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Multi Faith Facility Hawthorn Protocols and Management Guidelines

1 Introduction

1.1 Multi Faith Facility Hawthorn
Swinburne’s Multi Faith Facility Hawthorn is an acknowledgement of Swinburne’s commitment to religious tolerance and symbolises the centrality of the spiritual dimension to university life. The Facility is a unique spiritual and meditative site on campus and offers a positive recognition of different faiths and an opportunity for dialogue and understanding. It is a place for people to tolerantly engage in communal reflection and individual meditation. It may also be used as a place for multi faith activities.

Swinburne University is proud to offer such a space for the use of Swinburne staff and students.

Swinburne University Policies apply at all times and take precedence. The most significant policy to apply to the use of the Multi Faith Facility is the People, Culture and Integrity Policy.

1.2 Accessibility
The Multi Faith Facility at Swinburne is located on level 3 of the George at 34 Wakefield Street and is accessible via lifts or stairs. There is one large prayer room, and four smaller rooms. Toilet and ablution facilities are located on the same floor.

One of the four smaller rooms will be available (unbooked) primarily as a quiet meditative room. From time to time, however, it may be required for a booking.

The Multi Faith Facility will be open between the hours of 5am and 11pm, 7 days a week. On occasion, by negotiation, variation may be granted.

The facility is for the priority use of Swinburne students and staff and official visitors to Swinburne University.

1.3 Key Stakeholders
The Multi Faith Facility at Hawthorn has a number of key stakeholders.

1.3.1 Swinburne University of Technology
Swinburne University of Technology, following lengthy consultation with a wide range of religious groups, has committed to providing a multi faith space for Swinburne students and staff to pray, meditate, and have religious dialogue. This purpose built space will provide opportunities to enhance the spiritual experience for students and staff alike, whilst studying or working at Swinburne. The Multi Faith Facility at Hawthorn will be a portfolio managed by Corporate Services.
1.3.2 Swinburne Students and Staff
Swinburne students and staff, including faith based user groups registered with SSAA, may choose to enhance their faith experience whilst studying and working on campus. The Multi Faith Facility will enable students and staff to pray, meditate, and have religious dialogue in a purpose built space.

1.3.3 Swinburne Student Amenities Association (SSAA)
The SSAA provides a means for all student users groups wishing to use a space in the Multi Faith Facility in an ongoing capacity to formalise their group. Whether it's to pray as a group, or run a religious study group, the registration of the group with SSAA provides access to support and some funding for faith groups.

1.3.4 Swinburne Chaplaincy Committee
The Swinburne Chaplaincy Committee was established over 40 years ago to employ and support Christian Chaplains, accredited by the Council of Chaplaincies in tertiary institutions (CCTI). The Swinburne Chaplaincy Committee is a registered charity with tax-deductible status. The membership of the committee consists of staff and students of Swinburne and representatives of the wider community. In the recent changing religious and social context the committee has welcomed and promoted co-operative working relations with CCTI accredited Chaplains from other faiths. It encourages respectful dialogue between people of different faiths.

1.3.5 Muslim Prayer Room Management Committee
The purpose of the Muslim Prayer Room Management Committee is to ensure the continuation of services and facilities provided to Muslim students and staff and to be the intermediary and advisor to Swinburne University on the needs and spiritual obligations of Muslim students and staff at the University.

2 Purpose and Protocols

2.1 Purpose of the Space
The Multi Faith Facility at Swinburne is provided for approved use by students and staff for reasons associated with faith, meditation, or to spend time in quiet reflection. It is accommodating of all religious affiliations and denominations. The University does, however, reserve the right to refuse access to a person or persons for inappropriate behaviour or breaching the Protocols or University policies and procedures.

The space houses the Swinburne Chaplaincy Unit, as well as providing bookable spaces for meditation, worship, Islamic Prayer, and other faith based activities.

2.2 Protocols
The Multi Faith Facility at Swinburne exists to serve the religious needs of all religious affiliations and denominations within Swinburne. In order to facilitate this, whilst in the Facility, all user groups are expected to exercise respect and tolerance for the integrity of each other’s beliefs, cultures and traditions, and therefore urges everyone, religious and non-religious, to put aside intolerance, prejudice and divisiveness to attain peaceful co-existence at Swinburne. This means:
• Respecting other people’s freedom within the law to express their beliefs and convictions in worship and prayer;
• Respecting the convictions of others about food, dress and social etiquette and not behaving in ways that may cause offence;
• Always avoiding violence in relationships, in particular avoiding violent action, language, threats, manipulation, improper inducements, or the misuse of any kind of power;
• Not misrepresenting or disparaging other people’s beliefs and practices;
• Not actively seeking to persuade others to join their faith;
• Not seeking to direct others on how to exercise their faith.

3 Use of Islamic Prayer Facilities

In addition to the general guidelines in this document, users of the Islamic Prayer Facilities are requested to note the following:

3.1 Muslim Prayer Room Management Committee
The purpose of the Muslim Prayer Room Management Committee is to ensure the continuation of services and facilities provided to Muslim students and staff. For more information refer to the Muslim Prayer Room Management Committee Terms of Reference.

3.2 General Purpose of and Access to the Islamic Prayer Facilities
The Islamic Prayer Facilities exist as a place for religious observance by Swinburne students, staff and guests. For the purpose of ascertaining eligibility to use the Islamic Prayer Facilities, a Muslim is defined as a person of the Islamic Faith and adhering to the Statement of Faith that: There is no god except Allah and Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the Messenger of Allah.

The Islamic Prayer Facilities are only to be used for:

• Daily prayers
• Friday sermon and prayer
• Manage charity funds collected through donations
• Ramadan breaking of fast and Iftar Dinner
• Tharaweeh prayers
• Hajj festival prayers
• Providing a space for female users

Other religious groups will be welcomed to Islamic Prayers as guests or visitors with the agreement and invitation of the Muslim Prayer Room Committee.

3.3 Code of Behaviour in Islamic Prayer Facilities
• The principles of Islamic behaviour are to be observed in the Islamic Prayer Facilities at all times.
• The practice of Islamic principles of cleanliness should be followed in all parts of the Islamic Prayer Facilities.

• Cleanliness of all areas must be maintained by all users, including removal of shoes before entering Prayer Facilities. Shoes must be stored in areas provided for that purpose.

• To accommodate traffic flow:
  o Users of GS308 are encouraged to use the external staircase
  o Users of GS305 are encouraged to use the internal fire staircase
  o The lifts may be used by those unable to access the Multi Faith Facility by stairs

• Room dividers in the Prayer Rooms will under normal circumstances remain closed and latched.

• Islamic conventions of modesty in dress should be observed in the Prayer Rooms at all times.

• Notices regarding these practices will be displayed in the Islamic Prayer Facilities, particularly to assist non-Muslim visitors.

• It is not permissible to conduct any activity in a manner that may disrupt other worshipers such as listening to music, talking or reading loudly.

• Permission is required from the Prayer Room Committee (and University) for individuals or groups to conduct any activity or gathering outside of prayer times in the Islamic Prayer Facilities. This includes reading of books, promoting points of view, recruiting to join groups, workshops and seminars or for activities on and off campus.

• Bookshelves, storage areas and other amenities provided within spaces are for the use of all, and not reserved for the exclusive use of any particular group of users.

3.4 Qibla (direction of prayer)
Qibla has been established on the basis of technical information. Qibla has been indicated through directional lines in the carpet.

4 Management Guidelines

4.1 Management
The Multi Faith Facility at Swinburne will be a portfolio managed by the Office of the Vice-President Corporate Services. The Vice-President Corporate Services will nominate a coordinator. The Coordinator will oversee the approval of bookings, and other service provision in the facility and delegate tasks as required.

4.2 Multi Faith Reference Group
A Multi Faith Reference Group will be established and meet at least three times a year with representation from any CCTI (Council for Chaplaincies in Tertiary Institutions) accredited Chaplain serving Swinburne. The coordinator will be a member of this reference group. The group, by invitation only, may also include representation from time to time, of users groups of the space or the Swinburne Chaplaincy Committee. The coordinator or a nominee of the coordinator will convene and chair meetings.
The purpose of the Multi Faith Reference Group is to:

- Organise multi faith activities;
- Provide advice and recommendations to the University through the coordinator of the Facility on matters pertaining to the facility, both services and maintenance

### 4.3 Conditions of Space Usage

The terms and conditions of the usage of space in the Multi Faith Facility shall be:

- That a space will be set aside for private meditation open during normal business hours (that from time to time may be required for a booking)
- That the designated spaces shall be bookable via Coordinator, as nominated by the Vice-President Corporate Services. Booking will adhere to the requirements outlined in this document.
- That utilisation is subject to observing the protocols as outlined in this document
- That no food preparation facilities are provided on this floor of the building.
- That users of the space are required to clean up and remove any food waste or rubbish taken into the Multi Faith Facility, in respect of other users of the space.
- That additional or special events that may be held at or coincide with a regular or ongoing booking are booked separately (eg special speaker, feast day activity). (If in place of a regular booking you do not need to cancel your regular booking).
- The details of any external speakers attending an event must disclosed in the unique booking made for that event.

#### 4.3.1 Maintenance and Care of Space

- The Facilities and Services Group (FSG) space inventory database is the recognised source of authoritative information on each room/space in the University. The Multi Faith Facility will be managed by the Office of the Vice-President Corporate Services, however, ownership of the space (and furniture) remains with the University.
- No use of incense, burning or otherwise is to be used at all on Level 3 of the George Building.
- Squatting or using the Multi Faith Facility for sleeping is not permissible.
- Proposals involving functional or structural change to the space (e.g. cutting openings; or altering the surfaces of walls, ceilings or floors) may only be undertaken if coordinated and approved by the Director, FSG.
- Groups to which space is assigned must ensure the space is maintained in a satisfactory condition. Attaching posters, flyers, notices and other items to surfaces (painted and glass) other than pin/notice boards is not allowed.
• Facilities and Services is responsible for the cleaning, repairs and maintenance of buildings and services infrastructure. Therefore maintenance persons (including Cleaning and Security staff) are to be allowed free and un-hindered access at all times to carry out maintenance or address issues as necessary. Cleaning or maintenance requests falling outside the regular regime will incur additional costs. Cleaning is provided daily.

• Signage for rooms and facilities is provided by Swinburne University.

• Modification or alterations to any infrastructure elements is prohibited unless carried out via Facilities and Services.

• All circulation space is to remain clear of obstruction and available for free and un-hindered access by all authorised persons in accordance with relevant legislation and guidelines. It is the day-to-day responsibility of Units who are the principal users of circulation space to ensure that it is used in a safe and appropriate manner.

• The Space Management and Allocation guidelines (contained in the Facilities and Services Operating Manual) should be read in conjunction with this section.

4.4 Bookings
All bookings must be submitted for approval to Corporate Services at the beginning of each semester via the specific form. Each request for a booking will be considered and treated with equal respect and all efforts will be made to accommodate the group’s needs.

Booking of rooms may only be made by Swinburne staff, registered student groups or by Chaplains for chaplaincy organised activities. Registered groups must be affiliated as a club with SSAA. SSAA clubs only operate 1st February to 30th November each year, however a booking may be made in second semester for dates up until the beginning of first semester the following year.

In situations when requests for bookings are unusual or conflicting, the coordinator may consult and seek advice from the Vice-President Corporate Services and / or a member of the Multi Faith Reference Group.

4.5 Breach of Code of Conduct or other Multi Faith Facility protocols
Any alleged breach of the Protocols and Management Guidelines or University policies and procedures must, in the first instance, be brought to the attention of the Coordinator. Any alleged breach of SSAA club rules will be referred to SSAA. The University reserves the right to withdraw or restrict access to a person or persons for breaching University policy.

In the event any member of the Multi Faith Reference Group or the coordinator themselves are infringing any of these activities, the matter may be brought to the attention of the Vice-President Corporate Services.

multifaith@swin.edu.au