

# Revealed: Somali roots of suspect held over Russell Square knife rampage

From the [Telegraph](#)

The teenager held for allegedly stabbing to death a woman in Russell Square has been identified as a Norwegian national of Somali origin.

An American woman in her 60s has been killed after being repeatedly stabbed in the back by a knifeman in a central London rampage as police rowed back on terrorism as a potential motive and said the attack was probably triggered by mental health issues.

The US citizen was knifed by the “large man” – who was reportedly wearing black shorts and a white t-shirt – as he silently and indiscriminately attacked pedestrians in Russell Square on Wednesday night.

She was helped by a family of Spanish tourists as she lay slumped against railings after being targeted by the knifeman, who witnesses said did not say a word as he also stabbed a man in his 40s in the chest and a woman in her 20s in the arm.

The Norwegian teenager, 19, was arrested by officers after they tasered him to the ground at the scene, near to the British Museum and UCL’s main campus. He is now being held on suspicion of murder. The others injured were British, American, Israeli and Australian, confirmed Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley. Three have now been discharged from hospital

Police said early indications suggest mental health played a “significant factor” in the attack but terrorism remains “an

active line of inquiry". But Mr Rowley said that so far no evidence has been found of radicalisation that would suggest the man in custody was "in any way motivated by terrorism".

He added: "Whilst the investigation is not yet complete, all of the work we have done so far increasingly points to this tragic incident as having been triggered by mental health issues. At this time, we believe this was a spontaneous attack and that the victims were selected at random."

*Islam + khat use = sudden jihad syndrome*