POLICY STATEMENT

1 Intent

To establish the principles under which UTAS will:

- provide spiritual support and pastoral care to students and staff on its campuses as needed;
- formalise the access to UTAS campuses for nominated Pastoral Carers from established religious communities within the local community.

2 Scope

Members of recognised religious communities who wish to be nominated to provide spiritual support and pastoral care to students and staff on UTAS campuses.

3 Objective(s)

UTAS:

- Is a community based on the principles of equal opportunity seeking to offer spiritual support and pastoral care by recognised qualified individuals to students and staff as needed regardless of religion, race, gender or ethnicity.
- Recognises and respects the spiritual diversity and experiences of its community members and acknowledges that pastoral care is an important aspect in the lives of a proportion of students and staff.
- Is a secular organisation and its campuses are located in growing multicultural multi faith communities where spiritual and pastoral support is available for students and staff.

Therefore, UTAS does not appoint official religious representatives of any specific religion or faith to the University, but draws on the religious communities in the cities and towns where UTAS campuses are located.

In keeping with this, UTAS recognises that there are times when spiritual support and pastoral care does have a particular role in the life of the UTAS community (in a crisis e.g. the death of a student or staff member and the holding of a memorial service). In this instance, granting of casual access to space for groups or individuals for worship, prayer and support may be appropriate.
4 Definitions and Acronyms

**Pastoral care**  
Spiritual and emotional support within the religious framework and context.

**UTAS**  
University of Tasmania.

**Nominated Pastoral Carer**  
Under this policy, is a representative member of an established and recognised religious community authorised by the Vice-Chancellor to provide pastoral care to UTAS campuses.

**Established Religious Communities**  
Established recognised communities of faith.

**ITR**  
Information Technology Resources.

5 Policy Maker

Executive Director, Finance & Administration

6 Policy Provisions

6.1 Nomination of Recognised Representatives

Nominated Pastoral Carers are responsible for delivering spiritual support and pastoral care to members of its community who seek it.

Interested members of recognised religious communities seeking to nominate to provide spiritual support and pastoral care on a UTAS campus should submit a written statement to the Vice-Chancellor, through the Manager, Student Services that includes:

- a letter of endorsement from a Minister, Pastor, Senior Cleric or other accountable religious person/organisation registered under section 26 of the Commonwealth Marriages Act;
- formal evidence of long term commitment and growth within a religious community;
- a current National Police Certificate;
- evidence of relevant qualifications (e.g. possession of appropriate degree, award or completion of relevant and accredited study/pastoral care program);
- documented evidence of Pastoral experience (e.g. already holding a Pastoral position within a religious community would be advantageous);
- demonstrated ability to relate within a higher education environment, including an understanding of contemporary issues affecting students from diverse backgrounds of life experience, ethnicity and age;
- demonstrated interpersonal skills and relevant counselling skills with the ability to refer to relevant professional services within UTAS as needed and to maintain confidentiality as outlined by UTAS Policy;
- a commitment to fulfilling the role as described and compliance with UTAS Policies, Procedures and Guidelines.

Nominations will be considered on the basis of the above criteria and the need and interest demonstrated by UTAS community members. Once granted nominations will be reviewed annually by the Manager, Student Services.

Notwithstanding the above, nominations can be considered by the Vice-Chancellor on a case by case basis.
The Vice-Chancellor will respond in writing to requests relating to nominations for Pastoral Carers, setting out:

- a decision whether or not to allow the request; and
- the reasons for any such decision.

The Vice-Chancellor’s decision in the matter will be final.

6.2 University Expectations

There is a diversity of faith and life experience within the University community and nominated Pastoral Carers will be required to relate to others within this context and by so doing contribute to the sense of community and enrichment of life within UTAS.

It is expected that Pastoral Carers when on campus will:

- respect the privacy of all students and staff. The role of the Pastoral Carer is to support and nurture the spiritual needs of students and staff, providing opportunities for reflection for those who seek it. Seeking to actively convert others to a particular belief, faith or religion (proselytise) is not considered appropriate.
- participate in an appropriate manner in debate on contemporary issues while helping to promote understanding between the diverse groups represented within the UTAS community;
- be aware of and comply with all relevant University Policies, Procedures and Guidelines including the IT Services and Facilities Use Policy and agreement;
- work collegially with and respect other Pastoral Carers from across all faith traditions;
- work cooperatively with other UTAS staff in the delivery of services to students and staff;
- participate in meetings as requested by UTAS; and
- identify as a visiting Pastoral Carer (from the nominated religious community).

6.3 Access to Space

UTAS recognises a need where possible to provide access to space for appropriate religious activities on a casual basis. This will be coordinated and managed in a manner that maintains an environment that is non-denominational, harmonious and equitable. Access to space and facilities will be based on specified conditions of usage and provision of relevant information on the proposed purpose. Where access to space is provided, it will be in a manner that is sensitive to cultural and practical issues. Responsibility for space allocation rests with the Director, Asset Management Services.

6.4 Facilities

Access to library and information technology facilities may be provided consistent with UTAS policies on access by non-staff, the availability of resources and the requirements of the Telecommunications Act. Dependent upon the availability of resources, casual office space may be available for the use of Pastoral Carers for student appointments. Responsibility for office space and facility allocation rests with the Director, Asset Management Services.

Through its website UTAS maintains contact information for a range of religious organisations. Pastoral Carers will be expected to assist UTAS in keeping this up to date by providing information to the Student Services.
6.5 University Associate Status

Approved Pastoral Carers may be accorded the status of university associates for the purposes of access to email and IT facilities and will be administered through ITR.

7 Supporting/Related Documents

N/A

8 Key Words

- Pastoral Care
- Pastoral Carers

9 Supporting Procedures/ Guidelines

N/A

RESPONSIBILITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Executive Director, Finance &amp; Administration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compliance</td>
<td>Manager, Student Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
<td>Manager, Student Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development and/or Review</td>
<td>Executive Director, Finance &amp; Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation and Advice</td>
<td>Manager, Student Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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WHO NEEDS TO KNOW THIS POLICY?

- Religious communities seeking to nominate a member of that community to assist in the delivery of pastoral care services at UTAS.
- Visiting Pastoral Carers.
- Manager, Student Services.
- Director, Asset Management Services.

EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS POLICY

- All Pastoral Carers working on UTAS campuses are nominated and approved in compliance with this policy.

POLICY HISTORY

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy No.</th>
<th>TLP 3.1</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Approved</td>
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<td>May, 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice-Chancellor</td>
<td>Professor Daryl Le Grew</td>
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