

Former Debenhams worker Roma Iqbal who shared Islamic State documents is jailed

From the [Leicester Mercury](#) Photograph [Thames Valley Police](#)



An “intelligent” woman who shared documents supporting the terrorist group so-called Islamic State, after becoming infatuated with an American terror suspect, has been given an extended prison sentence of five-and-a-half years. Former Debenhams worker Roma Iqbal, 23, from Oxford, previously pleaded guilty to disseminating The Signs Of Al-Rahman In The Raid Of September and Ruling On Fighting Americans

Outside Iraq, on December 10, 2021.

Serena Gates, prosecuting, told Winchester Crown Court that the defendant helped set up a website called the People of Tawhid, to support the terrorist suspect Benjamin Carpenter, also known as Abu Hamza, who was arrested in Knoxville, in the US, in March 2021. He was arrested on suspicion of attempting to provide material support and resources to the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (Isis).

Iqbal would use a variety of social media platforms to discuss

Isis, including Signal, WhatsApp, TikTok and Telegram, and used encrypted messaging on the sites to avoid detection. She said that the documents she shared “glorified” the 9/11 terror attacks in the US.

“The defendant is a follower of the Salafi movement of Islam but also holds an Islamic extremist mindset. Her interest is very much focused on an academic justification for extremist views and actions and there are some very articulate and informed exchanges in which she participates across a number of social media platforms including Telegram, Instagram and TikTok.” *I never did buy the argument that terrorists were poor and downtrodden.*

In one message she said: “I told you I like to take risks, get locked up and convert the sisters inside, work our way outwards.”

Ms Gates said: “There was some degree of infatuation by the defendant about Abu Hamza, it doesn’t indicate that the defendant is exploited by Abu Hamza but does seek his approval. But clearly she is a bright articulate individual who knows what she is doing.”

Sentencing Iqbal to four-and-a-half years in prison with an extra year on licence, Judge Jane Miller KC told her: “It was a combination of your low self-esteem, isolation and depression that caused you to seek the affirmation that you did and act as you did. You are clearly an intelligent young woman and on balance, despite the extremist mindset that you developed, I do not think you will be as stupid to act in this way again.” *No, next time she will learn from her mistakes and take better precautions about encryption etc.*