Tahir Abbas – Academic Biography

Professor Tahir Abbas, FRSA, FAcSS, is Professor of Criminology and Global Justice and serves as Programme Director of the MSc in Criminology within the Department of Society and Politics, as well as Director of the Centre on Radicalisation, Inclusion and Social Equity in the School of Law and Social Sciences at Aston University.

He was formerly Professor of Radicalisation Studies at the Institute of Security and Global Affairs at Leiden University in The Hague (2018–2025).

Born in Birmingham, UK, in 1970, he earned a BSc (Econ) in Economics with Mathematical Studies at Queen Mary University of London, followed by an MSocSc in Economic Development and Policy at the University of Birmingham, and a PhD in Ethnic Relations from the University of Warwick.

Tahir has held various academic positions, including Senior Research Fellow at the Royal United Services Institute. He also held positions as a researcher at the Institute in London from 2016 to 2018, served as Professor of Sociology at Istanbul University from 2009 to 2016, and was Associate Professor of Sociology and Director of the Centre for the Study of Ethnicity and Culture at the University of Birmingham from 2003 to 2009. Additionally, he worked as a Senior Research Officer at the UK Home Office and Ministry of Justice in London (2000–2003), Director of Race Equality West Midlands (1999–2000), Research Fellow at Birmingham City University Business School (1998–1999), and Research Assistant at the University of Warwick (1995–1998).

As a visiting scholar, Tahir has been affiliated with several institutions, including the University of Exeter Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies (2023–), the London School of Economics Department of Government (2017–2019), the New York University Remarque Institute (2015–2016), the Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University Graduate School for Islamic Studies in Jakarta (2012), the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem (2012), the University of Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies (2007–2009), and the University of Warwick Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations (1999–2001). He is a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences (UK).

Tahir's research focuses on critical criminology, political sociology, political psychology, religious and Islamic studies, and critical terrorism studies, exploring various forms of radicalisation, extremism, and political violence across Europe, and their antidotes, which include integration, inclusion, and social equity.

Professor Abbas has published over 75 peer-reviewed journal articles.

He has authored twenty books and edited volumes, including Capitalism, State Power, and the Production of Extremism (Springer, 2025), Global Counter-terrorism (eds., with S. Dutta and S. I. Bergh, University Press, 2025), Voices of Gen Z (with R. Groen, Springer, 2025), Ethnicity, Religion, and Muslim Education in a Changing World (eds., with K. Iqbal, Routledge, 2024), Islamophobia Securitisation (with L. Welten, Springer, 2022), Countering Violent Extremism (Bloomsbury, 2021), Islamophobia and Radicalisation (Hurst/Oxford University Press, 2019), Contemporary Turkey Conflict (Edinburgh University Press, 2017), and Islamic Radicalism and Multicultural Politics (Routledge, 2011). He also published a critical autoethnographic account of his early education, entitled Ruminations (Beacon, 2022).

Tahir was the Scientific Coordinator of the European Commission-funded Drive project, which examined how social exclusion impacts the radicalisation of minority and majority groups in the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, and the United Kingdom. He was also Principal Investigator on the European Commission-funded Protone project, which explored the protection of religious spaces of worship in Europe, and a Co-Investigator on the European Commission-funded project Prepare, which generated a proof of concept concerning young people and families who are returnees from countries of conflict.

Tahir has conducted reviews, government-orientated research, and policy development work for several organisations, including the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office; the Commission for Judicial Appointments; the Ministry for Housing, Communities, and Local Government; the Home Office; and the Ministry of Justice in the UK. He has also served as a researcher and consultant for the International Organization for Migration in Erbil and the United Nations Office for Project Services in New York and Jakarta.