

## Part 1

### University of Essex – Faith Centre – Essex Students’ Union – Memorandum of Understanding

#### 1.1 About this Memorandum of Understanding

This Memorandum of Understanding describes agreed arrangements between the University, the University of Essex Students’ Union, Students’ Union Faith Societies, and chaplaincy-based or local/national faith groups in the operation and direction of the Faith Centre.

Students’ Union Faith Societies are required to sign up to the terms of this Memorandum of Understanding in order to affiliate themselves to the Faith Centre<sup>1</sup>. In this Memorandum of Understanding, the University also makes commitments to support those Students’ Union Faith Societies that are affiliated to the Faith Centre, in terms of facilities and services.

#### 1.2 Introduction – the University of Essex’s Approach to Faith and Belief

At the University of Essex, you can find the world in one place. We bring together students and staff from over 140 countries – a vibrant mix of faiths, beliefs, and cultural traditions across our three campuses.

We recognise the important role that faith, belief, and spirituality plays in the lives of many people. Our multi-faith approach to supporting the University community respects and celebrates difference between faiths and beliefs.

Our Faith Centre is for all members of the University community – of all faiths and none. The Chaplaincy team offers staff and students pastoral support, a confidential listening ear, and spiritual advice.

Our Chaplaincy spaces at Colchester and Southend are places of calm and peace – a sanctuary where anyone in our busy University can be still with their thoughts, meditate, or pray – alone or with a Chaplain. The Chaplaincy offers a safe place to practise or explore faith, either on campus or by connecting staff or students to a local place of worship.

Staff and students may also like to attend one of the services or events in the varied programme, organised by the Chaplains or Students’ Union Faith Societies.

#### 1.3 About the Faith Centre

The Faith Centre has had a presence at the University of Essex since its inception in the 1960s and exists to provide spiritual and pastoral support to staff and students of all faiths or none.

The University recognises the importance that faith and belief may play in the lives of our staff and students. The University provides Chaplaincy space and facilitates the invitation of officers of faith to work as Chaplains on our three campuses or to be officially linked to the University as a local/national faith representative, with conditions outlined in this Memorandum of Understanding and in our wider policies.

Due to the University having a duty of care to all staff and students, it may intervene at any time if any concerns may contradict this duty of care.

In the University of Essex structure, the Faith Centre is included within the portfolio of the Academic Section and is promoted to students and staff seeking pastoral and spiritual support.

The Chaplaincy team who run services within the Faith Centre are not University of Essex employees. Chaplains and other role-holders working as part of the Faith Centre must agree as part of their appointment to work within the terms of this Memorandum of Understanding.

The University recognises that role-holders within the Faith Centre are responsible to the religious body of organisation that they represent. The University requires those religious bodies/ organisations to be respectful of the University ethos, strategy, and policies, and for their representative officer to work in accordance with these arrangements as well as this Memorandum of Understanding.

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<sup>1</sup> The Students’ Union Faith Society agreement, signed yearly, is included in the appendices of this document.

The Faith Centre has a Chair role, elected by the Chaplains and approved by the Academic Registrar. The Faith Centre Chair works to represent the Faith Centre, working closely with the Centre Co-ordinator.

The Chaplains and operations of the Faith Centre are closely supported by a Centre Co-ordinator role, employed by the University of Essex. The Centre Co-ordinator is employed to act as link-point between the University and Faith Centre, supporting both parties in the management of the arrangements which ensures the Chaplaincy operated efficiently.

The membership of the Faith Centre Committee comprises all roles (as set out in Part 2), representatives from Students' Union Faith Societies, Academic Section (representing the University), and an elected SU sabbatical office, usually the VP (Welfare and Community), representing the Students' Union. This Committee meets once a term to review, plan, and develop Faith Centre activities.

Additionally, a Faith Centre Operations Group comprise of the Faith Centre Chair, Centre Co-ordinator, and 3 role-holders elected from the Faith Centre Committee, liaises or meets as needed to oversee day to day co-ordination for the Faith Centre in between Faith Centre Committee meetings.

Students' Union Faith Societies are ratified by the University of Essex Students' Union. Students' Union Faith Societies are required to sign this Memorandum of Understanding in order to affiliate to the Faith Centre, and commit to shared values regarding faith and belief at the University of Essex. Chaplains are encouraged to support the work of Students' Faith Societies where applicable. FC-affiliated Students' Union Faith Societies have the opportunity to use Chaplaincy space for their activities when space is available, and to use available channels such as the Faith Centre website, social media, and noticeboards to promote their Society and activities.

The work of the Faith Centre is highlighted by an Annual Report to the University's Student Experience Committee. The interests of the Faith Centre will be represented at this Committee by an appropriate member of University staff.

Additionally, the University's Diversity Champion for Faith and Belief will usually make an annual update to the University Steering Group, which oversees equality and diversity at the University.

## Part 2

### University of Essex – Faith Centre – Essex Students' Union – Memorandum of Understanding

#### Roles related to Faith and Belief

##### 2.1 Chaplaincy team – role-holder designations

The term 'role-holder' is used to refer to any individual who has proceeded through the Faith Centre appointment process outlined in this Memorandum of Understanding and has accepted an honorary contract to one of the following designations:

- Faith Centre Chair
- University Chaplain
- Visiting Chaplain
- Assistant Chaplain/ Chaplaincy Volunteer
- Local or National Faith Representative/  
Advisor

##### Other roles related to faith and belief:

The following roles have responsibilities relevant to the work of the Faith Centre, with their own distinct mechanisms for appointment as set out below:

- Students' Union Faith Society Presidents – appointed by annual election via the Students' Union in accordance with arrangements specified by the Students' Union;
- Centre Co-ordinator – employed by the University of Essex to support the work of the Multi-Faith Chaplaincy;
- Head of Equality and Diversity – employed by the University of Essex with an institution-wide strategic brief to support the University's commitment to equality and diversity; and
- Diversity Champion for Faith – a member of the University Steering Group (USG), designated by USG to play a lead role in promoting the University's approach to faith and belief.

##### 2.2 Faith Centre Chair

Elected by the Faith Centre role-holders and confirmed by the Academic Registrar, this is a senior voluntary role within the Faith Centre. A stipend is available to be paid to the individual or their employer in recognition of the additional time needed to carry out the role. The Faith Centre Chair role is elected on an annual basis, usually with an expectation to serve two terms. In addition to their activities as a University Chaplain designation (as set out in 2.3 below), the Faith Centre Chair will:

- Act in a lead advocacy role for the Faith Centre and faith at the University, including representing the service at University meetings, nominations consideration, and liaison with senior stakeholders from the University and Students' Union;
- The Chair ensures that the Faith Centre Committee functions properly, that there is full participation at meetings, all relevant matters are discussed, effective decisions are made and actions are carried out appropriately.
- Along with the Centre Co-ordinator, the Faith Centre Chair also:
  - Co-ordinates chaplaincy operations, including facilities and volunteer rotas;
  - Works collaboratively with role-holders to plan and develop a programme of activity, including promotion of events;
  - Supports the development of an annual report, outlining activities undertaken and setting direction for the coming year;
  - Works collaboratively with role-holders to develop good community links in the local area in order that the University is a stronger voice in local faith networks; and
  - Further enhances the support of staff and students, particularly for under-supported faith communities in the University.

The role holder will be required to bring impartiality and objectivity to meetings and decision making when carrying out the role of the Chair.

### **2.3 University Chaplain**

This role-holder is a religious minister/ officer who either works 'on license' from their employer/ religious body or offers their time on a voluntary basis. Where an external formal selection process is conducted to fill the post, it is expected that the University would be invited to participate in the process.

Role-holders will:

- Work to the role profile for their designation – included in the appendix to this Memorandum of Understanding;
- Whilst serving one faith group or denomination primarily, the role-holder should, if needed, support any member of the University community, regardless of the faith or belief of the individual, either directly or by referring them to the relevant faith community/ chaplain and/ or other support services within the University;
- Be accredited and endorsed by the leaders of his or her faith community or denomination, with a broad knowledge of their faith and some experience of a teaching or leadership role, ideally within the faith community
- Commit to complying with University rules and regulations and to work in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding
- Through the appointment process outlined in this Memorandum of Understanding, demonstrate suitability for the role, and willingness and ability to work alongside other chaplains and representative of other faith communities.

### **2.4 Visiting Chaplain**

As University Chaplain (set out in 2.3 above) but this role-holder visits the University less frequently than once a fortnight.

### **2.5 Assistant Chaplain/ Chaplaincy Volunteer**

As University Chaplain (set out in 2.3 above) but this role-holder is appointed to work as an assistant to a recognised Chaplain or as a volunteer to that Chaplain.

Candidates for this role should be accredited and endorsed by the leaders of his or her faith community or denomination, with a broad knowledge of their faith and experience in the provision of pastoral support. It is not expected that candidates for this role will be required to demonstrate some experience of a teaching or leadership role.

### **2.6 Local/ National Faith Representative/ Adviser**

Local or national contacts to whom students or staff may be referred when seeking contacts from the faith but without an expectation that services will be provided on campus or direct to staff and students. For example, this designation is appropriate to provide links between the University and a local place of worship in order to facilitate safe and effective signposting. In addition, advice may be sought by the University on matters of faith or practice and the implications for University study (e.g. religious festivals during exam periods).

### **2.7 Vice President (Welfare and Community) – Students' Union**

This elected Sabbatical Officer or their nominee includes faith and belief as part of their role. They represent the Students' Union at Faith Centre Committee Meetings. They also represent the student body on matters relating to faith and belief/ chaplaincy provision as they feel necessary.

### **2.8 Societies Guild Manager – Students' Union**

The Societies Guild Manager is a University of Essex Students' Union employee, who oversees the policy, process, and support relating to Students' Union societies. They undertake to uphold this Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the Students' Union as an organisation, and in the case of Students' Union Faith Societies, to oversee the completion by the relevant Society officials of the Students' Union Religious and Faith Societies' Students' Union Agreement each year. Whilst it is not mandatory to do so, they also undertake to encourage Students' Union Faith Societies to accept this Memorandum of Understanding, on the basis of which the Society will become affiliated with the Faith Centre.

### **2.9 Student Faith Society official**

This is a named official (e.g. President), who is a registered University of Essex student and a member of a recognised Students' Union Society. Each newly selected Student Society President is required to sign the

Religious and Faith Societies' Students' Union Agreement each year<sup>2</sup> and asked to sign to confirm acceptance of this Memorandum of Understanding in order to affiliate to the Faith Centre.

#### **2.10 Centre Co-ordinator**

The Centre Co-ordinator is a University employee. They will provide a day to day link point between the Faith Centre Chair, Chaplains, and other role-holders and the University.

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<sup>2</sup> Included in the appendices of this Memorandum of Understanding

## Part 3

### University of Essex – Faith Centre – Essex Students' Union – Memorandum of Understanding

#### Appointment to designated roles within the Faith Centre team

##### 3.1 University Approach

The University will seek new members of the Chaplaincy team, either following the resignation of an existing role-holder and/ or where gaps have been identified by the University in support for worshipping groups on our three campuses. Such support could be provided by either on-campus Chaplain support or developing links with the local faith community to facilitate safe and effective signposting for staff and students.

The University wishes to support nominations of suitably qualified and experience candidates to be appointed as role-holders within the Chaplaincy team. Where an external formal selection process is conducted to identify a nominee from a particular faith group, it is expected that the University would be invited to participate in the process.

The University recognises that different religions and denominations have varying governance structures, which to some extent will dictate the appointment process. The following procedure shall apply in the case of all new requests for appointments for all designations, including replacement for an existing office holder.

##### 3.2 Speculative enquiries from new faith groups/ prospective office holders

Whilst enquiries are welcomed, there is no obligation on the University to make an appointment from that faith group or to agree to any formal connection with that group. In considering speculative applications, the University will evaluate the request against the objectives for the Faith Centre as described in this Memorandum of Understanding and the wider interests of the University, its staff and students. If appointment progresses from an initial speculative enquiry, the method follows that of the application process below:

##### 3.3 Prospective candidates

Two main types of candidate are identified:

###### **1. A prospective appointee may already be in a paid role as a religious leader or officer of that faith, for which reference, recruitment, training, and development are already completed or underway.**

In this instance, the candidate should be recommended to the University by his or her employer/ licensing body. This letter of recommendation should indicate what training and development the candidate has taken which may support the chaplaincy, along with a reference, and a copy of the application form, completed by the recommended role-holder.

###### **2. Alternatively a prospective appointee may be a lay person or volunteer at their local place of worship.**

In this instance, the candidate should be recommended to the University with endorsement by the leaders of his or her local faith community or denomination. This letter of recommendation should indicate what training and development, if any, the candidate has taken which may support the chaplaincy, along with a reference, and a copy of the application form, completed by the recommended role-holder.

##### 3.4 Application process

1. Every candidate must fully complete and sign the application form relevant to the role for which the application is being made, indicating the designation they wish to be considered for.
2. The completed form should be endorsed by a sponsoring national, regional, or local religious body.
3. The sponsoring body should also provide a letter of recommendation/ reference highlighting the suitability of the candidate for this role, based on the role profile. Where possible this reference should also include confirmation of the training, ordination (if applicable), experience as applicable etc. of the candidate.
4. If the sponsoring body does not have access to this information, for example, the sponsoring body is a smaller/ less centrally governed religious body or local place of worship, the candidate themselves must provide evidence of study, training, development etc.

5. The application form will be submitted with the accompanying letter of recommendation to the Centre Co-ordinator who will administer the approvals process and convene the Chaplain's Nomination Group.

### **3.5 Approval**

1. The Centre Co-ordinator will first review the application to check if the information needed to consider the application has been submitted.
2. The Centre Co-ordinator will notify the Faith Centre Operations Group of the application and request feedback on the nomination from them.
3. Applications will then be considered by the Chaplain's Nomination Group. This will consist of:
  - i. Academic Registrar or his/ her nominee (Chair)
  - ii. Faith Centre Chair
  - iii. Students' Union Vice President (Welfare) or his/ her nominee
  - iv. Head of Student Support or his/ her nominee
  - v. Other members may be invited to join depending on denomination, e.g. the President of the relevant Student's Union Faith Society
4. The Chaplain's Nomination Group will consider the application and make a recommendation to the Registrar and Secretary for approval, including the level of designation to be offered.
5. Following approval by the Registrar and Secretary, an honorary contract with a role profile and a copy of this Memorandum of Understanding will be sent to the candidate.
6. In order for the appointment to the role to be confirmed, the role-holder shall be required to sign to confirm acceptance of the terms of the role and their commitment to the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding.

### **3.6 Appointment**

1. The appointed candidate will be invited to the University for a welcome meeting with the Centre Co-ordinator and Faith Centre Chair to plan the programme of induction
2. At a minimum, the Chaplaincy Co-ordinator and/ or the Accessibility Services Manager will undertake to meet annually with each role-holder and their religious leader (if wished) to review their activities, plan a programme for the coming year, and to discuss issues of mutual concern. Should matters of a strategic level need to be discussed, the Head of Student Support may also be involved.

### **3.7 Ongoing points of contact**

For all role-holders, the primary point of contact and support for the Chaplaincy team is the Centre Co-ordinator, or in his/ her absence, the Accessibility Services Manager.

### **3.8 Procedures for Students' Union Faith Societies**

1. As with any type of Student Society, Students' Union Faith Societies are developed and ratified by the University of Essex Students' Union Societies Guild. The Students' Union may seek advice from the Faith Centre Chair and/ or role-holder relevant to the faith if required.
2. Current Students' Union Faith Societies are listed on the Students' Union website: [www.essexstudent.com/societies/findasociety/](http://www.essexstudent.com/societies/findasociety/)
3. Requests for the development of new societies are managed by the University of Essex Students' Union Societies Guild. More information is available via [socguild@essex.ac.uk](mailto:socguild@essex.ac.uk) or [www.essexstudent.com/societies/start/](http://www.essexstudent.com/societies/start/)
4. More information on support for SU Societies and frequently asked questions can be found via [www.essexstudent.com/societies/help/faqs/](http://www.essexstudent.com/societies/help/faqs/)
5. Students' Union elections take place each year to select executive roles within each society.
6. Following these yearly elections, Students' Union Faith Society presidents are required to sign the Religious and Faith Societies' Students' Union Agreement (Appendix 1)
7. Additionally, they are asked to sign the University of Essex/ Faith Centre/ Students' Union Memorandum of Understanding. This acceptance of the Memorandum of Understanding confirms each Students' Union Faith Society to be a stakeholder in the shared values in relation to faith and belief of the University of Essex, Essex Students' Union, and Faith Centre. It also affiliates them to the Faith Centre.
8. The University of Essex, University of Essex Students' Union, and Faith Centre will mutually share records of each signed document. These will be held in accordance with the relevant local confidentiality policies and by the Centre Co-ordinator (University) and Societies Guild Manager (Students' Union).

## Part 4

### University of Essex – Faith Centre – Essex Students’ Union – Memorandum of Understanding

#### 4.1 University commitments to Chaplains, Visiting Chaplains, Assistant Chaplains/ Volunteers following acceptance.

The University is keen to support the work of the Chaplaincy team and will provide the following support, services, and resources to appointed campus-based role-holders:

<b>Support, services, or resources provided to on-campus role-holders</b>	<b>Details</b>
A University of Essex IT account	A University of Essex IT account will be provided which allows role-holders access to the University IT network including an ‘Essex’ email account and to use a University computer whilst on campus. This is subject, in common with university employees, to the Guidelines for the Use of IT Facilities policy.
A University ID card and lanyard (Colchester and Southend only) and name badge	The University will provide role-holders with a University ID Card and name badge. The name badge should be worn at all times on University premises and/or when representing the Faith Centre
Opportunity to register own vehicle for car parking (Colchester campus)	This is a cost to the role-holder (as any University member) but offers reduced hourly rates for car parking.
A Faith Centre induction, as part of the range of University support services available to staff and students	The Centre Co-ordinator will support an induction of new Chaplains, including an overview of the operations of the Chaplaincy and faith activity on our campuses, the University and Students’ Union and its operation and other matters relevant to the particular role.
Ongoing training	The University includes the opportunity for Chaplains to participate in defined areas of the University’s staff development programme (including compulsory online Health and Safety and Equality and Diversity Training)
Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) costs	The University will cover costs of an enhance Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), or similar, if it confirmed this is required as part of the honorary contract.
Limited reimbursement of expenses incurred	The University has a small budget for Chaplaincy operations, to which role-holders may apply, e.g. to support an event in the Chaplaincy or promotion of the Faith Centre. Any expenditure against this budget must be agreed with the Centre Co-ordinator in advance.
Venue availability	The Faith Centre rooms 1 and 2 are available for faith and belief related events organised by the Chaplains. FC 2 offers a dividing curtain and is primarily used for the five daily Islamic prayers. The University offers the opportunity to book Chaplaincy space for faith activities or multi-faith activities and to request use of other rooms when not required for teaching in line with the Room Bookings and Usage Policy.
Meetings, at least on an annual basis, with the Centre Co-ordinator	Ongoing support and a link point to the University are provided via the day to day relationship with the Centre Co-ordinator. At a minimum the Centre Co-ordinator and/or Accessibility Services Manager will undertake to meet annually with each role-holder and their religious leader (if wished) to review, plan activity, and to discuss issues of mutual concern. Should matters of a strategic level need to be discussed, the Head of Student Support will also be involved.
University updates	The University, via the Centre Co-ordinator, will undertake to keep office holders updated of any relevant University information or changes that may affect the Faith Centre services or staff/students (e.g. changes in support services)
Co-ordination of chaplaincy	The University will provide at their cost a Centre Co-ordinator to support

operations	chaplainship operations, including requests for room bookings, website updates, meeting administration, liaison with other University departments, e.g. Estates Management. Role holders are expected to undertake their own day to day administration.
Video conferencing facilities	The University can arrange video conferencing facilities to allow representatives from all campuses to participate in meetings, as required.
A desk, computer, printer, and telephone	As a minimum, the University will provide Chaplains access to shared equipment when on Chaplainship business on campus (where possible), with a quiet room available for one to one interaction with visitors to the chaplainship.

**Local/ National Faith Representatives/ Advisers** – As their role is not campus-based, the University will provide Faith Representatives/ Advisers with items as needed to their specific work and interactions with the University.

## Part 5

### University of Essex – Faith Centre – Essex Students’ Union – Memorandum of Understanding

#### 5.1 Practical information and support for Students’ Union Faith Societies affiliated to the Multi-Faith Chaplaincy

The University is keen to support the work of Students’ Union Faith Societies who have accepted this Memorandum of Understanding and, through the Centre Co-ordinator, will provide the following support, services, and resources in close liaison with the Students’ Union Societies Guild.

##### Key contacts for Students’ Union Faith Societies –

- Within Essex Students’ Union – the Societies Guild team
- Within the Faith Centre – the Chaplain or faith advisor for that faith and/or Faith Centre Chair
- Within the Faith Centre/ University (practical/ operational arrangements) – the Centre Co-ordinator

Item	Details
An opportunity to promote Students’ Union Faith Societies at the Faith Centre	There is space on the noticeboard (Colchester – in the corridor; Southend – inside the chaplaincy; Loughton – in the student services hub) to promote your Faith Society
Inclusion on the Faith Centre website	All ratified Students’ Union Faith Societies, who have signed the relevant documentation to affiliate to the Faith Centre are included on the Faith Centre website: <a href="http://www.essex.ac.uk/see/chaplaincy">www.essex.ac.uk/see/chaplaincy</a>
The opportunity to be involved in or volunteer for Faith Centre events	The Chaplains are keen for Students’ Union Faith Society involvement in chaplaincy activities, such as the annual FC Welcome Buffet, Welcome Week and Freshers’ Fair activities, Remembrance Day, etc.
The opportunity to attend Faith Centre Committee meetings	Each Students’ Union Faith Society President, along with the Vice-President (Welfare and Community) or their nominee, is invited to attend FC termly committee meetings.
Students’ Union Faith Society ‘pigeon hole’ (Colchester only)	There is a pigeon hole for each Students’ Union Faith Society, just inside the door of the Faith Centre
Storage space (Colchester only)	Limited space is available to store items relating to each Students’ Union Faith Society. This is: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The share of a cupboard shelf in FC Space 1. Please only enter FC Space 1 when the room is not in use. Please do not disturb a group or private act of worship or prayer.</li> <li>2. A shelf space in the ground floor FC storeroom, for which a key will be provided. Loss of the key will be charged to the Students’ Union Faith Society Presidents.</li> </ol>
Venue availability in the Faith Centre (Southend and Colchester) and room bookings on campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students’ Union Faith Society room bookings, either in the Faith Centre, or in teaching rooms elsewhere on campus, are subject to the University of Essex room bookings policy and the University’s Student Club &amp; Society Room Booking Terms and Conditions found via <a href="http://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/academic/tunetables.aspx">http://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/academic/tunetables.aspx</a></li> <li>• Priority for bookings in the Faith Centre is given to Chaplains who will plan their yearly programme each summer.</li> <li>• Following this process, Students’ Union Faith Societies are welcome to make requests to book the Faith Centre, via the Societies booking form</li> <li>• Room bookings can be made to finish no later than 23:00</li> <li>• FC Space 2 is usually fully booked for the five Islamic daily prayers</li> </ul>
Support in the planning and running of religious services and key religious festivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The University shall offer, through the Faith Centre, regular acts of worship in accordance with the practice of the relevant religion as appropriate, where the worshipping group request it, and in so far as is practicable</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For religions where there is not a representative on-campus presence, the Chaplaincy team will seek to help connect students to their local faith community, or faith society as applicable</li> <li>• The Faith Centre shall also arrange for religious festivals to be recognised and celebrated in so far as is practicable</li> <li>• The FC shall also seek to bring faiths together in combined celebration or discussion – for example at the Faith Centre Welcome Buffet</li> <li>• The University does not have unlimited space and its priority shall be its members</li> </ul>
<p>Use of external speakers or those from local places of worship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External speakers are encouraged to support further exploration of faith. Occasional or ad-hoc visits, for example to speak at a Students' Union Faith Society event, are subject to the University's Events and External Speakers Code of Practice</li> <li>• Students' Union Faith Societies should seek agreements from the SU Societies Guild, before inviting an external speaker to the campus and any such event will be held in accordance with the University's policy and Events and External Speakers Code of Conduct</li> <li>• If a Students' Union Faith Society has a regular external speaker from a local place of worship e.g. a local minister, it may be appropriate to request they apply to become a Chaplain, Visiting Chaplain, or Local Faith Representative. Please ask the Centre Co-ordinator for advice.</li> </ul>

## Part 6

### University of Essex – Faith Centre – Essex Students’ Union – Memorandum of Understanding

#### 6.1 Service commitments and obligations to all role-holders and affiliated Students’ Union Faith Societies

The Faith Centre differs significantly to a single faith place of worship. All stakeholders within the Faith Centre including role-holders and affiliated Students’ Union Faith Societies are expected to work in accordance with the FC service commitment and shared obligations.

#### 6.2 Faith Centre service commitment

The Faith Centre role-holders and other role holders related to faith and belief set out in section 2.1 above shall individually and collectively:

1. Offer a warm welcome, whether you are a person of faith or not
2. Provide non-judgemental pastoral support for students and staff
3. Offer a confidential listening ear
4. Support or advise spiritually at the request of the individual
5. Help people explore their faith
6. Use the facilities provided by the University for the Faith Centre to help those in the University community to practise their faith on campus and to signpost other facilities available in the local area
7. Respect the need for space within the Faith Centre to be available for quiet reflection and prayer, either alone or with a Chaplain
8. With the support of the University where needed, co-ordinate religious services, celebrations, events, and festivals
9. Provide a programme of spiritual and social activities
10. Link to places of support and help within the University if needed
11. Support affiliated Students’ Union Faith Societies
12. Remain respectful of individual beliefs and not evangelise or proselytise
13. Show due respect for the sincerely held beliefs of others
14. Encourage multi-faith activity where University members can learn about other faiths, and celebrate common ground
15. Help individuals connect with on campus activities or their local faith community
16. Support and advise the University on religious/ spiritual/ faith matters, providing an expert resource in operational, strategic, and educational matters where needed

#### 6.3 Faith Centre shared obligations

All role-holders and affiliated Students’ Union Faith Societies should:

1. Support and advocate a welcoming and harmonious shared environment in the Faith Centre.
2. Work as a role-holder or operate as a University member (as applicable) within the University Regulations, Policies, Procedures, and Codes of Practice, including but not exclusively relating to Equality and Diversity, Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech (including the Events and External Speakers Code of Practice), Dignity and Respect, Health and Safety, Use of IT Facilities, Safeguarding of under-18s and vulnerable adults, and protocols for responding to the death of a student.
3. Undertake the role indicated in their role profile and in this Memorandum of Understanding and where applicable, follow the SU Society policies and processes laid out by the Students’ Union Societies Guild.
4. Meet the requirements of an enhance Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if this is required by the terms of an honorary contract, and refer to other University and Students’ Union requirements as applicable regarding working with vulnerable groups.
5. Work with friendship and cordiality, actively creating and nurturing links with and between faith communities working within the guidance on Building Good Relations with People of Different Faiths and Beliefs produced by the Interfaith Network for the UK on <http://www.interfaith.org.uk/about-ifn/values-of-ifn>
6. Exercise self-restraint and a concern for the freedom and dignity of others. This means:
  - a. Respecting other people’s freedom within the law to express their beliefs and convictions in worship and prayer;

- b. Respecting the convictions of others about food, dress, and social etiquette, and not behaving in ways which cause offence;
  - c. Always avoiding violence in relationships, in particular avoiding violent action or language, threats, manipulation, improper inducements, or the misuse of any kind of power;
  - d. Not misrepresenting or disparaging other people's beliefs and practices;
  - e. Being sensitive and courteous;
  - f. Respecting the right of others to disagree with us; and
  - g. Not actively seeking to persuade others to join their faith.
7. Refer students or staff who might benefit from specialist support (e.g. counselling) to the relevant University service – Student Services Hub (students) or Occupational Health and Wellbeing (staff)
  8. Follow protocol when wishing to invite guests or assistants to the University. Members of the chaplaincy wishing to invite guests or assistants to the University shall do so only in accordance with the rules and regulations of the University and shall accept responsibility for the conduct of and for any loss or damage caused by their guests or assistants while on the University site. No member of the University shall knowingly invite a person who has been excluded by the Registrar and Secretary from any University site.
  9. Refer to the University of Essex appropriately – It's important to many members to be able to explain where they study, work, or volunteer; this is something the University and Students' Union supports. The formal name of the University of the Students' Union can also be used with permission in support of an event. Permission for the Union comes from the Societies Guild Manager and from the University by the Centre Co-ordinator.
  10. Get involved in chaplaincy operations and development – Regular opportunities are available through Faith Centre termly committee meetings for stakeholders to share their ideas and updates. Additionally, the Faith Centre Operations Group comprised of the Faith Centre Chair, Centre Co-ordinator, and 3 role-holders elected from the FC Committee meet more regularly to operationally co-ordinate the operations of the Faith Centre.
  11. The University of Essex allows voluntary segregation for acts of religious worship in line with the Equality Act 2010. However the segregation of event attendees that leads to discrimination will not be permitted; event attendees are not allowed to be segregated by request, through force, coercion, or intimidation.
  12. Be vigilant that promotional materials are suitable for display and should not be distributed by unauthorised individuals or groups.

Any leaflets and other materials displayed or distributed should not proselytise or disparage another denomination or faith or belief or be written for the purpose of promoting or comparing one faith over another. Literature should not be produced/ supplied by a third party (unless approved for display by the Centre Co-ordinator or Faith Centre Chair). Holy books and other items provided by role-holders to support religious services are permitted.

All stakeholders should ensure that any leaflets or other materials displayed or distributed in the Faith Centre are:

- a. Focussed on the services offered through the role-holder or Students' Union Faith Society
- b. Produced, mindful of this Memorandum of Understanding and University regulations
- c. Displayed only by appointed role-holders and/or their linked place of worship and Students' Union Faith Societies affiliated to the Faith Centre
- d. Clearly marked with the organisation or individual(s) responsible for the material and/or the role-holder who has put it on display

#### **6.4 Additional role-holder commitments:**

Under the terms of their role profile and honorary contract, Faith Centre role-holders are asked to:

1. Complete the induction programme for new Chaplains
2. Keep statistical information on activities and services organised and of the use of these by staff and students to report to the Faith Centre Committee or provide to the University on request and for inclusion in the Faith Centre annual report
3. At times when they are not available, for example due to holiday, maternity leave, sickness, to put forward a minister/ alternative officer of faith if required. This is usually via the appointment process for longer term cover or via the University Events and External Speakers Code of Practice for one-off cover arrangements

## **Part 7**

### **University of Essex – Faith Centre – Essex Students’ Union – Memorandum of Understanding**

#### **7.1 Concerns and Infringements of this Memorandum of Understanding**

Whilst this Memorandum of Understanding is written in the spirit of partnership, we also recognise that sometimes there are misunderstandings of things simply go wrong. To seek to resolve such difficulties any individual staff or student member of the University of Faith Centre role-holder shall raise any concerns informally with the opposite party in the first instance through the Faith Centre Centre Co-ordinator (University) or the Societies Guild Manager in the Students’ Union. If a dispute cannot be resolved then it shall be referred to either the Deputy Chief Executive of the SU or the Director of Student Life or their nominees. Where the dispute remains unresolved, the matter will be referred to the Academic Registrar or the Chief Executive of the Students’ Union.

In the last resort, the University reserves the right to withdraw recognition to a role-holder or rescind affiliation to a Student Faith Society should the individual or group be found to be in infringement of the terms of this Memorandum of Understanding.

In the case of a concern or infringement being made against an individual student, this will be subject to the rules and processes within the University Student Code of Conduct.

#### **7.2 Enquiries**

Any enquiries relating to this Memorandum of Understanding should be made in the first instance to [mfcadmin@essex.ac.uk](mailto:mfcadmin@essex.ac.uk)

**University of Essex**  
**June 2017**

**Annex 1 - Students' Union Religious societies form**



**Religious and Faith Societies Students' Union Agreement**

Name of the Society.....  
 Current Executive members

Name	Position	Email Address

Please give details of any person who leads your religious/faith group on a regular basis  
 Name.....

Contact Telephone Number.....

Address of place of regular/permanent worship  
 .....  
 .....

Post Code.....

For office use only

I agree that I have read, understood, accepted and signed the Multi Faith Chaplaincy's Memorandum of Understanding.

I agree my society will abide by the Societies Guild Constitution.

Please ensure two members of your executive committee sign this form.

Signed.....

Print.....

Date.....

Signed.....

Print.....

Date.....

## Annex 2 – Chaplain role description and profile

### University of Essex

#### ROLE DESCRIPTION

<b>Role Title:</b>	Chaplain (XXXX faith) or (xxxx organisation)
<b>Status:</b>	Works on license from [Bishop/ place of worship]
<b>Hours:</b>	A mutually agreed commitment between the individual and/or faith body and the University, confirmed at the time of appointment.
<b>Department/Section:</b>	Academic Section, (Student Life)
<b>University oversight by:</b>	Academic Registrar
<b>Day to day contact:</b>	<b>Within the University</b> Faith Centre Centre Co-ordinator <b>Outside the University</b> The individual's employer or licensing body, to which they account.
<b>Campus</b>	This role is based at [insert] campus with an expectation occasional support be provided at our other campuses if required by telephone or email, providing support in person in so far as possible(expenses paid).
<b>Purpose of role:</b>	With a focus on their faith, to be part of the University-wide Faith Centre team of chaplains, providing on-campus pastoral care, a confidential listening ear and spiritual support to the University community (students and staff), to all faiths and none.
<b>Focus of role</b>	To act as a Chaplain for their faith community (staff and students) at the University of Essex, including interactions in the Chaplaincy/ around the designated campus, plus arrangements and running of religious services as required by their faith group and meetings within the University as required.  To support people of other faiths and none in situations of need, and provide effective signposting if this person's faith differs from the role-holder's own.

#### **The University of Essex**

The University of Essex is the world in one place. We bring together students and staff from over 140 countries - a vibrant mix of faiths, beliefs and cultural traditions, joining together at our three campuses (Colchester, Southend and Loughton)

We recognise the importance that faith, belief and spirituality plays in the lives of many people. We take a multi-faith approach to our support of the University Community which both respects and celebrates difference between faiths and beliefs. [www.essex.ac.uk](http://www.essex.ac.uk)

#### **Academic Section/Student Life**

The Academic Section is part of the University of Essex's Professional Services and is headed by the Academic Registrar. The Section is responsible for managing all aspects of student and academic administration and plays a central role in delivering the University's commitment to excellence in education across the institution. The main directorates of the Academic Section are: Academic Services and Student Life. The Student Life directorate is responsible for leading and coordinating many elements of the student experience which support the educational aspects of student life. This includes Student Support (including wellbeing, accessibility services, residence life, student finance, Faith Centre, Student Services Hub), Employability and Careers, and Student Engagement. The directorate is predominantly student-facing and the success of its delivery relies on ensuring student benefit is paramount in our approach and that services and support are delivered in a coherent and student-focused manner.

[www.essex.ac.uk/academic-section/](http://www.essex.ac.uk/academic-section/)

## **About the Faith Centre**

The University-wide Faith Centre (FC) service, offers on-campus pastoral care, a confidential listening ear and spiritual support to our University students and staff, whatever their beliefs or religion. The service also works to signpost University members to other support services in the University and Students' Union, and to facilitate connections to the local faith community.

Our Chaplains work around and about on our campuses as well in our Chaplaincy spaces at Colchester and Southend. These are places of calm and peace for anyone in our busy university to come and have some time out and be still with their thoughts, or to pray - alone or with a Chaplain. Our Chaplains also co-ordinate a programme of events, including faith-specific services and multi-faith activities. They also work closely with student's union faith societies. [www.essex.ac.uk/see/chaplaincy](http://www.essex.ac.uk/see/chaplaincy)

## **Role profile**

### **These attributes form an overall list which may form a greater or lesser part of the day-to-day Chaplain role within the operations of the Faith Centre**

As part of the team of chaplains to:

1. Work in accordance with the Faith Centre-University of Essex Memorandum of Understanding, University policies, and adherence to matters relating to UK legislation such as safeguarding and equality and diversity.
2. Act as chaplain to the staff and students of the chaplain's own religion or denomination
3. Provide on-campus support to our University community, including the offer of a confidential listening ear and/or spiritual/ religious support, as appropriate, and to support and assist anyone in a time of difficulty or crisis.
4. Promote an inclusive and welcoming environment; being available to greet people of any faith or none who contact or come into the Chaplaincy
5. Provide information and response to enquiries relating to the chaplain's faith or organization by email, telephone, in writing or in person, making referrals as appropriate.
6. Help facilitate regular opportunities for worship, prayer and educational aspects relating to the role-holder's faith. This may include leading religious services, overseeing facilities to worship on campus, and observance of the religious calendar in facilitation of faith events, working closely with the FC Centre Co-ordinator and other University service providers such as Event Essex when needed on larger or more complex events.
7. Work as part of a range of integrated support services at the University of Essex, signposting staff and students to other chaplains or SU religious societies or more widely to other support or advice areas where their enquiry or need falls outside the knowledge or remit of the FC or the chaplain.
8. Work collaboratively with FC stakeholders to foster and maintain excellent and productive working relationships with key contacts associated with the work of the team, within the University and Students Union.

This list of attributes serves to highlight the key aspects of a Chaplain role at the University of Essex. This role profile forms part of the Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Essex and Faith Centre. Subsequent changes may be requested on occasion by the Student Experience Committee or the Academic Registrar.

## **Terms of Appointment:**

For a full description of the terms of appointment as per the Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Essex and Faith Centre, please visit [www.essex.ac.uk/see/chaplaincy](http://www.essex.ac.uk/see/chaplaincy)