

**Promoting good campus  
relations, fostering  
shared values and  
preventing violent  
extremism in  
Universities and Higher  
Education Colleges**

Department for  
**Innovation,  
Universities &  
Skills**

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## Foreword

In November 2007, in a speech on liberty, the Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, said, “to each generation falls the task of expanding the idea of British liberty and to each generation also the task of rediscovering liberty’s central importance as a founding value of our country and its animating force.” He also called on the Secretary of State, John Denham, and me as minister, to invite the university sector to lead a debate on how we maintain academic freedom whilst ensuring that extremists can never stifle debate or impose their views. In this context, the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills is updating guidance for promoting good relations, fostering shared values and preventing extremism on campus.

Our central challenge is to strengthen the resilience of communities against forces that would tear them apart, enabling them to resist extremist influence and root out terrorism, at the same time as preserving the freedom we value so much and that defines our traditions.

Absolutely key to this effort is our quest to develop our sense of shared values: the values that bind communities together. These values belong to everyone in Britain; they are not possessed by any one race, creed or nationality. The Higher Education sector’s task is to foster these values in their institutions. These shared values are experienced, not taught. They are built over time by people sharing ideas, tolerating other views and having constructive disagreement.

Higher Education provides students with skills they will draw on for the rest of their lives. Since the many young people pass through HE at some point it is absolutely critical that institutions embody these values of openness, free debate and tolerance, and promote them through the way they operate.

By promoting this culture, we will provide an environment with the trust and respect in which communities can deal more productively and collaboratively with any conflict arising from differences of culture, ideology or faith. It will also enable us to seek to convince, via rational argument, those who hold the sorts of extremist tendencies that are the enemies of rational argument. We prize academic freedom and freedom of speech as ends in themselves and as the most effective way of challenging the views which we may find abhorrent but that remain within the law. Institutions have a responsibility to protect all their students and staff from those who seek to exploit the freedom that Higher Education provides in order to promote violence, incite hatred, intimidate or bully others. They also have a responsibility to support all of their students particularly those who may be at risk. Many universities are already doing this, and for that we praise them.

We should never overstate the menace we face from violent extremism. There is a real and serious threat, and we must all take responsibility for protecting ourselves. The Government's assessment that the greatest current threat is from Al-Qa'ida influenced terrorism. Freedom belongs to people, not governments. And there is no freedom at all if people face disruption and violence in their daily lives.

This guidance aims to support HE institutions to work with the vast majority of students on campus to isolate and challenge the very small minority who promote violent extremism. It seeks to continue to sensitise staff to the issues: how Higher Education communities can become more vigilant, how they can work with staff and students to take responsible preventative action to tackle violent extremism and recruitment to violent extremist groups on campus. We welcome all the hard work and effort that staff and students have already undertaken to help us meet this continuing challenge.

This document was first issued in 2006, however, we felt it was important to re-issue it this year to reiterate the need to promote shared values and foster cohesion in our student populations and to highlight the clear role that universities have in creating spaces for free and open debate to challenge violent extremism. It also reflects our increased knowledge of how violent extremist groups operate, how they recruit and what the scale and nature of this activity is within our communities. This information is set out in Annex A. This document builds on the guidance document sent out to HE providers by the Equality Challenge Unit and UUK on Promoting Good Campus Relations. This guidance can be found at [www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/guidancepublications/200709](http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/guidancepublications/200709)



**Bill Rammell MP**  
**Minister of State for Higher and**  
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# 1. Introduction

We want our universities and colleges to be integrated communities where all staff and students are safe and secure and where free and open debate can take place. A valued aspect of the right to freedom of expression in the UK is that individuals have the right to criticise, disagree and campaign against the government on any issue of foreign or domestic policy they choose. It can be entirely legitimate to hold a view that is radical or extreme on the political spectrum. However, it becomes unacceptable and indeed, is a criminal activity when individuals develop extremist views that lead them to espouse, advocate or even undertake or facilitate violent acts. Institutions must not tolerate those who incite hatred so as to deliberately undermine good campus and community relations, using their extremist viewpoint as a justification for their actions.

This guidance highlights the crucial importance of HE institutions, working with students of all backgrounds, to build community cohesion and good race relations on campus and to prevent the segregation of students. It aims to share information and experiences in order to enable university or college authorities to develop a more consistent and effective approach across the sector. It considers recommendations that may be necessary to ensure good relations and a safe environment in HE institutions, thus ensuring that all staff and students can work, study and live without fear of intimidation, harassment, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour.

The Government judges the main terrorist threat to the UK at this time to be from Al-Qa'ida influenced terrorism. It is for this reason that in this guidance, we specifically focus in some areas on this form of violent extremism and in other areas, all forms of violent extremism. We recognise that universities face similarly complex issues with regard to the activities of the extreme far right, animal rights activists, anti-semitism, Islamophobia as well as wider issues of race, faith, sexual orientation and gender intolerance. These problems, however, do not present the same scale of threat as AQ-influenced violence.

Violent extremists frequently target their radicalisation efforts at young people in a number of settings within the wider community and in specific institutions such as prison, youth clubs, schools, universities and Further Education colleges. The efforts of universities to foster an environment where hatred and intolerance cannot prosper is helping to make it more difficult for violent extremists to spread their message successfully.

This guidance has been sent directly to Vice-Chancellors and we expect university management to consult with their staff, the unions and students as appropriate in designing and implementing policies and procedures. We would expect Higher Education Institutions to consult widely and use collective bargaining when implementing this or any other guidance issued to them by the Department or the Funding Council.

By "university" we mean universities and colleges of Higher Education.

## 2. Cohesion on campus: Key Themes and Objectives

Since the vast majority of young people pass through either FE or HE at some point in their lives, it is absolutely critical that these institutions foster shared values. By promoting a culture of free debate, rigorous inquiry, and tolerance, institutions play their part in challenging (through rational argument) those with extremist tendencies. This also provides an environment with the trust and respect that allows the academic community to deal more effectively and collaboratively with any sensitive issues that arise.

We know institutions take seriously their responsibilities to promote cohesion and good relations between all groups of students and staff. It is in the interests of any world class higher education institution actively to promote cohesion on campus. Indeed, institutions that do not seek to increase integration in their student community will not compete in an increasingly competitive and globalised higher education system and their students will not be getting a full and rounded HE experience.

This section sets out the 5 key areas where institutions have a clear responsibility to help foster a cohesive society. Section 3 offers advice on practical steps for institutions in relation to each of these areas and issues which they should consider when looking at these key objectives. Section 4 provides a number of scenarios based around real life examples which a university may face and issues to consider when drawing up institutional policy in response.

### Key Objectives

1. To promote and reinforce shared values; to create space for free and open debate; and to listen to and support mainstream voices.
2. To break down segregation amongst different student communities including by supporting inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue and understanding and to engage all students in playing a full and active role in wider engagement with society.
3. To ensure student safety and campuses that are free from bullying, harassment and intimidation.
4. To provide support for students who may be at risk and appropriate sources of advice and guidance.
5. To ensure that staff and students are aware of their roles in preventing violent extremism.

### 3. Practical Advice on Delivering Key Objectives

#### 1. **To promote and reinforce shared values; to create space for free and open debate; and to listen to and support mainstream voices.**

Violent extremists seek to attack our shared values of respect for human rights, the rule of law, equality of opportunity, freedom of speech and freedom of religious practice. These values belong to everyone in Britain, not belong to one race, religion or creed.

Higher Education institutions can play a key role in encouraging students to experience and develop shared values. For example, by providing an open and vibrant space for intellectually rigorous and challenging debate, they provide an environment where people can challenge those who espouse violent extremism. The ability to hold open debate, to discuss and challenge ideas is essential to the very core of a university, both in a student's formal and informal education.

HEIs should work closely with student groups and societies to make sure there are clear policies on their duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for members, students, employees and visiting speakers (Section 43 of the Education Act 1986).

HE institutions should encourage students to play a full and active role in society to enrich their whole university and educational experience. For example, institutions should encourage participation in the democratic process, on campus, locally or nationally. They should promote and encourage students to take up volunteering opportunities which can empower students and enable them to develop new skills and mix with others from different backgrounds and cultures.

It is important that staff and students from all faiths or none feel able to play a full part in university life and not feel intimidated, marginalised or ignored. Governing bodies, staff, student unions and political and faith societies all have a role. Institutions will want to consider how people on campus are encouraged to engage in debate and how they ensure the views of all staff and students – not just the most vocal – can be encouraged and heard. This may include providing and publicising clear channels and forums whereby those who wish to challenge extremist views are given the support and strength to do so.

### **Issues to consider**

- Is there a clearly publicised, easily available Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech which outlines the university's policies and procedures?.
- Are you working with the student's union and societies to create and publicise opportunities for students to voice their opinions and engage actively in debate?
- Are you working with the student's union to promote participation in the democratic process and to facilitate opportunities to get involved in the community?
- Do you have regular dialogue with student groups, university chaplains and student union general managers?

## **2. To break down segregation amongst different student communities including by supporting inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue and understanding and to engage all students in playing a full and active role in wider engagement with society**

Educational institutions must ensure equality of opportunity for all, increase participation and promote interaction between different groups. Breaking down segregation is a key part of the role of institutions to ensure students get a full university experience. The university should take reasonable steps to set up opportunities for inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue and interaction, supporting activities such as volunteering or arts and sports which cross the faith and cultural boundaries. It is also important to recognise the significant social role of faith groups, faith chaplaincies and student societies and the role they have to play in helping promote cohesion.

There are also benefits from increasing links between institutions and their local communities. These include the capacity to promote understanding and shared values; challenge intolerance and discrimination; and the potential for current students to support, mentor and encourage local young people to aspire to higher education. Government is actively working with Muslim communities to build their capacity to take practical steps to reject violent extremism and feel a welcome part of wider British society. HE institutions should take reasonable steps to explore opportunities for staff and students to engage in relevant areas including the potential leadership role of young Muslim men and women.

The danger in allowing segregated communities to develop on campus is that in such an environment, attitudes and beliefs can be reinforced so that there is little opportunity for dissent, free-thinking or the dilution of commonly held preconceptions about issues within the segregated community or wider communities. Segregated communities may drift away from each other increasingly regarding the codes of behaviour, loyalty and respect that wider society take for granted as behaviour that no longer applies to them. Division and conflict can follow. Those who prefer segregation can present attempts at encouraging integration as being designed to destroy close community ties, breaking up groups. This is a particularly difficult and sensitive issue with responsibilities on both sides. Universities should not feel obliged to meet every demand but should encourage an open and rational debate about what is reasonable. They should communicate clearly what has been decided and why. Students need to recognise that it is not reasonable to expect universities to provide facilities in a way that an institution whose chief purpose was religious would do. Universities should balance any requests for separate facilities from religious and cultural groups with the need to ensure an integrated campus community.

### **Issues to consider**

- Have you reviewed your existing policies and procedures to take account of recent relevant legislation set out in Annex C and available guidance and good practice?
- Do your policies specifically address the need to balance the interests of particular cultural or religious groups with those of the wider campus community? Are these policies clearly communicated to staff, students and potential students?

### **3. To ensure student safety and campuses that are free from bullying, harassment and intimidation**

All students and staff have the right to be safe and free from threats, other intimidation, harassment or violence during their time at university. Institutions must ensure a safe environment where people from different backgrounds or with different beliefs are tolerant and respectful of each other. Discrimination, intolerance and violence have no place on campus.

The Universities UK/Guild HE/Equality Challenge Unit publications *Promoting good campus relations: dealing with hate crimes and intolerance* (2005) and *Promoting good campus relations – an institutional imperative* (2007) provide comprehensive and practical guidance for institutions on appropriate steps to take where activities are likely to threaten the safety and freedoms of staff and students from many forms of intolerance including racism, political or religious intolerance, anti-Semitism and homophobia. The government strongly endorses that guidance.

This publication extends that approach to cover the issues raised by, and possible responses to, violent extremism and AQ-influenced terrorism. Unacceptable extremism can range from incitement of social, racial or religious hatred, to advocating the use of violence to achieve fundamental change to the constitutional structure of the UK, to carrying out terrorist acts. Individuals can and do hold extreme views without espousing violence. This is entirely acceptable, provided these views do not pass the line of illegality. The authorities are concerned with any form of extremism that espouses, promotes or leads to violence: 'violent extremism'.

### **Issues to consider**

- Are your staff and students aware of their rights and responsibilities regarding discrimination, harassment, intimidation, equality and freedom of speech?
- Do you have a clear and easily accessible Equal Opportunities Policy and clear procedures for dealing with complaints and incidents?
- Are staff and students clearly signposted to sources of help in the university, student union and local police?
- Do you have an institutional standard of acceptable behaviour setting out zero tolerance to intimidation, bullying, harassment, discrimination, racial hatred or incitement to racial hatred or any forms of incitement to violence or violence itself?

## **4. To provide support for students who may be at risk and appropriate sources of advice and guidance**

HE institutions should work closely with students' unions and student societies to publicise appropriate contacts with whom students with any concerns about violent extremism can consult in confidence. These could be: confidential helplines; religious advisers; personal tutors willing to speak to students with questions; student welfare groups; student liaison officers; welfare officers, student union general managers and university chaplains. Making links with the local faith leader or Chaplain and other community groups is important as they may have the expertise to play a positive on campus role. Institutions should also make sure their staff have access to appropriate training materials to enable them to provide appropriate support to students.

Some HE institutions may want to look specifically at the provision of Muslim chaplaincy support on campus. The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) is developing a framework of minimum standards for institutions engaging Muslim faith leaders in public service to make them more effective in addressing any issues relating to violent extremism on campus. CLG and DIUS will be working with HE institutions to consider what this means in practice for recruiting Muslim chaplains and training

individuals already carrying out this function. Making links with the local Muslim faith leaders and other community groups is also important as they may have the expertise to play a positive role in supporting and protecting vulnerable young people, in particular where there is no Muslim chaplaincy on campus.

HE institutions may also wish to consider how they can become involved in local initiatives to build community resilience to violent extremism. The Department for Communities and Local Government launched a £6m Preventing Violent Extremism fund in 2007/8 for around 70 local authorities. Institutions could consider how they can become involved at an institutional level, as many already are, and how they can work with the local authority to ensure their students have access to appropriate programmes and projects.

### **Issues to consider**

- Are your staff appropriately trained to deal with concerns from students?
- Are staff and students clearly signposted to sources of help in the university, student union and local police?
- Are the Chaplaincy services that are available on your campus clearly publicised and easily accessible?

## **5. To ensure that staff and students are aware of their roles in preventing violent extremism**

HE institutions and student leaders have an important role in educating their students about how violent extremist groups operate and recruit and who they target. They should make clear how the university, student welfare teams and the law enforcement agencies can support anyone who feels targeted or vulnerable, or is the subject of intolerance, discrimination, hate crime or intimidation.

Specific information on the recruitment and grooming processes used by violent extremists, engagement with the police and the legislative framework is given in the annexes. In addition, HE providers should have robust policies to tackle any prejudice or intolerance against students that may be sparked by the activities of Al-Qaida inspired or other extremists.

Institutions should establish clear institutional policies on external speakers. An institution must take reasonable steps to ensure that an external speaker is not like to promote or advocate violent extremism and that the university is able to make sure what is said falls within the law. Universities and colleges should consider sharing information with each other on speakers of concern, those who are deemed inappropriate to speak on campus, or those who are involved in any form of extremist activity leading to or promoting violence.

As part of their risk management process, institutions should consider having emergency plans in place to respond to an event or incident, for example, if a student is arrested under terrorism legislation. Institutions should think about the implications for staff and other students, how they should be supported and how best to work with the Police.

Universities should have policies and procedures which allow them to assess literature and material being held by or distributed on university premises. It is vital that students and staff are able to research violent extremism, its causes, and associated literature, and subject them to intellectual and academic rigour. However, the law sets boundaries regarding publications that may promote or incite violence. Universities with concerns on whether the content of a publication may break the law should seek legal advice. (The relevant legislative framework is set out in Annex C).

### **Issues to consider**

- Do you have clearly set out policies on use of external speakers?
- Do you have recently reviewed and clearly set out policies on the use of university premises by outside bodies?
- Do you have mechanisms to ensure that you could act appropriately if university premises were being used for unlawful activity or speech?
- Do you have clear policies on acceptable use of university facilities including meeting rooms, internet, library books etc.?
- Do you have in place the methods to be able to translate any publications or literature being held or distributed on campus into English?

## 4. Scenarios and Responses

**The following scenarios are all based on real events that have occurred at universities and colleges in the UK.**

### **Introduction**

This guidance is about tackling violent extremism. It is not about eroding the long-established traditions of encouraging radical debate, ideas and freedom of speech within universities and colleges. Universities and colleges are in a unique position to provide a forum for open debate and discussion. In this way, they embody the shared values of society which are essential for students from all backgrounds to experience first hand.

This section seeks to identify some of the activities or incidents in and around campuses which could potentially be associated with violent extremists. That is not to say that such activities are necessarily illegitimate or criminal. HE institutions need to strike a difficult balance between maintaining academic freedom whilst ensuring that extremists can never stifle debate or impose their views.

HE institutions should be alert to the possibility of unsubstantiated allegations being made against individuals or groups when considering how to respond to activities and incidents. They should make judgements about how much internal investigation to undertake before taking concerns to the police.

### **Example One – Suspected Extremist Literature On Campus**

A member of teaching staff has raised concerns with university authorities about some literature that was left lying around in a university room in which she took a tutorial group. Some leaflets were written in English, and others appeared to be in Arabic. She reported that the literature in English had titles such as 'Who is a legitimate target?' and 'From Jihad to a new world order'. One of the students in the tutorial group reported that she had seen lots of the pamphlets lying around other places in the university earlier in the day, and a number of students walking around with bundles of them.

### **Issues to consider**

- The leaflets may constitute a criminal offence under terrorism or racial and religious hatred legislation. They may also breach internal policies on these issues, or on hate crimes. Do you have in place procedures to obtain the necessary legal advice where this is needed?
- Do you have a reporting mechanism for staff and students to report any concerns within the HE institution? Are the reporting mechanisms clear and understood? Who should decide whether to inform the police? Do they know how to seek advice from local police?

- Do you have the facilities to encourage exploration and debate of the issues raised in this scenario?
- What is the local policy on room bookings and contents of posters and meeting flyers?
- Does the HE institution have the means of translating foreign language material if necessary?

### **Example Two – Extremist Speaker Attending University Seminar**

A group of students have approached their personal tutor to express concern about a speaker who has been asked by a student society to deliver a talk entitled 'Terrorist or Freedom Fighter?' They believe him to use extremist language and think he has commented in the media that acts of terrorism against British citizens are justified.

### **Issues to consider**

- The speaker may have the right to express his views and staff and students the right to hear them, providing there is no likelihood of disorder or a crime being committed and no interference with the rights of others. It might be appropriate to ensure events or a series of events are balanced, with speakers offering differing viewpoints and arguments
- The speaker's conduct could amount to a criminal offence under terrorism legislation or a public order offence. It is in the interest of the HE provider to prevent public disorder on campus, and they should establish the speaker's track record. If the speaker had indeed made the comments ascribed to him the HE provider should consider excluding him from speaking on the campus or premises. If there is no evidence to support the claims, the HE provider will still need to deal with the concerns raised and decide on the potential impact of the talk on the wider student communities.
- What is the local policy to ensure that the university or college authorities are aware of, and, if appropriate, advise on external speakers with student societies/the students' union?

### **Example Three – Inappropriate Student Use Of The Internet**

College library staff have reported that a student has approached them expressing concerns at images she had seen fellow students looking at on computers in an IT room. She reported that two males were looking at some kind of home-made images of other men dressed in military and civilian clothing holding guns. The two men were joined by two others and she could see that they were watching shots being fired and explosions on the computer. The images then appeared to show somebody making a home made explosive device.

#### **Issues to consider**

- The dissemination of terrorist publications is an offence under section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006.
- The HE institution should have a policy on internet use and internet security as staff and students may need to access material of this sort as part of legitimate research. If it is alleged that these policies are breached then what is the process for sensitively investigating allegations, and if necessary who should decide whether to inform the police?

### **Example Four – Concerns From Staff and Students About Potential Threats to Their Safety**

A senior staff member whose staff and research students have been receiving letters from an animal rights group contacts the security team. Each year this group holds an 'Awards Ceremony' and sends out letters to people or groups they hold responsible for the worst aspects of animal cruelty. The institution confirms that a copy of the letter and the names of the recipients has been posted on the group's website. The staff and research students are concerned that they are going to be targeted by an animal rights group and activists who are sympathetic to the animal rights agenda.

#### **Issues to consider**

- Is there a reporting mechanism for staff and students to report any concerns within your institution? Are these clear and understood? Who should decide whether to inform the police? Do they know who to contact for advice from local police?
- Are there publicly stated policies on intimidation and harassment?
- Are anti-bullying policies robustly enforced?
- Are staff aware of the institution's procedures should a violent incident occur?

### **Example Five – Concerns About Potentially Suspicious Group Activity**

A student has made a staff member aware of a group of students who meet up on Monday evenings to take part in a martial arts club followed by a 'current affairs discussion group' on subjects ranging from 'The duties of Muslims in the UK today', 'Islam and the West' and 'The plight of Muslims across the world.' These activities have been advertised through leaflets on a university or college notice-board. The leaflet does not give verifiable contact information about the organisers but does give out a contact mobile phone number. The student informing the staff member had spoken to an attendee of the Monday evening session, and from his conversation was concerned that the activities were organised by a group seeking to spread violent extremist views in the name of Islam.

#### **Issues to consider**

- Is there a need for a local policy on groups advertised on campus? Could the HE institution work with student societies/students' union to develop one? Should one of the student bodies contact the group? Is there a role for an HE provider religious advisor to become involved?
- Are the reporting mechanisms for staff clear and understood? Who should decide whether to contact the group, consult student societies or inform the police?
- Does the student union have a policy to ensure that university or college societies are open and inclusive?

### **Example Six – Use Of University or College Prayer Facilities**

A student has spoken to their personal tutor regarding concerns about alleged inappropriate use of a prayer room in a university or college. The student reported that a prayer room appeared to be off-limits and claimed offensive material was on display on the inside of the room which could not be seen from the outside as the windows of the room had been covered with posters.

#### **Issues to consider**

- If multi-faith prayer rooms are provided, is there a 'fair use' policy to ensure prayer rooms are seen as a shared resource and accessible by all faiths?
- Are there unregulated prayer rooms for different faiths? How should the university or college administration ensure these are accessible by all who want to use them?
- Are the reporting mechanisms for staff and students clear and understood?

## 5. Next Steps

The Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills is committed to leading a debate with the university sector on how we maintain academic freedom whilst ensuring that violent extremists can never stifle debate. We would welcome your comments and feedback on this guidance document and would also be interested in hearing about how you have tackled some of these difficult issues within your own institution.

Please email your comments and examples to the following email address:  
**campus.cohesion@dius.gsi.gov.uk**

In addition to this we intend to set up on-going consultative arrangements with sector representative bodies to discuss the implementation of this document, examples of best practice and how we can further support universities to promote cohesion and tackle violent extremism. If you would like to be involved in one of these groups, please email the address above.

# Annex A: Al-Qa'ida Influenced Violent Extremism and the Recruitment and Grooming Process Used by Violent Extremist Groups

## 1. Al-Qa'ida influenced violent extremism

The Government judges that there is a real, current and sustained threat to the UK from Al-Qa'ida (AQ) influenced terrorism. The threat is international in its scope, involving a variety of individuals, networks and groups who are driven by violent and extremist beliefs. They are indiscriminate – aiming to commit murder and cause mass casualties, regardless of the age, nationality, or religion of their victims; and they are prepared to commit suicide to do so. The overall assessment is that the threat is unlikely to diminish for some years.

Violent AQ-influenced extremist activity is justified using a literal, distorted and unrepresentative interpretation of Islamic texts to advocate and justify violence in order to achieve fundamental change in society (see below “The Single Narrative”). Individuals involved in this form of extremism can be involved in criminal activity. They can either be directly involved in violence and terrorist acts, or can be involved indirectly through inciting others to become involved in violence or supporting or funding violent activities.

The process of an individual turning to violent extremism (not just AQ influenced violent extremism) can occur because of a variety of factors, of which no single factor predominates. Existing evidence from this country and from overseas suggests the key factors that lead to violent extremism of this kind are:

- An **ideology** which justifies terrorism by manipulating theology as well as history and contemporary politics;
- **Individuals and networks** who promote violent extremism, through new media and in **vulnerable spaces and institutions** in this country;
- **Individuals who are vulnerable** to the messaging of violent extremism for a range of personal factors;
- **Communities** which do not have resilience to resist and reject the narrative and activities of violent extremists; and
- A number of **grievances**, some substantive, which resonate with individuals and are exploited by violent extremists.

There is no single profile of those most susceptible to these factors but they are likely to be young (generally younger than 30) and male (although the number of women who support and participate in violent extremism is increasing). The evidence also suggests that radicalisation is focused in certain geographical areas of the country.

The vast majority of Muslims in the UK and abroad reject both extremism and violence: violent extremists represent only a tiny minority of individuals in the UK and abroad. A clear distinction should be made between these extremist individuals and the faith they might falsely claim to be associated with or represent. Extremists who wrongly argue for support for acts of terrorism present a threat to all students and communities. Moreover propagating false perceptions about the values and beliefs of Islam potentially adds to a vicious circle that may fuel discrimination and Islamophobia. This may, in turn, exacerbate violent extremism in the name of Islam, as individuals perceive that they are increasingly marginalised.

Law enforcement and intelligence operations are vital to containing the threat but on their own they will not be able to resolve it. Government, communities and local agencies also need to work together to refute the language and the arguments of those trying to advance the cause of violent extremism and counter the efforts they are making to recruit others. There are limits to what central Government can do – and should try to do – in this area. Continued progress depends on local authorities, the police, those working with young people, community organisations and the voluntary sector.

Violent extremist groups and networks have operated in a number of settings within the wider community and in specific institutions such as prisons, youth clubs, schools, universities and further education colleges. HE institutions should be alert to how different forms of unacceptable behaviour and extremism on campus can interact and should be aware of the need to support the vast majority of individuals on campus who hold more moderate views and so strengthen their resilience to the messages that the extremists transmit.

## **2. The Terrorists “Single Narrative”**

Violent extremists rely on simplifying complex political, philosophical, ethical, religious and historical facts and using the resulting claims of oppression to recruit vulnerable individuals and incite a violent response. Al-Qa’ida’s “global jihad” ideology uses a view of history and international relations that says that the corruption of Islam and the (supposedly) impoverished state of the Muslim world is the result of a Zionist-Christian alliance against Islam.

The narrative draws on a number of concerns – some of which may be quite widely shared by Muslims and non-Muslims alike. These include perceived injustices (e.g. Palestine); opposition to military intervention (e.g. in Iraq or Afghanistan); local perceptions of discrimination (e.g. a view that stop and search rules are not operated fairly); and concerns about globalisation (e.g. perceived as an imposition of “Western” values). Government acknowledges that many people are concerned about these issues. And we actively encourage each issue to be discussed and debated on its own merits with proper intellectual and ethical rigour. But the Al-Qa’ida narrative relies on audiences lacking an in-depth knowledge of the issues and on the spread of misinformation. It ignores factual evidence to the contrary (e.g. British military intervention to protect Kosovan Albanian Muslims; UK support for Turkey’s membership of the EU). Its potency as propaganda is based on its propensity to weave fact with subjective opinion and emotion to seek to occupy a moral and religious high-ground. As a result, the Al-Qa’ida message is persuasive to many and is actively used by large numbers of people and networks promoting violent extremism.

### **3. The recruitment and grooming process used by Violent Extremist groups**

The following section highlights some themes that could play a role in the process of recruiting and grooming individuals to violent extremism on campus. Similar themes and tactics exist for all forms of violent extremism on university and college campuses

#### **Networks**

The nature of HE institutions means that the student population is fluid. Therefore the extent of different types of extremism on campus can change over time. The level of extremism can also be disproportionately affected by the simultaneous presence of a few like-minded individuals. Even one particularly determined individual can have a significant impact on the extent of extremism at a particular university or college.

Universities and colleges can provide a recruiting ground for extremists of all forms, particularly those that target young people. Student communities provide an opportunity for extremist individuals to form new networks, and extend existing ones. Different categories of students may be affected. There are those who quite rightly are keen to explore the wider issues of their faith; those who may be actively looking for extremist individuals with whom to associate; those who may be new to a university or college environment and vulnerable to ‘grooming’ by individuals with an agenda as they search for friends and social groups. For example grooming may involve separating students from their roots (such as family and old friends) thereby isolating them from alternative views. This is a tactic deployed by recruiters, and can be more easily achieved in a setting where young people are separated from their family environment.

## **Segregation**

Ethnically or culturally segregated communities can be common on campus. Two of the main reasons for this occurrence are lack of opportunity to mix with others and making the decision to separate from mainstream society. Lack of opportunity to interact can have a negative impact on how individuals view themselves and are viewed by others and negatively impacts on and individual's university experience. Feelings of isolation, retreating into ones own community and feeling hostility towards the 'other' can exacerbate extremism.

## **Student societies and other groups**

The overwhelming majority of faith-based student organisations are moderate and democratic groupings that seek to provide students with accurate information on religious beliefs, history and civilisations, as well as organising prayer meetings, speakers and other activities. These societies can have an influential role on campus with members varying in numbers across institutions. For those who are members, these societies can wield significant influence in their lives through organising liturgical and other activities. It follows that should control of a university or college society or other group fall into the hands of extremist individuals, this can play a significant role in the extent of extremism on campus. Taking control of Friday prayers, other prayer meetings or sermons and the use of charismatic radical speakers can be means by which extreme groups seek to spread their messages.

## **Outside Speakers**

Student groups commonly hold debates and talks on a variety of issues and often invite speakers or preachers onto campuses. This is an important part of encouraging vibrant debate and discussion about issues of concern. However, on occasion such speakers hold very extreme views which could include advocating and justifying the use of violence. These individuals can be forceful, persuasive and eloquent, and often have a scholarly background, the latter fact being emphasised in order to give them greater credibility in the eyes of students. They seek to exploit feelings of alienation and sometimes offer "religious" justifications for extreme actions. It is increasingly likely that speakers would be careful to keep their messages within acceptable limits while speaking at university or college meetings.

### **Peer group pressure and bullying**

Peer group pressure at meetings and debates can help to sway opinion, bringing moderates over to a more radical viewpoint. Those who have a differing viewpoint can be afraid to speak and differentiate themselves from the majority. Individuals who openly disagree could be opening themselves up to accusations of not being a true Muslim and becoming sidelined. Sometimes a group collectively adopts a more extreme position than would be expected from an analysis of views held by individual members of the group. Extremist individuals have also been known to 'groom' likely recruits, by closely observing those willing to adopt more extreme viewpoints or those perceived to be vulnerable and more likely to be easily influenced. There have been instances whereby extremist individuals have befriended vulnerable students in order to create a culture of dependency and influence over them.

### **Meetings subsequently attended outside a university or college**

HE societies and other groups are often inter-linked, as well as being in touch with networks outside the university or college. Details of external meetings can be passed on by word of mouth and particularly religious students can be targeted, or those who have shown a particular interest and fervour in the subjects of debates. At these external meetings opinions can be more openly aired and more extreme views can be roused. Individuals may be encouraged to feel angry, frustrated, humiliated and powerless and may develop a strong desire to take some form of action to seek redress. HE institutions should ensure they are aware of the local community context and how that might impact on students.

## Annex B: Engagement with the Police

There are a number of intervention options available to HE institutions that may be more appropriate than direct police enforcement action. These can range from overt engagement and diversion work to simply enforcing existing rules. A partnership approach between police and HE institutions may enable early intervention to take place that could negate a later need for enforcement action.

However those few HE institutions that identify they may have a problem with violent extremist groups will be fully supported by the police in their efforts to promote good campus relations and community safety.

Many HE institutions have highly effective multi-level liaison with their local uniform police. However, it is important that these partnerships between the police and universities and colleges are able to address effectively the full range of policing issues that may be found on campus. This includes instances of violent extremism that may lead to terrorism. The police are keen to build on existing relationships to support HE institutions in recognising and responding to such instances should they occur.

*With the complexities and difficulties surrounding violent extremism, the police are seeking to promote a position whereby HE institutions have the confidence to share concerns about emerging (or existing) instances of violent extremism on campus with them. Equally, it is important for the police (and wider community) to have confidence that a local HEI can recognise if it has a problem and ask for help. In order to assess this capability it may be useful for HE institutions to consider the following questions:*

- *Can staff identify violent extremist behaviour?*
- *Do staff have the confidence to report it within the institution?*
- *Does the HE institution have the processes in place, and the willingness, to get that information to the police?*

Staff in the institution may be unsure of how to recognise signs of violent extremism, or should they become aware, may be unsure of what they can or should do with that information. Police can offer support and guidance to HE institutions in developing strategies and policies. Police may also offer training to assist HE institutions to recognise and respond to potential violent extremism. The police will also take the appropriate law enforcement action on the rare occasions this may be required.

# Annex C: Legislative Framework

## Legal update: Introduction

An overview of the key legislation for HE institutions to consider when dealing with violent extremism can be found in the guidance 'Promoting Good Campus Relations: Dealing with Hate Crimes and Intolerance'.

When making a decision on how to deal with an incident on campus, HE institutions will need to take into account the concepts of reasonableness and proportionality. The Commission for Racial Equality advises that, if a right under the European Convention on Human Rights is to be restricted or limited in any way, then it will be necessary to demonstrate that:

- the decision has been reached after careful consideration;
- the decision is based on evidence;
- the decision is necessary to prevent crime or disorder, or otherwise to protect the rights and freedoms of others;
- the decision is proportionate.

In essence any action taken must be a reasonable response to the perceived or actual threat and must be proportionate to the situation. HE institutions need to be able to show that any decision has been based on consideration of all available information and is sound. If a reasonable decision is taken and documented as a result of evidenced balancing of the all the relevant issues, an institution should be able to defend its actions against any subsequent claim.

## Freedom of Speech

HE institutions have a particular position with regard to freedom of speech. Under the Education (No. 2) Act 1986, persons concerned in the government of an institution in the higher or further education sector have a duty to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for members, students, employees and visiting speakers. They must also ensure insofar as reasonably practicable that the use of the institution's premises is not denied to any individual or body or people on the grounds of their beliefs, views, policies or objectives. The right to freedom of expression can be subject to limitations provided those limitations can be justified. A limitation can only be justified if it is in accordance with the law, is in pursuit of a legitimate aim (including the prevention of disorder or crime; to protect health or morals; or, in the interests of national security) and is necessary in a democratic society.

### **Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003**

HE institutions also need to be particularly aware of the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003. These Regulations outlaw direct and indirect discrimination (and victimisation and harassment) on grounds of religion or belief. The indirect discrimination provisions apply where a policy or practice has a detrimental impact on a particular religious group that cannot be justified. Essential to the issue of justification is the relevance and proportionality of the policy or practice. The Regulations apply to the employment of staff and to the provision of vocational training, including education in institutions of further or higher education.

### **Race Relations Act 1976, as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000**

The amended Race Relations Act requires HEIs, in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.

### **Disclosures to the Police**

If a university or college suspects that an offence has been or is likely to be committed then a report should be made to the police. Educational providers should have a policy on the release of student information which should be followed. If the police require information from an university or college then they will make a request for it. A court order is not necessarily required before a disclosure can be made to the police, although if a university or college receives such an order it must be complied with. Most Police Forces will have their own request form which should always include a brief outline of the nature of the investigation, the student's role in that investigation, the signature of the investigating officer and will, if necessary, provide how the request is compatible with the Data Protection Act 1998. Disclosures should be made in writing rather than over the telephone.

Under section 38B of the Terrorism Act 2000 a person commits an offence if he or she has information which he or she knows or believes might be of material assistance in preventing another person from committing an act of terrorism or securing the apprehension, prosecution or conviction of another person, in the UK, for an offence involving the commission, preparation or instigation of an act of terrorism and he or she fails to disclose that information to a constable as soon as reasonably practicable. Section 19 of the Terrorism Act 2000 places a legal duty on a person to disclose to a constable that he believes or suspects that an offence under sections 15 to 18 of that Act has been committed, if the belief or suspicion is based on information that came to the person in the course of a trade, profession, business or employment. Sections 15 to 18 deal with offences relating to funding terrorism and the laundering of terrorist property. If a person fails to make a disclosure in accordance with section 19 they commit an offence. Section 21A of the Terrorism Act 2000 creates a similar offence in relation to information that comes to a person in the regulated sector.

## **Legislation Enacted In 2006**

The following provides an update on key pieces of legislation which have been enacted in 2006 and which have a direct impact on the issues surrounding extremism. These should be read in conjunction with the previous guidance on 'Promoting Good Campus Relations: Dealing with hate crimes and intolerance' which contains a more comprehensive section on relevant legislation.

### **Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006**

The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006 was passed by Parliament on 16 February 2006. It is intended to extend existing incitement to racial hatred laws that protect certain religious groups to provide protection for people of all faiths and those of no faith by creating a number of new offences which relate to the stirring up of religious hatred. This legislation will operate in England and Wales under part 3A of the Public Order Act 1986, which is due to come into force in February 2007 which the 2006 Act is due to be commenced.

The new legislation creates a number of new offences including an offence for a person to use threatening words or behaviour, or to display any threatening written material, with the intent to stir up religious hatred. For this purpose, religious hatred is defined as hatred against a group of people defined by reference to religious belief or lack of religious belief.

Educational providers should note that the legislation is not intended to impinge on students' freedom of speech: the Act does not prevent students from offending, criticising or ridiculing faiths without any intention to stir up religious hatred. Rather, protection will be provided from the stirring up of hatred against students because of their faith or lack of it.

### **Terrorism Act 2006**

This Act came into force (in the main) on 13 April 2006 and created offences which include:

- Publishing or causing to be published a statement which is likely to be understood as directly or indirectly encouraging terrorism. Indirect encouragement includes glorification as long as those to whom the statement is published understand that the conduct that is glorified is glorified as conduct that should be emulated (section 1).
- Disseminating terrorist publications. Dissemination includes distributing, circulating, selling, e-mailing or offering for download. A publication will be a terrorist publication if it contains matter which direct or indirectly encourages terrorism, or is useful in acts of terrorism and was included in the publication wholly or mainly for the purpose of being so useful. Indirect encouragement includes glorification as long as those to whom the publication is made available understand that the conduct that is glorified is glorified as conduct that should be emulated (section 2).

- Preparing to commit an act of terrorism or to assist others to do so, if the defendant has the necessary intention to commit an act of terrorism or assist others to do so (section 5).
- Giving or receiving training in certain terrorist skills such as the making handling or use of a noxious substance (section 6).
- Attending at a place used for terrorist training (section 8).

The Act also increases the maximum period that a person can be held after arrest under section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000 and before charge from 14 days to 28 days.

There are opportunities for students in universities and colleges to be manipulated by individuals who commit these offences or to commit these offences themselves. Examples of undesirable and possibly criminal conduct in this context could include: an individual handing out flyers or leaflets or offering for sale books, videos or DVDs that encourage terrorism; the use of an university or college IT system to circulate material that encourages terrorism; the use of university or college facilities to carry out training in terrorist skills.

## **Equality Act 2006**

Part 2 of The Equality Act 2006, which is due to come into force in April 2007, makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of religion or belief in:

- Education
- The provision of goods, facilities and services
- The use and disposal of premises
- The exercise of public functions.

The measures will afford protection from:

- *Direct discrimination*, where a person is treated less favourably than another.
- *Indirect discrimination*, where a provision, criterion or practice has the effect of putting people of a particular religion or belief at a disadvantage when compared to others which cannot be reasonably justified.
- *Victimisation*, where someone is treated less favourably than others because, for example, they have complained of discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief or have assisted someone else in a complaint.

Individuals are protected not only if they suffer direct discrimination because of their own religion or belief, but also if they are directly discriminated against because of the religion or belief of someone they are associated with (such as a friend or member of their family). Individuals are also protected if they are discriminated against because the discriminator mistakenly thinks that they belong to a certain religion, for example because of what they are wearing, even when they do not.

The concept of religion or belief also covers a lack of religion or belief, which means that people will be protected if they suffer discrimination because they have no specific religion or belief.



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