

Working with others – inter faith relations

A member of a faith union has asked whether they can run an inter-faith café that will introduce various faiths to all interested parties in a relaxed and welcoming environment. They see the benefit of sharing ideas and beliefs over a coffee as ideal for helping break down barriers between different groups. At this stage it's merely an idea that the member has come up with as they have attended something similar at their local drop in centre.

Factors to consider

- Who will undertake the organisation of this?
- Is it to be a one off event, or is it seen as something more regular?
- It is important that it is not misinterpreted as trying to 'convert'
- Is this only going to involve members of the university, or will others from the outlying community be allowed to attend?

University reflections

"We have a regular faith forum chaired by a union officer and open to all faiths that's incredibly well attended. The forum gathers all the different faiths together to meet and discuss any issues of concern on campus or involving students around faith, and also they can all work together to help promote faith, rather than individually focusing on their own faith.

After the forum there's always a one hour inter-faith café which is open to absolutely everyone. Anyone can come along and have a coffee and some cake and just generally chat to the different faiths. It's amazing really as it's so well attended even by the atheist society and the (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transsexual) LGBT society which has input in many topics from different faiths." – Head of student support and faith