

STATEMENT ON FAITH AND RELIGION FOR STUDENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The University of Southampton is a secular organisation committed to the values and principles of equality and diversity; it has a responsibility to ensure freedom of intellectual enquiry and expression. The University privileges no religious faith or organisation but recognises the value of faith and religion in supporting the wellbeing of our students.

This statement is intended as a form of guidance for the University's students on religious activities, practices and provision on campus. It is designed to support the University's commitment to equality and diversity, recognising that religious and cultural beliefs form part of a rich academic community; and should be read in this spirit.

2.0 CONDUCT AND ACTIVITIES

All staff, students and visitors to the University have a responsibility not to discriminate on the grounds of religion or belief. The University expects and requires that religious groups, individuals of faith and no-faith should accord full tolerance to the religion, beliefs and practices of others.

The University respects cultural and religious differences in clothing as part of embracing a diverse community. The only limitations in cultural and religious dress codes may be: on the grounds of health and safety, where a uniform is required, where clothing prevents easy verification of identity (e.g. for access to premises, examination identification checks). Clothing that is offensive, discriminatory or inflammatory in its use of writing or symbols is not acceptable and disciplinary action may be taken.

The University does not schedule any academic, administrative, procedural or social events and activities around religious festivals, observances and holidays for example: examinations, assessments, induction or graduation. Students cannot normally request special consideration on the grounds of religious beliefs or practices.

3.0 PROVISION AND FACILITIES

Subject to resources and in line with its duties under the Equality Act 2010, the University is committed to making reasonable provision for religious activities, observance, prayer and spiritual/pastoral care on campus.

The University accommodates its various faith communities in the Chaplaincy (Faith Centre), which is both ecumenical and multi-faith. It offers a variety of services including: ecumenical religious services, social events aimed to bring members of all faiths together, quiet prayer and contemplation spaces, debate and discussion groups, faith advisors, individual support and advice.

A room, which meets the requirements for Muslim Prayer, is available at Highfield Campus. The organisation and management of all facilities for religious observance, prayer and spiritual/pastoral care will be carried out in such a way as to accommodate a reasonable range of student users fairly, including those without faith. As a city centre campus, space is limited; therefore, provision is made for students of the University only. Southampton has a diverse range of community spaces, activities and events for those of faith and we encourage students to engage with these.

Southampton University Students' Union (SUSU) Vice President for Welfare oversees the many student-organised faith groups at the University and ensures they operate in line with the policies and procedures of all other student groups and societies. SUSU is the main point of contact regarding information about faith groups, bookings, activities and events.