



Report Title	International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance: Definition of Antisemitism		
Author	David O’Brien, Director of Corporate Services and Company		
Accountable Director	Peter Reading, Chief Executive		
Previous committees/groups	Trust Executive Group, 19 November 2025		
Recommended action(s)	Approval		
Purpose of the paper	This paper proposes that the Trust adopts the definition of antisemitism developed by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance		
Executive Summary			
On 16 October 2025 NHS England issued a letter in the names of Sir James Mackay, Chief Executive, and Jo Lenaghan, Chief Workforce Officer which encouraged all NHS organisations to adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism. By adopting the IHRA definition of antisemitism NHS organisations will: • Demonstrate commitment to fostering an inclusive, respectful, and professional environment for colleagues, patients, and visitors across the NHS. • Provide assurance to communities of the NHS commitment to tackle hatred in all its forms. • Reiterate a zero-tolerance stance to all forms of hatred, antisemitism, Islamophobia, and racism, and to any form of discriminatory behaviour. • Reiterate the NHS commitment to creating workplaces and services where everyone feels safe, valued, and supported, regardless of their background, faith, or identity On 03 October, the Trust issued a statement in response to the attack on a synagogue in Manchester which took place on 02 October. This statement emphasised that: “We stand in solidarity with our Jewish colleagues during this difficult time. We recognise that colleagues from Jewish, as well as other faiths, may have friends or family who are feeling anxious following the news of an attack at a place of worship. At YAS, we respect all faiths and backgrounds. The diversity, experiences, and uniqueness each of us brings to our work is a source of strength and compassion for YAS.” Adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism strengthens the Trust’s position regarding hatred, discrimination, and racist behaviour.			
Recommendation(s)	The Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust formally adopts the IHRA working definition of antisemitism.		
Link to Board Assurance Framework Risks (board and level 2 committees only)	BAF Strategic Risk 6: Open and Positive Workplace Culture		

International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Definition of Antisemitism

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This paper proposes that the Trust adopts the working definition of antisemitism as developed by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.

2. CONTEXT

- 2.1 On 26 May 2016 the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) adopted a working definition of antisemitism.
- 2.2 In 2016 the United Kingdom government formally adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism.
- 2.3 In October 2025 the Department of Health and Social Care, via Wes Streeting, Secretary of State, reaffirmed its commitment to this definition.
- 2.4 On 16 October 2025 NHS England issued a letter in the names of Sir James Mackay, Chief Executive, and Jo Lenaghan, Chief Workforce Officer, which, among other things, encouraged all NHS organisations to adopt the IHRA definition. This letter is presented at Appendix A.

3. IHRA DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM

- 3.1 The IHRA working definition of antisemitism is as follows:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”
- 3.2 The definition states that antisemitism employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits and can be expressed in speech, writing, visual forms, and actions. The definition includes illustrative examples of how antisemitism may manifest in contemporary settings. These include, but are not limited to, denial of the Holocaust, accusations of Jewish conspiracy, and the targeting of the Israeli state as a proxy for Jewish people. Note, however, that criticism of the country of Israel that is similar to equivalent criticism levelled against any other country is not regarded as antisemitic.

- 3.3 The IHRA definition is itself legally non-binding. However it does include guidance regarding criminal acts that are antisemitic and discrimination that is antisemitic.
- 3.4 The full IHRA declaration regarding the working definition of antisemitism is presented at Appendix B.

4. TRUST POSITION ON ANTISEMITISM

- 4.1 On 03 October the Trust issued a statement (see Appendix C) in response to the attack on a synagogue in Manchester which took place on 02 October. Excerpts from this statement are as follows:

“We stand in solidarity with our Jewish colleagues during this difficult time. We recognise that colleagues from Jewish, as well as other faiths, may have friends or family who are feeling anxious following the news of an attack at a place of worship.

At YAS, we respect all faiths and backgrounds. The diversity, experiences, and uniqueness each of us brings to our work is a source of strength and compassion for YAS.

- 4.2 The above remarks built on two earlier statements about tackling discrimination and racist behaviour issued by the Trust on 12 September (Appendix D) and 26 September (Appendix E). These statements reiterated the Trust’s commitment to making this organisation a place where all colleagues feel safe to come to work, and where patients receive the care they need, free from the fear of discrimination of any kind. The statements make it clear that the Trust expects all staff and volunteers to uphold this commitment in line with our organisational values.
- 4.3 Adoption of the IHRA working definition would strengthen the Trust’s position regarding antisemitism and all other forms of hatred, discrimination, and racist behaviour. In its letter of 16 October 2025 NHSE explains that by adopting the IHRA definition of antisemitism NHS organisations will:
- Demonstrate commitment to fostering an inclusive, respectful, and professional environment for colleagues, patients, and visitors across the NHS.
 - Provide assurance to communities of the commitment to tackle hatred in all its forms.
 - Reiterate a zero-tolerance stance to all forms of hatred, antisemitism, Islamophobia, and racism, and to any form of discriminatory behaviour.
 - Reiterate the commitment to creating workplaces and services where everyone feels safe, valued, and supported, regardless of their background, faith, or identity.
- 4.4 It is proposed that this Trust does adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report has no direct financial implications.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust formally adopts the IHRA working definition of antisemitism.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- Appendix A:** Letter issued by NHS England, 16 October 2025.
- Appendix B:** International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of antisemitism, adopted 26 May 2016.
- Appendix C:** Staff Notice: Statement issued in response to the terrorist incident in Manchester, 03 October 2025.
- Appendix D:** Staff Notice: Eliminating discrimination at Yorkshire Ambulance Service, 12 September 2025.
- Appendix E:** Staff Notice: Tackling discrimination and racist behaviour, 26 September 2025.

David O'Brien
Director of Corporate Services and Company Secretary

November 2025