



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### House of Lords Written Answers

#### Universities: Freedom of Expression

**Baroness Deech (Crossbench)** [HL13580] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether their proposals to champion freedom of speech in universities extends to (1) hate speech, and (2) antisemitic speech, as defined by the International Holocaust Remembrance Association.

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, announced new measures to strengthen free speech and academic freedom at universities in England on 16 February 2021, in order to stamp out unlawful silencing on campuses. The new measures set out in the policy paper will help to ensure that our universities are places where free speech can thrive. The policy paper can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-free-speech-and-academic-freedom>

However, the right to free speech does not include the right to harass others, or to incite violence or terrorism. The government has always been very clear that there is no place in our society, including in higher education, for hatred or any form of harassment, unlawful discrimination or racism, including antisemitism. Universities have clear responsibilities in this regard: they and other higher education providers should be at the forefront of tackling hatred.

In October 2020, the Secretary of State wrote to all higher education providers in England urging adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism. It is estimated that at least 31 additional institutions have adopted the definition since this letter, with more indicating their intention to adopt. We have been clear that adopting the IHRA definition sends a clear and important signal to students and staff that antisemitism is taken seriously and it will not be tolerated. The IHRA definition allows providers better to understand and recognise incidents of antisemitism, which helps them to address

hatred or unlawful discrimination in higher education settings. We will continue to call on providers to adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism.

The government does not see a conflict between protecting freedom of speech and adopting the IHRA definition. Indeed, our strengthened protections for free speech are likely to support Jewish students who on a number of occasions have had their freedom of speech curtailed by others. Universities have clear legal responsibilities regarding discrimination and harassment, and must balance these with their legal duties to protect free speech.

We will continue to work across government to ensure that racism and religious hatred of any kind is not tolerated anywhere, including in our world-leading universities.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-23/hl13580>

*The announcement referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/landmark-proposals-to-strengthen-free-speech-at-universities>

### **Universities: Freedom of Expression**

**Lord Smith of Finsbury (Non-affiliated)** [HL13617] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the free speech duties they intend to place on universities will prohibit the implementation by universities of the duties placed on them under the Prevent programme.

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, set out new measures to strengthen free speech and academic freedom at universities in England on 16 February 2021, in order to stamp out unlawful silencing on campuses. The new measures set out in the policy paper will help to ensure that our universities are places where free speech can thrive.

Higher education providers will continue to be subject to the Prevent duty under Section 26(1) of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The government is clear that the Prevent Duty should not be used to suppress free speech; rather, it requires providers, when exercising their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism. There is no prescription from government (or the Office for Students) in regard to what action providers should take once they have had due regard. The legislation imposing the Prevent duty in relation to higher education specifically requires that providers must have particular regard to their duty to ensure freedom of speech and to the importance of academic freedom. As they already do, providers will continue to balance their legal duties, both in terms of ensuring freedom of speech and academic freedom, and also of protecting student and staff welfare.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-23/hl13617>

*The announcement referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/landmark-proposals-to-strengthen-free-speech-at-universities>

*The policy paper referred to above can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/961537/Higher\\_education\\_free\\_speech\\_and\\_academic\\_freedom\\_web\\_version\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/961537/Higher_education_free_speech_and_academic_freedom_web_version_.pdf)

## **Welsh Government**

**Updated guidance to local authorities, approved premises and places of worship on marriages civil partnerships and related wedding ceremonies: coronavirus**

<https://gov.wales/guidance-marriages-and-civil-partnerships-coronavirus-html>

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# Holocaust

## House of Lords Written Answers

### World War II: Genocide

**Baroness Deech (Crossbench)** [HL13582] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 17 February (HL13247), when (1) a decision will be taken to establish a chair of Holocaust Studies, and (2) an endowment fund will be established to support such studies; what estimates they have made of the costs of such a chair and endowment fund; and whether they continue to be committed to such aims, six years after the then-Prime Minister accepted those recommendations of the Holocaust Commission Report.

**Lord Greenhalgh:** The Holocaust Memorial Foundation continues to consider how best to deliver all the recommendations made in the Commission's report Britain's Promise to Remember.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-23/hl13582>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-10/hl13247>

*The report referred to above can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/398645/Holocaust Commission Report Britains promise to remember.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398645/Holocaust_Commission_Report_Britains_promise_to_remember.pdf)

### National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

**Baroness Deech (Crossbench)** [HL13393] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 12 February (HL12782), why they cannot confirm whether the Armenian genocide will be commemorated in the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.

**Lord Greenhalgh:** The Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre's main focus is the Holocaust. The exhibition will address subsequent genocides but it is too early to decide what the detail of that content will be.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-22/hl13393>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-01/hl12782>

### National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

**Baroness Deech (Crossbench)** [HL13394] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 12 February (HL12784), whether an educational impact assessment has been carried out for the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre; and whether they have consulted the British Association of Holocaust Scholars on the content of the memorial and learning centre.

**Lord Greenhalgh:** As plans are developed for the content of the Learning Centre, the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation will continue to discuss progress with relevant organisations.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-22/hl13394>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-01/hl12784>

### National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

**Baroness Deech (Crossbench)** [HL13395] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 12 February (HL12785), when they plan to put in place a sustainable long-term plan for the management of the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.

**Lord Greenhalgh:** We will put in place a sustainable long-term plan in good time before the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre opens.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-22/hl13395>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-01/hl12785>

#### **National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service: Finance**

**Baroness Deech (Crossbench)** [HL13396] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 12 February (HL12938), how much private funding has been raised so far for the creation of the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.

**Lord Greenhalgh:** Firm pledges of private funding have not been sought in advance of planning permission.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-22/hl13396>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-03/hl12938>

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

#### **National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service**

**Baroness Deech (Crossbench)** [HL13397] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 12 February (HL12939), what is the planned timetable for reaching a conclusion on the operating model for managing the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.

**Baroness Deech (Crossbench)** [HL13398] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 12 February (HL12940), what is the planned timetable for reaching a decision on the future management arrangements for Victoria Tower Gardens.

**Lord Greenhalgh:** Decisions on the operating model will be made in good time before the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre opens.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-22/hl13397>

*The answers referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-03/hl12939>

*and*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-03/hl12940>

#### **National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service**

**Baroness Deech (Crossbench)** [HL13581] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 17 February (HL13245), what environmental impact assessment was carried out before the choice of Victoria Tower Gardens as the site for the UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre was made.

**Lord Greenhalgh:** A detailed assessment of the environmental impact was made as part of the planning application. The documents are available (attached) at

<https://idoxpa.westminster.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=PL0CVYRP27000>

[assessment of the environmental impact](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-23/hl13581>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-10/hl13245>

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## Israel

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### Israel: Palestinians

**Wes Streeting (Labour)** [158135] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations he has made to the Government of Israel on (a) the case of Issa Amro and (b) upholding Palestinians' right to undertake take non-violent protest in support of Palestinian human rights and statehood.

**James Cleverly:** Officials from our Consulate-General in Jerusalem attended Mr Amro's court hearing on 6 January. We continue to urge the Israeli Government to fully respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of human rights defenders and organisations. We have also raised concerns with the Palestinian Authority about the narrowing of space for civil society to operate in the West Bank.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-24/158135>

### Department for International Trade

#### Updated Guidance: Trade with Israel

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/summary-of-the-uk-israel-trade-and-partnership-agreement>

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## Other Relevant Information

### Hope Not Hate

Resource pack for teachers, students and parents to guide young people who are at risk of involvement in extremist groups or radicalisation

<https://charity.hopenothate.org.uk/radicalisation-in-schools>

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## Relevant Legislation \*\* new or updated today

### UK Parliament

#### Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2622>

#### Assisted Dying Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2592>

#### Domestic Abuse Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2709>

## **Education (Assemblies) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2579>

## **Freedom of Speech (Universities) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2820>

## **Genocide Determination Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2621>

## **Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2608>

## **Marriage (Approved Organisations) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2537>

## **Marriage (Authorised Belief Organisations) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2795>

## **Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2584>

## **Scottish Parliament**

### **Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Bill**

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/domestic-abuse-protection-scotland-bill>

### **Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill**

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/hate-crime-and-public-order-scotland-bill>

### **Post-mortem Examinations (Defence Time Limit) (Scotland) Bill**

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/post-mortem-examinations-defence-time-limit-scotland-bill>

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## **Consultations**

\*\* new or updated today

**The future of the [Welsh Government] Equality and Inclusion Funding Programme**  
(closing date 30 March 2021)

<https://gov.wales/future-equality-and-inclusion-funding-programme>

**Evidence for Equality National Survey (EVENS): Documenting the Lives of Ethnic and Religious Minorities in a Time of Crisis** (closing date 11 May 2021)

[bit.ly/evensurvey](http://bit.ly/evensurvey)

**Social Distance, Digital Congregation: British Ritual Innovation under COVID-19**  
(closing date not stated)

<https://bric19.mmu.ac.uk/take-the-survey/>

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