



University of East Anglia

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[REDACTED]

02 March 2018

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Information request (ref: FOI_18-032)

We have now considered your request of 08 February 2018 as clarified on 09 February for information relating to the provision of support to religious groups at UEA.

Our response is on page 2 of this letter, together with a copy of your request.

We hope this information will meet your requirements, however if you are not satisfied you have the right of appeal. If you wish to appeal, please set out in writing your reasons for appealing and send to the above address. You must appeal within 60 calendar days of the date of this letter. Any appeal received after that date will not be considered nor acknowledged. This policy has been reviewed and approved by the Information Commissioner's Office.

You also have a subsequent right of appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office. Further information is available on their website:

https://ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us, or by telephone on 0303 123 1113.

Please note that any material over which UEA has copyright is released on the understanding that you will comply with all relevant copyright rules regarding reproduction and/or transmission of the information provided.

Please quote our reference given at the head of this letter in all correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Dave Palmer
Information Policy and Compliance Manager
University of East Anglia

Response to Freedom of Information Act 2000 request (FOI_18-032)

I am writing with a request to receive data about acceptance and support of diverse religions by your university from the past 10 years. Do you have prayer rooms and if yes, how many?

The University has a Multi-faith Centre with a variety of rooms, include a large Common Room with easy chairs and a kitchen, two (2) Quiet Rooms for individuals or small groups to spend time in contemplation or prayer, and one (1) large Worship Room for religious services.

Do you have religion groups and if yes, how many?

Yes, we have what we term 'faith groups' and they are listed on our website: <https://portal.uea.ac.uk/multifaith/faiths>

Have you received any complaints and do you have any future plans for widening the religion aspect of your university?

[Clarified on 09 February to limit complaints to those connected to the provision of religious support within the period 2007 – 2017, and to define 'widening the religious aspect' to the expansion or enhancement the support of religions, including the provision of space]

We have not received any formal complaints in the time period cited regarding the support of religion at UEA.

However, there was a temporary closure of one facility in 2017 for a period of 5 months. Alternate provision was provided during this period and a dialogue was maintained with the affected faith group throughout this period. While there was no formal complaint submitted under the University's complaints processes, it would be accurate to say that the affected faith group were not happy with the closure of the facility or the manner in which it was planned and communicated.

To summarise the recorded information held regarding our future plans for the expansion and/or enhancement of support for religions at UEA, following the incident noted above, the University has taken a number of steps to ensure that the liaison with faith groups is improved.

These steps have included:

- the establishment of a Space for Faith Working Group sub-group within the existing Faith Working Group to consider proposals for the enhancement and/or improvement of physical spaces for religious groups,
- the refurbishment of the daily prayer facility, and
- the installation of bidet showers within the Multi-faith Centre for students of the Muslim faith.

The University is currently reviewing the space provision for Faith activities on campus, including a consultation with both current Chaplains and students, which is being managed in partnership with the Students' Union.

No decision with regard to any possible expansion of the space allocated for faith based activities has yet been made.