

Multi-Faith Statement

(Adapted from Building Good Relations with People of Different Faiths and Beliefs, © Inter Faith Network for the UK 1993, 2000)

At the University of Lincoln people of many different faiths and none work and study side by side. The Multi-Faith Chaplaincy sees this diversity as an opportunity and wants to contribute to building a community founded on mutual respect, openness and trust, where people can live their lives of faith with integrity, while allowing others to do so too. At the University of Lincoln Multi-Faith Chaplaincy, Volunteer Chaplain/Faith Advisors from different religions and denominations work together as a team and strive for inter-religious understanding and co-operation without blurring the differences and disagreements that exist between and also within faith groups.

Faith in the University

In our dealings with people of other faiths and beliefs this means exercising good will and:

- Respecting other people's freedom within the law to hold and express their beliefs and convictions
- Learning to understand what others actually believe and value, and letting them express this in their own terms
- Respecting the convictions of others about food, dress and social etiquette and not behaving in ways which cause needless offence
- Recognising that all of us at times fall short of the ideals of our own traditions and never comparing our own ideals with other people's practices
- Working to prevent disagreement from leading to conflict
- Tolerating no violence in our relationships
- When we talk about matters of faith with one another, we need to do so with sensitivity, honesty and straightforwardness. This means:
 - Recognising that listening as well as speaking is necessary for a genuine conversation
 - Being honest about our beliefs and religious allegiances
 - Being able to give and respond to challenge and criticism in a respectful way
 - Not misrepresenting or disparaging other people's beliefs and practices
 - Correcting misunderstanding or misrepresentations not only of our own but also of other faiths whenever we come across them
 - Being straightforward about our intentions
 - Accepting that in formal inter faith meetings there is a particular responsibility to ensure that the religious commitment of all those who are present will be respected.

Pastoral Care

In pastoral encounters with people of faiths and denominations different from our own we are sensitive to the expressed needs of the other and open about our own background. Differences in religious convictions will always be recognised and respected. Where appropriate, and within the boundaries of confidentiality, referrals to Chaplains of the respective faith or denomination will be made.

Sharing Faith

All of us want others to understand and respect our views. Some people will also want to invite others to consider joining others to consider joining their faith. In a setting such as the University of Lincoln where people of different traditions and faiths live and work together, the attempt to do so should always be characterised by self-restraint and a concern for the other's freedom and dignity. This means following these guidelines:

- Respecting another person's expressed wish to be left alone
- Avoiding imposing ourselves and our views on individuals or communities who are in vulnerable situations in ways which exploit them
- Being sensitive and courteous
- Respecting the right of others to disagree with us

Shared values

Living and working together is not always easy. Religion harnesses deep emotions, which can sometimes take destructive forms. Where this happens, we will draw on our faith to bring about reconciliation and understanding.

We have a great deal to learn from one another, which can enrich us without undermining our own identities. Together, listening and responding with openness and respect, we can move forward to work in ways that acknowledge genuine differences but build on shared hopes and values.

Agreement

As representatives of our faith communities involved in and concerned for the pastoral and spiritual support of the students and staff of the University of Lincoln, we the undersigned commit ourselves to:

- recognising, respecting and valuing our different faiths and beliefs and the practices of our religions
- creating opportunities for interaction and dialogue between our faiths in order to promote knowledge, understanding and an awareness of the equality of all people
- co-operating to promote racial, cultural and religious harmony and to fight intolerance
- working together for the common goals of peaceful co-existence, justice for all peoples and the flourishing of the whole of humanity
- sharing and encouraging these views and values in our work with the students and staff on the University of Lincoln campus

Further it is understood that the mutual trust between us requires that we will not encourage or sanction any attempt, approach or event designed to induce someone to change their religious affiliation

Chaplain/Faith Advisor

Faith Community