

FE Chaplaincy

A quick guide for managers

This is not a definitive guide (which is to be found in the LSC/NEAFE **Handbook on FE Chaplaincy**, published by LSC November 2005). It is meant as a handy reference guide for managers exploring, developing or reviewing FE chaplaincy provision in today's multi-faith context.

PRINCIPLES – what is FE Chaplaincy about?

1. FE Chaplaincy has always been ecumenical in character and is now generally multi-faith, both in principle and practice. All chaplaincies are established as a partnership between colleges and faith communities, to meet the needs of all students, of any faith or none.
2. FE Chaplaincies are usually multi-faith teams, built into college structures, with clear definitions of roles and responsibilities agreed by all concerned, with agreed minimum standards for office, meeting space and operational conduct.
3. FE Chaplains, of whatever faith, do not indulge in overt proselytism (i.e. trying to convert students from one faith to another). FE Chaplains are there to help students in their spiritual and moral development: to explore faith, and to seek meaning and purpose in life; chaplains also act as signposts to local faith communities.

PRACTICE – What do FE Chaplaincy teams do?

FE chaplaincies exist for the benefit of all in the college:

- STUDENTS**
- to be a resource for spiritual and moral development
 - to help individuals at times of spiritual need or crisis
 - to help all groups and communities which wish to practice their faith

- STAFF**
- to be a resource at times of spiritual need or crisis
 - to facilitate curriculum input on spiritual, moral or religious issues
 - to facilitate partnerships/links with communities

COLLEGES, PRINCIPALS AND SMTs

- to maintain an ethos of learning which nurtures the whole person and the whole community
- to enable the college to meet OFSTED and Children Act requirements
- to support access, retention and recruitment of students from all communities, especially those from deprived and marginalised communities

PROCESS – How we do it

Most successful FE chaplaincy teams work on the basis of a code of practice or agreement, in which the college and the chaplaincy team together set out expectations and responsibilities for both sides. This normally includes the following:

- **Leadership:** a half-time (sometimes full-time, sometimes less) team leader or coordinating chaplain responsible for managing the team and reporting to the Principal or/and Head of Student Services.
- **Funding:** Most posts are funded by colleges: a few have joint funding with churches or faith-based organisations.

- **Chaplaincy teams** may include both lay and ordained, paid (e.g. church/mosque representatives paid on a part-time basis) and volunteers (e.g. retired FE lecturer from a local congregation).
- **Recruitment** may be through local faith community networks, or through standard FE advertisement and selection procedures.
- **Training:** Increasingly, chaplains are trained – soon through an accredited training course (as well as the regional training events and meetings organised annually or more frequently).
- **NEAFE, the Faiths in FE Forum, the Churches' National Adviser in FE and Regional Networks** of these organisations are available to assist and support colleges in developing, strengthening or reviewing chaplaincy provision.

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