CONSTITUTION

1. Overview

1.1. Chaplaincy at the University of Bristol has existed since at least the 1960s. For many years it was based in local churches, but by the 1990s, chaplains from a variety of Christian denominations were working together from a shared building within the University.

1.2. This collaboration was formalised in 2001 with the signing of a Local Ecumenical Partnership covenant by leaders of these denominations. In this covenant, the leaders recognised that ‘in the unity we seek there will be not uniformity but reconciled diversity’ and they pledged to ‘strive for greater coordination and complementarity of work within the University community’ while endeavouring to be ‘instruments for peace, reconciliation and unity.’

1.3. In 2006 the Chaplaincy was reconstituted as a Multifaith Chaplaincy, and its scope and vision was enlarged to enable chaplains of different faiths to work together to represent and support students and staff of all faiths and none, and to continue to be 'instruments for peace, reconciliation and unity' within the University. Again, leaders of the faith groups represented committed themselves to this shared endeavour.

1.4. In 2009 the Student Services division was significantly restructured, and the Multifaith Chaplaincy began to work increasingly closely and collaboratively with the rest of the Division, with the support and oversight of the Director of Student Services. A divisional review in 2011 recognised the distinctive contribution the Multifaith Chaplaincy brought both to Student Services, and to the wider University.

1.5. This Multifaith Chaplaincy Constitution, agreed in 2015, replaces the Structure Document dating from 2006. It intends both to reflect the current vision, governance and processes of the Multifaith Chaplaincy, and to act as a coherent framework within which other key Chaplaincy documents can be held.

2. Vision

The University of Bristol Multifaith Chaplaincy (“the Chaplaincy”) celebrates the diversity of the University community, and seeks to contribute to the flourishing of students and staff of all faiths and none by offering:

2.1. **Support for individuals**

   2.1.1. hosting a place of welcome and community within the University

   2.1.2. providing confidential pastoral and spiritual support to individuals

   2.1.3. facilitating religious rites within the pastoral norms of faith traditions

   2.1.4. collaborating with and making appropriate referrals to other support services

2.2. **Opportunities to explore faith and spirituality**

   2.2.1. organising events focused on faith and spirituality, and on their connections with wider learning and lived experience

   2.2.2. facilitating encounter and deeper understanding between people of all faiths and none

   2.2.3. supporting the provision of space for the practice of faith and spirituality within the University
2.3. **Support for the institution**

2.3.1. providing specialist religious representation and advice

2.3.2. developing relationships across the University at all levels and seeking to work collaboratively

2.3.3. engaging with developments in Higher Education and contributing to strategic discussions and objectives

2.4. **Support for local faith communities in their work with students and staff**

2.4.1. providing support and meeting space for faith societies and groups

2.4.2. signposting the faith organisations and activities available locally

2.4.3. helping faith communities to understand the University and the needs of its members

3. **Governance**

3.1. The Chaplaincy team works collaboratively to organise and deliver the day-to-day running of the Chaplaincy.

3.2. The Coordinating Chaplain acts as head of department and is a member of the Divisional Management Team. He or she reports to the Director of Student Services, and is responsible for overseeing the work of the Chaplaincy, in consultation with the Chaplaincy team and the Multifaith Chaplaincy Committee.

3.3. The Director of Student Services supports the Chaplaincy as one of the departments in the Student Services Division and line manages the Coordinating Chaplain (in his or her capacity as head of department). The Director is ultimately responsible for decisions regarding appointments and the allocation of resources.

3.4. The Multifaith Chaplaincy Committee is an advisory group that meets regularly to support and advise on the work of the Chaplaincy [Appendix A].

3.5. The provision of chaplains and the recognition they are granted flows from the longstanding mutual goodwill established between faith communities and the University. Members of the Chaplaincy team remain accountable to both the faith communities who sponsor them and to the University.

3.6. This system of governance is reflected in the Chaplaincy’s Organisational Chart [Appendix B].

4. **Appointments**

4.1. There are a number of faith communities with which the Chaplaincy has longstanding partnerships, and from whom appointments to the Chaplaincy team are made. However, the Chaplaincy may also consider making appointments from other faith groups, on a case by case basis. Such appointments will be subject to the following considerations:

4.1.1. There should be a benefit to the University and demonstrable demand from students and staff.

4.1.2. There should be a willingness to work collaboratively with the other faith communities represented at the Chaplaincy, and to be committed to its multifaith ethos. Those appointed must be able to fulfil the relevant person specification and job description.

4.1.3. There should be a willingness to abide by University policies and procedures.

4.1.4. Guidance regarding the suitability of an appointment may be sought from Inform and/or other university chaplaincies.
4.1.5. Appointments will be made following a formal process organised by the Coordinating Chaplain. Final decisions rest with the Director of Student Services.

4.2. There are a number of different roles at the Chaplaincy, with varying responsibilities and appointment processes:

4.2.1. **Chaplains** are appointed to help fulfil the breadth of the Chaplaincy’s vision (as at Section 2 above), and hold honorary University staff status. A summary of the appointment process, Role Description and Person Specification can be found in Appendix C. Chaplains indicate their willingness to contribute to the ethos of the Chaplaincy by signing the Multi-faith Statement (Appendix D). Particular responsibilities and a time commitment are agreed in a Memorandum of Understanding (Appendix E), which is reviewed every three years. A Safeguarding Declaration can be found in Appendix F.

4.2.2. **Local Faith Contacts** provide representation and support for a specific faith group. They are different to chaplains in that there is no expectation of a regular time commitment or contribution to the wider work of the Chaplaincy. A summary of the appointment process, Role Description and Person Specification can be found in Appendix G.

4.2.3. **Chaplaincy Assistants** are paid employees who are line-managed by the Coordinating Chaplain. A Job Description and Person Specification can be found in Appendix H.

4.2.4. **Coordinating Chaplains** are appointed by the Director of Student Services in consultation with the Multifaith Chaplaincy Committee and the Chaplaincy Team. A Role Description and Person Specification can be found in Appendix I.

5. Finances

5.1. The University provides an administrative budget, which is set annually. This contributes to the funding of the Chaplaincy Assistant role and to the running costs of the Chaplaincy Centre. The Coordinating Chaplain oversees this budget.

5.2. The Chaplaincy also has two bank accounts. These hold income from donations and bookings and their funds are used to pay for the Chaplaincy Assistant role and some Chaplaincy events. The Chaplaincy Team consults with the Multifaith Chaplaincy Committee regarding its use, and members of the committee act as signatories.

5.3. Chaplains may hold budgets or accounts in relation to their sponsoring faith community, for which they are not accountable to the Chaplaincy.

6. Review

This Constitution and its appendices will be reviewed by the Multifaith Chaplaincy Committee at least every three years, in consultation with the Deputy Registrar.

*This Constitution was drafted by the Coordinating Chaplain and this final version agreed by the Multifaith Chaplaincy Committee and the Deputy Registrar in April 2015.*
Appendices

A  Multifaith Chaplaincy Committee Terms of Reference
B  Multifaith Chaplaincy Organisational Chart
C  Chaplain Role Description and Person Specification
D  Multifaith Statement
E  Memorandum of Understanding for Chaplains
F  Safeguarding Statement
G  Local Faith Contact Role Description and Person Specification
H  Chaplaincy Assistant Job Description and Person Specification
I  Coordinating Chaplain Role Description and Person Specification