Noah Katz,

Lancaster University Jewish Society,

Chaplaincy Centre,

Lancaster University,

Bailrigg,

LA1 4YW.

Wednesday 21st October 2020

Dear Professor Schofield,

I am writing to you as the Campaigns Officer of the Lancaster University Jewish Society to express our concern about the rise of Antisemitism in society and on campuses in the UK and request your help in tackling it.

[According to the CST](https://cst.org.uk/data/file/9/0/IncidentsReport2019.1580815723.pdf), the charity which monitors Antisemitism in the UK, 2019 saw over 1,800 reported incidents, the highest level ever recorded in the UK. This figure eclipsed the previous records which were set in 2016, 2017, and 2018, meaning that 2019 was the fourth consecutive year figures have hit record levels. Incidents of Antisemitism on UK campuses are also on the rise, with a 60% increase in incidents recorded in 2019. Moreover, polling conducted on behalf of the [Holocaust Memorial Day Trust found](https://www.hmd.org.uk/news/we-release-research-to-mark-holocaust-memorial-day-2019/) that five per cent of UK adults do not believe the Holocaust took place and one in 12 believes its scale has been exaggerated. This unprecedented rise in Antisemitism in our country has led to many within the Jewish community feeling anxious, especially students who are often away from home and their community for the first time in their lives.

To be tackled, it must first be made clear that Antisemitism has no place at Lancaster University.

With this in mind, we request the hasty adoption and implementation of the following International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance [(IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism](https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism), in full, at Lancaster University. (Attached to the email for your convenience).

Due to a [Freedom of Information Act request by the Union of Jewish Students (UJS](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/ujs/pages/1358/attachments/original/1601632621/IHRA_Freedom_of_Information_responses.pdf?1601632621)), we know that 30 UK Universities have adopted the Definition – including, recently, the University of York. In comparison, from the FoI request, we learnt that Lancaster University does not currently use a definition of Antisemitism and worse, somewhat disappointingly, UMAG does not even plan to consider adopting a definition anytime in the future.

The time an individual spends at university is extremely important in shaping the outlook one has on life. As such we believe this gives universities not only the immense responsibility, but also the opportunity, to tackle Antisemitism and other forms of hatred wherever they may arise.

Lancaster University differs from your previous institution, University of Birmingham, in that Lancaster’s Jewish student population constitutes [less than 0.15% of the student body](https://www.ujs.org.uk/lancaster) vs the [~2.86% at Birmingham](https://www.ujs.org.uk/birmingham) ([for reference, the UK Jewish population is around 0.5%](https://www.bod.org.uk/jewish-facts-info/jews-in-numbers/)). The difficulties that Jewish Lancastrians face are intensified because there we are such a small minority. It is important that Jewish Lancastrians have full confidence in UMAG to tackle any Antisemitic incidents which may arise on campus and know that if they are forced to raise a complaint, that it will be judged in accordance with the definition chosen by British, and International, Jewry.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Noah Katz,

Campaigns Officer, Lancaster University Jewish Society.

Co-Signed:

Dominic Casoria – President, Lancaster University Jewish Society.

Max White – Vice President, Lancaster University Jewish Society.

Rebecca Harris – Democracy & Finance Officer, Lancaster University Jewish Society.

Ben Rose – Media Officer, Lancaster University Jewish Society