



An 'Islamophobia definition' adopted by universities won't fix this mess. There must be a singular standard to fight dehumanisation.

14 July 2026

Everyone deserves to feel safe from racism at university. No student should be treated as less than human because of who they are. We believe universities should be able to protect all students and staff equally.

But the plan the government put forward today won't do that. It asks every university to create a special definition of Islamophobia, Antisemitism and Racism against First Nations peoples to deal with racism complaints. The problem is that this approach leaves out many groups who also face racism. Writing a separate definition of racism for each community means some people get protected while others get left behind.

Universities can hand out serious punishments, but they don't work like a real court with all its rules and resources. So, they need one clear guide to follow, not a different definition for each group. Just like the law itself, there needs to be one single standard that guides universities when they handle these complaints.

That's why we suggest the Dehumanisation Framework instead. It focuses on "dehumanisation," which means talking about people as if they are less than human. This kind of hate speech has come before and gone along with terrible violence many times throughout history. The Framework gives universities one clear guide that protects everyone.

Our vision is a fair system that works for all students. The Framework is explained in this [submission](#) to the Royal Commission into Antisemitism and Social Cohesion. Eleven Muslim organisations have backed the plan, and the Jewish Council of Australia has even told the Royal Commission that the Dehumanisation Framework should be looked at as part of online safety changes.

The Framework follows international human rights law and Australian hate speech law. It's meant to protect people because of who they are, so it doesn't cover comments about countries, armies, or political beliefs and the people who hold them.

AMAN has spent about seven years building and testing this Framework through legal cases, and it's based on research, including case law, hate-crime studies, and atrocity-prevention studies. It's a proven idea that could help universities treat every student fairly. We call on TEQSA and Australian universities to explore and embrace the Dehumanisation Framework in consultation with their staff and students.

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