

GPRC Approved Addendum to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims' Definition of Islamophobia

Responsible body:	Green Party Regional Council
Approved by:	Green Party Regional Council
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Approved date:	3 December 2022
Next review due:	
Version:	1.1

The Green Party of England and Wales recognises the need for a definition of Islamophobia and after consulting widely agreed to adopt the APPG definition. We believe that this definition, and the examples that accompany it, are well intentioned. However, we are also conscious of criticisms of this definition and that the definition and examples as currently stated do not take full account of alternative points of view. This addendum is intended to acknowledge the range of concerns about the definition, and to state that GPEW will keep the definition of Islamophobia under review.

Firstly, we acknowledge the importance of recognising concerns about the APPG definition that are raised within Islam as a faith community, and the need to try to ensure that by adopting the definition in its current form we do not help to further marginalise those voices. For instance, we note that in November 2020 the Federation of Student Islamic Societies stated its opposed to the definition because, in their view, it conflates race with religion. Over 60 Islamic Student Societies at universities and colleges in the UK and Ireland have signed a position statement that opposes the adoption of the APPG definition in Higher and Further Education.

Secondly, we acknowledge that some campaigners for free speech are concerned that the APPG definition has a detrimental effect on the potential to make legitimate criticisms of attitudes and behaviours that are associated with some aspects of Islam; there are also concerns about who will actually define 'Muslimness', and the extent to which moderate and liberal voices may be drowned out. We note the existence of an open letter published by the National Secular Society in May 2019 that includes signatories from the Council of Ex-Muslims of Britain, the Network of Sikh Organisations and Christian Concern. The letter notes that the law already protects individuals against attacks and unlawful discrimination on the basis of their religion and raises concern about Islam receiving special treatment in comparison to other religions.

Finally, we have to acknowledge that it is effectively impossible to come up with a wording which would meet with universal approval, but we hope that over time a consensus can emerge which can respond positively to both of the previous points.