

Chaplaincy Business Process

PURPOSE

The purpose of this process is to describe the procedures associated with the delivery of key services and activities of the University of Limerick Chaplaincy (ULC).

RESPONSIBILITY

The Head Chaplain is responsible for this process. All members of the Chaplaincy team are responsible for implementing the associated procedures.

PROCEDURE

The [Chaplaincy](#) works through the development and fostering of relationships with students and staff providing a service that offers encouragement, support and spiritual guidance to people of all faiths and none. The primary aim of the Chaplaincy is to meet the many and varied religious needs and backgrounds of a global university campus. The Chaplaincy seeks to assist in forming “a spiritually sensitive, creative, reflective environment for the participation of all students and staff on campus” and works continually to achieve this aim.

The greatest priority of the Chaplaincy is the holistic development of the person. The service aims to accomplish its mission by assisting, supporting, enabling and accompanying students and staff on their life’s journey. Marked by availability and approachability, the Chaplaincy strives to promote an open and caring ethos where diversity is respected, and to be a supportive agency for people of all faiths and none. The ULC seeks to offer strength, support and spiritual guidance to students and staff on campus in times of rejoicing and in times of need. The aim is to inspire a friendly relationship between the students and staff. The Chaplaincy recognises that there must be a balance between its public and private roles and so provides a listening space – a confidential and non-judgemental service of availability for individuals.

The primary procedures associated with the delivery of ULC’s services are:

- A. Teach Fáilte
- B. Contemplative Centre
- C. Student Death Protocol
- D. Exam Support/I-Grade Process
- E. Financial Aid

A. Teach Fáilte Procedure

The Management and Maintenance of Teach Fáilte is central to the Chaplains’ work. Teach Fáilte is the Chaplaincy’s Drop-in Centre in the Students’ Square and all students are welcome as individuals or groups for a casual cuppa, chat and support. This venue is multi-purpose providing the hospitality of a boiling kettle and also the hospitality of a listening ear. In times of difficulty students are assured of a non-judgemental listening ear and may be facilitated to avail of other supports on or off campus. The Deputy Chaplain is primarily responsible for this procedure, and is based in Teach Fáilte. The roster for cover in Teach Fáilte is on display near the office.

1. Between 8.30am and 10.30am the Deputy Chaplain is responsible for undertaking a range of duties. These can include:
 - a. Preparing Liturgical Services
 - b. Sourcing materials and resources for services and events
 - c. Co-ordinating events
 - d. Holding meetings, including one-to-one sessions with students
 - e. Dealing with phone and email queries and requests

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- f. Following up with students
 - g. Other general administrative duties
2. Notice boards are used in Teach Fáilte to keep students updated on the business of the Chaplaincy Service and of the Student Affairs Division.
3. Teach Fáilte is open daily on a drop-in basis to students from 10.30am-4.30pm.
4. From 1.00-2.00pm daily, the PVA (President's Volunteer Award) Meet and Greet Hosts for Teach Fáilte is facilitated by student volunteers. Meet and Greet Hosts also cover when the Chaplains attend meetings/training. This initiative is co-ordinated by the Deputy Chaplain, and hourly log sheets for the volunteers are kept.
5. If a student wishes to speak personally with one of the Chaplains, they may drop in to Teach Fáilte during opening hours, make an appointment to meet a chaplain, phone or send an e-mail requesting a chat. Students are sometimes referred to Chaplaincy by academic and support staff.
 - a. The Chaplain meets with the student, offers a listening ear, and provides appropriate support or advice, where possible, depending on the nature of the query.
 - b. If necessary, and with the consent of the student, the Chaplain may contact and liaise with other support services, lecturers or departments on behalf of a student.
 - c. When deemed appropriate, chaplains follow up with vulnerable students, including outside of working hours.
 - d. Sometimes a member of a student's family visits the Chaplaincy Service or makes contact by phone.
 - e. Bereavement support is available to students who are grieving the death of a parent, close relative, classmate, housemate or friend. When appropriate, ongoing support deemed is provided to the student which may include facilitation of I-Grades.
 - f. When a current student dies the Chaplains visit the family and offer support. Ongoing support is offered when the family wish to remain in contact with the service.
6. Cleaning of Teach Fáilte is undertaken by Noonan Cleaners on two mornings a week and general cleaning is done by students and Chaplains outside of those times. Weekly cleaning of the fridge, microwave and sinks is done by a Chaplain. Bins, kettles, teapots and cupboards are cleaned when needed. A deep clean is done before each new academic year.
7. Supplies for Teach Fáilte are purchased by the Deputy Chaplain.
8. At 4.20pm students are asked to stack the chairs and tidy Teach Fáilte so that it is prepared for the groups who use the space in the evenings.

Procedure for use of Teach Fáilte by groups

9. Teach Fáilte is available for booking for use by internal groups.
10. On receipt of a request for use of the Teach Fáilte, if required, a meeting is arranged between the group leader and a Chaplain to further discuss the request.
11. The Group Leader is required to sign a Letter of Agreement for use of Teach Fáilte.
12. Letters of Agreement are kept on file at Teach Fáilte and the group leader also holds a copy.
13. The Chaplain who is liaising with the group leader informs the Head of Campus Security of the booking by e-mail. The Head of Security in turn informs the duty supervisors of the arrangements.
14. If any group who uses the Teach Fáilte needs to be contacted, the Deputy Chaplain does the follow up.

B. Contemplative Centre Procedure

The Contemplative Centre is an Inter-Faith Space used for religious services, rituals, talks and seminars. UL Chaplaincy promotes the use of this haven of peace and tranquillity by individuals and groups.

1. The Contemplative Centre is open daily from 8.15am to 4.30pm. The Contemplative Centre is opened each morning and locked in the evening by Campus Security staff. Students, staff and visitors are

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welcome to visit this oasis of peace and tranquillity for a time of quiet, peace, contemplation or prayer during the day.

2. Daily Mass is celebrated Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 1.10pm. On Wednesdays, the Centre is available for alternative lunch-time services and rituals.
3. Memorial services, para liturgies, rituals and seminars are held when requested by students or staff. The space is used regularly by the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance for their "Ritual and Chant" programme.
4. The Deputy Chaplain checks in on the Contemplative Centre each morning and removes out-of-date literature or decayed flowers. The Deputy Chaplain is also responsible for liaising with Noonan's Cleaners in relation to the cleaning of the Centre.
5. The Head Chaplain looks after the altar supplies, sets the lectionary and checks the book of petitions.
6. The Head Chaplain liaises with Buildings and Estates for repairs and maintenance of the Centre.

Procedure for use of Contemplative Centre by groups

1. The Contemplative Centre is available for booking for use by internal, and on occasion external, groups.
2. On receipt of a request for use of the Contemplative Centre, if required, a meeting is arranged between the group leader and the Head Chaplain to further discuss the request.
3. The Group Leader is required to sign a Letter of Agreement for use of the Contemplative Centre.
4. Letters of Agreement are kept on file at Teach Fáilte and the group leader also holds a copy.
5. The Head Chaplain informs the Head of Campus Security of the booking by email. The Head of Security in turn informs the duty supervisors of the arrangements.
6. If any group who uses the Contemplative Centre needs to be contacted, the Head Chaplain does the follow up.

C. Student Death Protocol

In the event of a student death, the Chaplains assist in the activation of the University of Limerick Student Death Protocol

Immediate Communication on the news of a student death

1. Information of a student death may enter the University from a variety of sources and may arrive on the desk of any one of several people on campus.
2. The Head Chaplain confirms the death of a UL student with the Director of Student Affairs who then notifies the Communications Manager who will serve as the primary focal point for managing internal and external communications. The President on confirmation of details communicates with the Campus Community.
3. In some cases where the death is anticipated, the Chaplains may already have been in contact with the family, relevant students, friends and staff.
4. If death is unanticipated contact is made with the bereaved family and students connected with the deceased. When the funeral arrangements are known, the Head Chaplain communicates these to the Director of Student Affairs.

Actions on Confirmation of a death leading up to and including Funeral and a Campus Memorial Service

5. The Head Chaplain makes contact with Heads of Departments, Lecturers or Administrative Staff and a formal meeting is organised with students. The chaplains, a counsellor and a representative of the ULSU are present.
6. The Head of Counselling and Chaplaincy send an email of condolence to class mates.
7. Chaplains liaise with the Students Union and Class Reps to ensure that transport is available for students who wish to travel to the funeral.

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8. Chaplains arrange for Books of Condolence to be set up at the ULSU and at relevant Department Buildings for the campus community to sign. The Books of Condolence are given to the families at an appropriate time.
9. When possible the Chaplains will visit the family at the time of death or at a time suitable to the family.
10. The Head Chaplain signs a memorandum on Confirmation of Amended Records to state that all records have been amended. Both paper and electronic and list the deceased as **'leaver'**. The Head Chaplain also signs a memorandum of amended records as Chair of Financial Aid Support Fund and lists the deceased as **'leaver'**
11. The Head Chaplain confirms the names of the bereaved family members to the Chancellor who writes a letter of condolence to the family.

Bereavement support offered by the Chaplains.

12. Chaplains are available for bereavement support for students and staff members who are affected by the death of a student.
13. Each year Chaplains contact all bereaved families and on the first anniversary of a student death and at Christmas. These families are invited to attend the Annual November Memorial Service where they meet the President. Many appreciate this as well as the opportunity to meet other bereaved families.
14. Some bereaved families keep in contact with Chaplaincy as part of their grieving process. Where appropriate Chaplains visit their homes and keep in communication by phone, post or email.
15. When families wish to honour their son/daughter's achievement in UL, the Chaplains liaise with the Vice President's Office and relevant Department in offering an Aegrotat Award.
16. Chaplains accompany the bereaved families at the formal gathering where they receive the Aegrotat Award from the President. If a family chooses to receive the award privately it is presented on behalf of the University by the Chaplains.

D. Exam support / I-Grade Procedure

The Chaplaincy provides one-to-one meetings with students who may feel stressed due to exam pressure. It provides a confidential, supportive, relaxed space and a listening ear to students. The aim is to ensure that the student has someone to talk to in a safe, non-judgemental environment. If the Chaplaincy staff member feels the student may benefit from a referral, they will liaise with other services with a view to making the referral. Alternatively, a member of the Chaplaincy team may approve an I-grade application for a student. Detailed information on the I-grade Process is available in UL's Handbook of Academic Regulations and Procedures, produced by [Student Academic Administration](#).

1. If a student requests information on the I-grade process, a member of the Chaplaincy team will speak with or email the student to explain how the process works, and the circumstances in which I-grades can be awarded. Students are referred to the Handbook of Academic Regulations and Procedures in relation to this process. A Chaplain is available on Campus to meet and support students on Saturdays during the Spring and Autumn Examinations.
2. If a student requests an I-grade to be supported by Chaplaincy, the student must first of all make contact with a member of the Chaplaincy team in order to explain the circumstances under which they are seeking an I-grade. Circumstances under which Chaplaincy may be able to support an I-grade include in the cases of bereavement or other family emergencies. Proof of bereavement or other emergencies must be provided by the student. Cases related to illness or mental health issues are referred by Chaplaincy to the Student Health Centre or Counselling for support with I-grade applications.
3. Having spoken with Chaplaincy, the student completes an on-line application process for an I-grade and references the Chaplaincy in their application. The application must be received within 5 working days of the end-of-semester exams in order to meet grading deadlines.

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4. The relevant Chaplain receives the application and approves the application which is forwarded to the I-Grade Committee for final approval.
5. Requests for I-grades are considered by the University I-grade Committee, which usually meets seven days after the last day of exams each semester. The Head Chaplain is a member of this Committee.

E. Financial Aid (Support) Fund Procedure

The Financial Aid Committee is responsible for administering the Financial Aid (Support) Fund to students who experience financial difficulties. The Financial Aid Committee is made up of: the Students' Union Welfare Officer, the ULSU Student Information and Support Officer, the Postgraduate SU President, the Students' Union Accounts Officer, a Financial Accountant who is a representative from the UL Management Committee and the Head Chaplain.

The Financial Aid Fund is derived from a percentage of the student registration fee and from donations from the UL Alumni Association. Financial Aid is administered to undergraduate and postgraduate students by using the following main methods:

- Through loans which are repaid before graduation
- Through bursaries which are given without repayment
- Through financial assistance for child care support, i.e. single parents (a Bursary twice a year.)

The application process for all three methods is as follows:

1. The first point of contact for students seeking funding is the Students' Union Welfare Officer / the Students' Union Student Information and Support Officer for undergraduate applicants or the Postgraduate SU President for postgraduate applicants. As these posts rotate annually, the Chaplains support these officers in their roles as they adjust to their workload and to dealing with the distress of the students who come to see them.
2. The Welfare Officer / Student Information and Support Officer normally conducts a brief first contact, including providing the student with a Financial Aid application form.
3. The student completes the application form and returns it to the Head Chaplain for assessment. Students are required to provide records of grant payments, fees payment and up-to-date bank statement for the previous three months.
4. The Head Chaplain conducts an interview with the applicant, the result of which is recorded on the application form and returned to the Welfare Officer / Student Information and Support Officer or the Postgraduate SU President with a final comment. On occasion students are referred by staff from Student Affairs. In some cases the Head Chaplain takes the recommendation from colleagues/student counsellors and does not conduct a formal interview with the student.
5. A copy of the interview records is kept on file at the Chaplaincy Office, Room CM071.
6. Once an application is successful, the Head Chaplain meets with the Welfare Officer/Student Information and Support Officer or the Postgraduate SU President to countersign the cheques or authorise payment on line in consultation with S.U. accountant. The payment is received by the student into their bank account or for postgraduates they receive the cheque from the Postgraduate SU President. It takes a maximum of ten working days to process the payment.
7. In the case of the provision of a loan, the applicant is informed of the repayment process and the timeline. He or she has to set up a standing order in the Bank.
8. The repayment of the loan is channelled through the Welfare Officer/Student Information and Support Officer / Postgraduate SU President, or directly through the Bank. The students are made aware of this easy method of repayment of loans by the Head Chaplain, the Student Welfare Officer / Student Information and Support Officer and the Postgraduate SU President.

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9. If a student is unsuccessful in being awarded funds, they are informed by e-mail by one of the Financial Aid Committee of their failure to meet the required terms and conditions. The student is free to apply at a later date if they meet the criteria.
10. The Financial Aid Committee meets quarterly. Minutes of the meetings are recorded by the secretary and are kept on file in the Chaplain's Office CM071.

DOCUMENTATION

- Letter of Agreement for use of Contemplative Centre
- Letter of Agreement for use of Teach Fáilte
- Financial Aid Fund application form

RECORDS

All hard copy documentation relating to the operation of both Teach Fáilte and the Contemplative Centre is held in Teach Fáilte e.g. Daily Activity Diary, Event folders, Weekly Time Sheets, Inter-Faith Directory, records of Mass requests, team meetings & Letters of Agreement for the use of Teach Fáilte and the Contemplative Centre. Annual Reports, Financial Aid documentation and records of bereaved students are held in the Head Chaplain's office.

Any records created within the Unit are stored in accordance with UL's [Records Management and Retention Policy](#).

PROCESS VERIFICATION

Evaluation of the Chaplaincy Process effectiveness is carried out using internal audits. Changes to the process are put in place as required and as appropriate.

REVISION HISTORY

Revision No.	Date revised	Approved by:	Approval date & meeting	Details of Change	Process Owner
1	Sept '13	Quality Team		<i>Initial Release</i>	John Campion
2	May '14	Quality Team		<i>Detailing procedures</i>	John Campion
3	Nov '14	Quality Team		<i>Further detail included on Teach Fáilte</i>	John Campion
4	April '17	Quality Team	QT meeting, 03/05/17	<i>Further development of all procedures</i>	John Campion
5	March '18	Quality Team	QT meeting, 04/04/18	<i>Inclusion of updated Student Death Protocol Text changes to some procedures to clarify responsibility of duties. Inclusion of the Student Information and Support Officer in Procedure E.</i>	John Campion