ii, iii}
3. Antisemitic incidents in the higher education sector has more than doubled between 2022 and 2023.^{iv}
4. 66% of antisemitic incidents across the UK in 2023 occurred in the aftermath of October 7th.^{v, vi}
5. Two thirds of these reported incidents on UK campuses occurred between October 7th and December 31st.^{vii}
6. Jewish students in St Andrews have experienced antisemitism on campus, and a rise in anti-Jewish sentiment in St Andrews and other UK campuses since October 7 2023 has led to Jewish students feeling unsafe and added to sentiments of fear and exclusion.^{viii, ix, x, xi}
7. The Scottish Government formally accepted the IHRA working definition for antisemitism in June 2017.^{xii}
8. The University of St Andrews conducted a review and consultation of the IHRA definition in 2022; the results of which were presented in a paper to the Academic Senate. Due to a lack of consensus, it was recommended that it be preserved alongside other definitions and resources, such as The Jerusalem Declaration (1), instead of being formally adopted.^{xiii, xiv, xv}

This SRC Believes that:

1. Antisemitism is a form of racism and must be condemned, combatted and rooted out.
2. Training people in understanding what antisemitism is and how to combat it is a useful way of tackling antisemitism.^{xvi}

3. Understanding contemporary and historical antisemitism are both important in understanding struggles that Jewish students face on campus today.
4. The Student's Association can make a tangible difference in ensuring and promoting safety on campus for Jewish students by sharing resources in tackling and reporting antisemitism.

This SRC Resolves That:

1. The Students' Association President will communicate via email to all students condemning antisemitism and rising antisemitic sentiment on campuses, urging students to call it out and providing educational resources to help inform students. The content of the email and the resources provided will be created in close collaboration with the Jewish Society and Jewish voices who wish to be involved.
2. The Students' Association will request that their Board of Trustees will provide all sabbatical officers and members of the Student Representative Council with mandatory annual antisemitism awareness training. In choosing which organisation provides the training and the content of it, the Jewish Society and Jewish voices who wish to be involved will be closely consulted and have confidence in the training provided.
3. The Students' Association will promote events promoting Jewish culture to foster understanding and good relations will be promoted by the Student's Association.
4. The Student's Association will agree to formally meet with the Jewish Society and Jewish voices who wish to be involved to regularly to discuss how the SA can further support the community with regard to antisemitism.
5. The Students' Association agrees to host open meetings for Jewish students, which may be shared through Jewish Society as well as other relevant and interested parties of the Jewish community these will be facilitated by a trained member of staff to ensure free and fair expression and will see all SRC officers invited to learn from our Jewish members on how to combat antisemitism and promote positive relations on campus.

ⁱ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-68288727>

ⁱⁱ <https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2024/02/15/antisemitic-incidents-report-2023>

ⁱⁱⁱ https://www.scojec.org/resources/files/15iv_census.pdf

^{iv} <https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2024/02/15/antisemitic-incidents-report-2023>

^v <https://www.thejc.com/lets-talk/how-we-educate-universities-on-antisemitism-and-why-we-need-to-ag38nfg§>

^{vi} <https://cst.org.uk>

^{vii} <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-68288727>

^{viii} <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/i-ve-felt-scared-jewish-students-face-hatred-on-campus-h5fjlm0wd5ll>

^{ix} <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/10/28/jewish-students-hide-kippahs-stars-of-david-safety-fears/>

^x <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-786244>

^{xi} <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cxw7ggjyvnxo>

^{xii} <https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/questions-and-answers/question?ref=s6w-07575>

^{xiii} <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/hr/edi/rerbg/antisemitism/>

^{xiv} <https://jerusalemdeclaration.org/>

^{xv} University Court Documents can be requested here: <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/about/governance/senate/meetings/minutes/>

^{xvi} <https://www.thejc.com/lets-talk/how-we-educate-universities-on-antisemitism-and-why-we-need-to-ag38nfg§>