

Religious Services Policy and Procedure



1 Purpose

To provide faith services and programs through the University Multifaith Chaplaincy Services Section.

2 Scope

Applies to all University staff and Students.

3 Policy Statement

The University of Southern Queensland recognises that Students, staff and community members associated with the University have religious and spiritual needs. It also recognises that religion is an important dimension in the life of many individuals.

The University's international education program involves a number of Students from different religious and spiritual traditions who should have their religious and spiritual needs fulfilled while undertaking long term study on campus, far from their home countries.

Cultural and religious diversity is also recognised amongst domestic Australian students, who are sometimes located far from their homes.

Staff members of the University constitute a diverse body, who come from different states and countries to undertake their duties. They also represent different cultural and religious traditions.

The University will adopt a model with an approach of respect for various faiths, so as to respond to the different religious and spiritual needs of students and staff. Aiming for a more integrated, holistic approach, the specific needs of particular faith groups based on their tradition and specific religious requirements are also respected, and, where possible, assistance in cooperation with or referral to various religious bodies will be provided.

4 Principles

The University of Southern Queensland recognises the religious and spiritual diversity amongst its Students, staff and community members and aims to respond to their needs as far as it is possible. To do this, the University will provide faith services and programs through its new Multifaith Chaplaincy Services section. The aims of the policy are:

1. To recognise the diverse religious and spiritual needs of the University community.
2. To respond to these needs through the new Multifaith Chaplaincy Services section.
3. To recognise the positive contribution of churches and religious groups to the University.
4. To establish and develop close cooperation with religious leaders and religious bodies.
5. To undertake projects of mutual interest with various religious bodies and communities.
6. To conduct educational projects aiming towards mutual understanding and respect between particular faith groups.
7. To work on the development of mutual cooperation and respect between particular religious bodies and groups.
8. To respect the dignity of all, regardless of their religion, as well as non-believers.

5 Procedures

1. The transition from the current model into a more multifaith approach will be overseen by the University Multifaith Services Advisory Committee. The Committee will also manage the transition of Chaplaincy into Multifaith Chaplaincy Services in conjunction with any appropriate religious bodies.
2. The membership of the committee will be:
 - a. Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students) (Chair)
 - b. Director, Multicultural Centre
 - c. Director, USQ International
 - d. USQ Chaplain Coordinator
 - e. Senior Executive Officer (Policy and Planning) to the Vice-Chancellor
 - f. One student representative (nominated by the USQ Student Guild)
 - g. One student representative (nominated by USQ Chaplain Coordinator)
 - h. One staff member (nominated by the USQ Chaplain Coordinator)
 - i. Manager, Multicultural Centre (Executive Officer and Secretary)
3. The Committee will have the power to co-opt members if necessary.

4. The Faith Community Network will be established to assist with consulting on specific issues with local religious groups and implementation of the policy.
5. The Network, comprising representatives of local religious groups, reports to the University Multifaith Services Advisory Committee.
6. There will be a position of University-wide Chaplain Coordinator. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students) may appoint campus-based Chaplain Coordinators on campus-based centres.
7. The Chaplain Coordinator will be appointed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students) on the recommendation of the Multifaith Services Advisory Committee after consultations with any appropriate religious bodies.
8. The Chaplain Coordinator, campus chaplains and other chaplains involved in the religious and spiritual activities at the University will perform their roles according to the guidelines for the University Multifaith Chaplaincy Services. The Chaplain Coordinator will be an honorary, unpaid position with support provided for conference attendance.
9. All chaplains should cooperate in the provision of their services according to the requirements of their respective religious bodies (which supported their recommendation to the position of chaplain).
10. The duly appointed chaplains, in the absence of their colleagues, would provide necessary essential advice or referral to students and staff regardless of their own religious affiliations, if this is requested by the student or staff member seeking assistance.
11. The Chaplain Coordinator, campus chaplains and other chaplains will not proselytise any members of the University community to a different or new faith. All chaplains will respect people who are not associated with their own religious traditions as well as non-believers.
12. The University will provide the chaplains with reasonable facilities, resources and support in order to fulfil their duties.
13. Each University campus will be considered to be responsible for providing resources to organise their respective programs.
14. All chaplains are expected to cooperate between themselves, with their religious bodies and with the University's management.
15. All chaplains should be aware of the main University policies and procedures, including the Religious Services Policy and Procedure and associated regulations, and Policies on Anti-discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Multiculturalism.
16. All chaplains are to possess a valid 'Blue Card' for working with minors.

17. Chaplains are encouraged to be involved in the life of the University and will be invited to participate in major University events, programs and functions.
18. All chaplains have a duty to report incidents of religious conflict, tension or inappropriate behaviour to the Multifaith Services Advisory Committee.
19. Chaplains will try and respond to the religious and spiritual needs of external students by a variety of technological means and make appropriate recommendations to the Multifaith Services Advisory Committee.
20. The chaplains will cooperate closely with the University Multicultural Centre and are welcome to contribute to any University-wide and community programs organised and conducted by the Centre.
21. The chaplains are also supported by the University's Student Services, Student Guild and other sections where appropriate.
22. Administrative support, management and planning of major events will be provided at the Toowoomba campus by the University Multicultural Centre and in other campuses by officers delegated by the Head of that campus.
23. The Committee reports to the Social Justice Committee
24. The Committee will conduct regular meetings, at least two times during the year.

6 References

Nil.

7 Schedules

This policy must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

8 Policy Information

Accountable Officer	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students)
Responsible Officer	Executive Director (Student Success and Wellbeing)
Policy Type	Executive Policy
Policy Suite	
Subordinate Schedules	

Approved Date	17/12/2015
Effective Date	17/12/2015
Review Date	
Relevant Legislation	
Related Policies	Employee Equity and Diversity Policy Harassment and Discrimination Complaint Resolution for Students Policy and Procedure Multiculturalism Policy and Procedure
Related Procedures	Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Complaints against Employees Procedure Employee Conflict of Interest Procedure
Related forms, publications and websites	
Definitions	<p>Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary</p> <p>Student</p> <p>A person who is admitted to an Award Program or Non-Award Program offered by the University and is: currently enrolled in one or more Courses or study units; or not currently enrolled but is on an approved Leave of Absence or whose admission has not been cancelled.</p> <p>University</p> <p>The term 'University' or 'USQ' means the University of Southern Queensland.</p> <p>Definitions that relate to this policy only</p>
Keywords	Multiculturalism, religion, chaplain, counselling, pastoral support
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