**University of Essex**

**Faith Centre Committee**

**Terms of Reference**

1. **Origins**

The Committee shall exercise its authority in accordance with the provisions of this document which shall be known as the 'Terms of Reference’. This replaces the former ‘Instruments of Management’ document.

1. **Faith Centre Committee: responsibilities and membership**

2.1 The Committee shall be responsible to the Registrar and Secretary, through the Director of Student Support, for:

* Working to promote the Faith Centre purpose- including (in no particular order):
* To advise individuals (students and staff) on religious/spiritual/faith matters
* To advise the University on religious/spiritual/faith matters
* Where facilities are provided, to offer a place of worship and regular services for staff and students
* To coordinate celebrations, spiritual events and festivals
* To provide spiritual and social activities
* To provide pastoral support for students and staff of all faiths or none
* To promote links and relationships with the wider community
* To support student faith societies
* To encourage interfaith dialogue and multi-faith activity where there is a desire for this among members
* Ensuring that members observe the Memorandum of Understanding with the University;
* Considering the strategic development of the Faith Centre;
* Identifying gaps in provision and seek to build links with groups not currently represented when the need arises;
* Making recommendations for the allocation of any space provided by the University and agreeing arrangements for room bookings by members;
* Making recommendations regarding the appointment of new/replacement Chaplains and associated roles at all campuses;
* Ensuring that all groups wishing to work within the chaplaincy are deemed appropriate to do so;
* Liaising as necessary with the appropriate University officers;
* Providing an annual report to the University
  1. All recognised Chaplains, Chaplaincy Assistants/Volunteers and the Presidents (or equivalent) of student faith societies are eligible for membership of the Committee. In addition, each group shall have the option of appointing a second representative to the Committee. Members of the Committee may send their deputies providing they have been officially recognised. Faith Representatives/Advisers are not eligible for membership of the Committee but may attend by invitation. See ‘terminology’ document for definitions of roles.
  2. The Committee may at its discretion co-opt up to three other persons to membership.
  3. The Director of Student Support (or nominee), the Students’ Union Vice President (Welfare and Community) and the Students’ Union Vice President (International) shall be ex-officio members of the committee. Either the Vice President (Welfare) or the Vice President (International) shall attend Committee meetings.
  4. The Director of Student Support shall appoint a member of staff to act as administrator to the Committee.

1. **Format and procedures**
   1. The Faith Centre Committee shall decide its own pattern of meetings, subject to the proviso that at least three meetings in each calendar year in must be held.
   2. It is suggested that the Committee initially meet twice each term, in week 2 and week 8 of each term combining the previous MFCC Committee of Management meeting and Chaplaincy Team meetings.
   3. The meetings will be split into three sections:

a) Formal business; recognition of new members, election of officers, budget management and annual timetable.

b) Chaplaincy matters; including organisation of multi-faith events and representation at University events and committees, pastoral matters in general.

c) Closed business; to discuss items of closed business such as specific pastoral matters where it is not appropriate for student society officials to be present.

* 1. Space and maintenance issues should not be the main focus of the committee and that these matters should be considered by the Standing Committee and reported back to the committee accordingly.
  2. Additional decisions may need to be taken outside of these meetings; where possible these decisions should be made by the Standing Committee or conducted via email, whichever is more appropriate.
  3. Each year, the Committee shall appoint, from among its membership, the following officers: Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer. The officers should normally be a Recognised Chaplain. The officers shall be appointed for one year and shall not normally serve in a particular post for more than three consecutive years.
  4. Members should raise items with the FCC administrator when asked for agenda items. Late business can be submitted during any other business at the end of each meeting. Agendas, minutes and papers shall be prepared by the administrator.
  5. The Faith Centre Committee shall be quorate if either more than 50% of its membership are present. At meetings of the Faith Centre Committee, when a vote is taken, a matter shall be determined by the majority of the members present and voting on the matter. In the case of equality of votes, the Chair shall have the casting vote.
  6. The Faith Centre Committee may appoint such sub-committees as it thinks fit and may, as it wishes, delegate functions to such sub-committees.
  7. Minutes and/or reports of the Faith Centre Committee shall be made available to relevant University Committees. A representative of the Faith Centre Committee may be selected to attend relevant University Committees by invitation.
  8. The Faith Centre Committee is a University-wide body which includes all campuses. Chaplains and associate roles at all campuses should be invited to committee meetings (in person or by video conference).

1. **Standing Committee**
   1. The Standing Committee is constituted as follows:

* Chairperson
* Vice-Chairperson
* Treasurer
* One other recognised member of the Faith Centre Committee.

The Standing Committee will deal with matters on behalf of the Faith Centre Committee between meetings, including those relating to space and maintenance.

1. **Room Bookings and Security**

5.1 Room booking requests should be submitted to the FC administrator prior to the first term for regular bookings. Each group can make a request for any time at this point, previous year bookings are not automatically carried forward and any clashes will need to be resolved by the groups involved. There will also be a separate timetable for Welcome Week. Any further bookings can be made by emailing mfcadmin@essex.ac.uk.

5.2Security arrangements are the responsibility of the University Security Manager. When the facilities are locked for safety reasons access may be requested to patrol/security staff.

**6. Terms of Reference: Modification**

6.1 The membership and terms of reference should be confirmed annually at the first meeting of the academic year to ensure that all members are familiar with the purpose of the meeting.

6.2It shall be open to the Faith Centre Committee to recommend to the Registrar & Secretary changes to the terms of reference and to associated documentation. Notice of such changes must have been given to all members of the committee at least two weeks before the meeting at which they are considered, and before a recommendation may be made to the Registrar & Secretary it must be supported by two-thirds of the membership of the Committee who are present and voting.

University of Essex

Student Support

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