

A FRAMEWORK FOR ADDRESSING ANTISEMITISM IN AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES

Executive Summary

This framework sets out a practical, evidence-based roadmap for Australian universities to address antisemitism and strengthen inclusion across the higher education sector. Grounded in peer-reviewed research, evidence delivered to parliamentary inquiries, and consultation with university leaders and community organisations, it focuses on building the skills, systems and cultures necessary for universities to navigate complex debates responsibly and confidently.

WHAT THE FRAMEWORK RESPONDS TO:

- Antisemitism on Australian campuses is both a safety issue and a cultural challenge, affecting trust, belonging and academic life.
- It often appears indirectly, through exclusion, polarisation and contested debates about Israel and Jewish identity.
- Universities face ongoing challenges in balancing academic freedom with protection from harm.
- Inconsistent definitions and processes have led to confusion and uneven responses across the sector.

SUMMARY OF KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Embed clear, practical definitions of antisemitism into policy, training and decision-making.
- Strengthen leadership capability and accountability to ensure consistent and trusted responses.
- Expand education and training for staff and students, including navigating difficult, identity-sensitive conversations.
- Improve reporting, safety and inclusion across physical and digital campus environments.

SUMMARY OF NEXT STEPS:

- Work in partnership with universities to adapt the framework to local contexts and governance structures.
- Support staged implementation through leadership briefings, training and sector collaboration.
- Establish ongoing evaluation to track progress in safety, trust and inclusion.
- Strengthen coordination between universities, government and community organisations for sustainable impact.

PURPOSE

Antisemitism undermines the university's core mission: the pursuit of knowledge through free, open and respectful inquiry. This framework provides clear, implementable guidance to prevent and respond to antisemitism while protecting academic freedom and the rights of all communities. Addressing antisemitism also strengthens universities' broader capacity to deal with racism, polarisation and harm across all student and staff groups.

SCOPE

Designed for university leaders, policymakers and educators, the framework offers adaptable approaches that complement existing equity, diversity and inclusion frameworks, and align with national sector strategies.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- Education as prevention: Build understanding and critical literacy to reduce ignorance and prejudice.
- Inclusion through accountability: Embed antisemitism awareness into equity systems with transparent reporting and enforcement.
- Freedom with responsibility: Uphold academic freedom while ensuring it is exercised ethically and without harm.

KEY ACTIONS

- Deliver leadership and professional-development programs on antisemitism and related discrimination.
- Provide evidence-based guidance for navigating politically sensitive topics.
- Implement accessible reporting systems with independent oversight.
- Partner with Jewish students and staff to enhance dialogue, safety and visibility.
- Embed antisemitism awareness within broader anti-racism and inclusion strategies.

IMPLEMENTATION

Universities are encouraged to adopt a staged plan, beginning with leadership briefings and policy alignment, followed by training, evaluation and transparent reporting. Progress is measured by increased trust, engagement and belonging among Jewish students and staff, which are indicators of a healthier, more resilient university community for all.