

CHAPLAINCY BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE

Brief Background to Christian Chaplaincy

Christian Chaplaincy at the University of Reading has evolved considerably since the University's inception in 1926. Initially separately appointed by the major denominations and working independently, in recent decades Christian chaplains have increasingly worked in partnership. An informal Local Ecumenical Partnership agreement was signed by chaplains (but not by denominations) in 1995, though this has not been renewed.

In 1998 the University of Reading Chaplaincy Centre Trust was formed. This registered charity (no. 1071305) was created with the primary intention "to advance education and the Christian religion through the provision of a Chaplaincy centre and associated services". Donations from denominations, churches and individuals contribute to the running of the Chaplaincy Centre and its activities and the employment of an administrator, cleaner, and sometimes a Chaplaincy Assistant. Trustees include several of the chaplains.

Chaplains are nominated (and often employed) by their own denomination, local church or group. They are accorded the designation of 'visiting staff' by the University.

Ultimate responsibility for each chaplain lies with their nominating body/employer. Chaplains agree to work alongside one another. The Anglican Chaplain is currently the only full-time chaplain and, with the consent of the other chaplains, acts as a coordinator.

Whereas the Chaplaincy Centre Trust focuses on the financial operations of the Centre, the Chaplaincy Board serves the strategic role of overseeing the work of Chaplains and being the focal point of liaison between the University, chaplains, and nominating bodies.

1 Membership of the Board

At present (2022), membership of the Board consists of:

- a representative of each chaplain appointed by the respective nominating body.
- appropriate representation from within the University (presently: the Dean for Diversity and Inclusion, the Director of Student Wellbeing Services, a member of the Student Welfare Team, a representative of RUSU, and the Senior Management Board's 'champion for religion')
- the treasurer of the Chaplaincy Centre Trust
- chair of the Chaplaincy Centre Trust
- the Coordinating Chaplain
- all other chaplains
- an officer of Churches Together in Berkshire (who acts as chair)
- secretarial assistance, provided by the Chaplaincy Centre Administrator (non-voting).

2 Purpose of the Board

The Board's primary purpose is to meet termly to hear a summary report from the Coordinating Chaplain (with input from any other chaplains in attendance) on the work of the chaplaincy, to offer encouragement and guidance about present and future plans.

2a The role of individual Board members is:

- to celebrate and encourage chaplaincy work
- to respond to issues raised by the chaplains by taking issues / problems back to their own domains
- to act as critical friends to chaplains, churches and to the University

2b Church representatives are expected:

- to attend thrice-yearly meetings and to send their apologies if unable
- to have a good relationship with their chaplain and with their nominating body
- to meet at least once a year with their chaplain to ensure that opportunities for review, training, and other needs are met (or to ensure that such supervision occurs elsewhere)
- to ensure that their chaplain has an up-to-date DBS and has undertaken all necessary safeguarding training
- to act as advocates for their chaplains outside of meetings, conveying reports of their good work, advocating for sustained and, where needed, increased allocation of resources

2c University members are expected:

- to attend thrice-yearly meetings and to send their apologies if unable
- to represent key parts of the University with which the chaplains relate
- to relay good news stories or information about chaplaincy initiatives to their respective parts of the University
- to relay information from their respective parts of the University to chaplains and other Board members

2d Chaplaincy Trustee members are expected to:

- to attend thrice-yearly meetings and to send their apologies if unable
- to represent the interests of the registered charity (the Chaplaincy Centre Trust) that part-funds the running of the Centre and its activities

2e Chaplains are expected:

- to attend thrice-yearly meetings and to send their apologies if unable
- to share their work with the Board either by contributing to the Coordinating Chaplain's summary report in advance or by offer comment during the meeting

3 Appointments, Withdrawals, Complaints

The Board (by a two-thirds majority vote of those present; 50% attendance is considered quorate) will agree to the recognition of new chaplains (applications having been processed according to the appointments process policy).

Board members *may* be the conduit by which problems/complaints associated with a chaplain are raised (where the issue is not taken up directly with the sponsoring body).

If the Board is contacted about such a matter, the designated representative shall convey such matters to the appropriate authority within the employing/appointing body and may subsequently act as liaison with the University and other Board members whilst matters are dealt with.

The Board (by a two-thirds majority vote) shall have the right to suspend or withdraw official recognition of an individual as a University Chaplain.