

A Report into Labour Students' Investigation into Anti-Semitism at Oxford University Labour Club

Introduction:

On Monday 15th February the co-chair of Oxford University Labour Club (OULC), Alex Chalmers resigned his position in protest at what he described as 'intolerant tendencies' towards Jewish members of the club. Labour Students responded by condemning any and all anti-Semitism immediately.

More details came to light on February 16th after the Oxford Jewish Society (JSoc) posted a list of allegations against members of Oxford University Labour Club which can be viewed in full here: <https://twitter.com/oxfordjsoc/status/699705086386302976>.

Labour Students responded by launching an investigation into the allegations on Wednesday 17th February. On Friday 19th February a series of oral interviews were conducted with OULC and JSoc members. Two Labour Students officers met with 17 individuals throughout the day all of whom were advised that the meetings were being minuted and that they may be called upon to give further evidence to a member of the party's compliance unit. Written submissions were also invited for members who were unable to attend the interviews but wished to submit evidence.

Contained in this report are further details of the allegations made by the JSoc and more allegations which came to light over the course of our interviews and written submissions alongside a summary of the supporting evidence for each of the allegations.

Key definitions:

The European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia's definition of anti-Semitism: *'Anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.'*

Full guidance from the Hate Crime Operation Guidance manual is attached.

Key Findings:

- The evidence gained through the Labour Students investigation process has revealed numerous examples of serious, repeated and potentially criminal anti-Semitism over a sustained period of time. The details of 6 individuals and supporting evidence have been passed over to the Labour Party's Compliance Unit for further investigation and disciplinary action.
- Where witnesses in our investigation have reported incidents that could potentially constitute a hate crime, we will strongly recommend those individuals to report these incidents directly to the police.
- A number of individuals perpetrating a culture within the Labour Club whereby a number of Jewish students have reported feeling either uncomfortable at meetings or unwelcome to attend the Black and Minority Ethnic caucus.
- A number of serious allegations of anti-Semitism at Oxford University, but outside of either the Labour Club or Labour Club members, have been uncovered as part of the investigation. The University of Oxford is therefore urged to urgently and immediately launch an investigation into the clear systemic problem of anti-Semitism that is visible at the University, and to put into place the necessary processes to ensure the welfare of students at the University.
- There is no conclusive evidence that any Club Co-Chair has committed any acts of anti-Semitism and no evidence that the Club has ever attempted to cover up or ignore anti-Semitism, or that any anti-Semitism has taken place at a Labour Club event besides the General Meeting of the 15th February.
- It is noted that the Club is in the process of setting up a disciplinary and complaints process to help alleviate the chances of future incidents. This is welcome and Labour Students will assist the Club in producing this.
- Labour Students will continue to work with the OULC Executive to ensure that the Club is a place free from discrimination where all students feel safe and able to participate fully.

Notes on the investigation

- Over the course of this report each witness has been assigned a letter in order to protect their identity and ensure the confidentiality of their statements.
- Underneath each alleged incident a conclusion has been drawn recommending whether sufficient evidence has been gathered in order to pass on the details of the individual/s for further investigation.