

**Protocol for the Multi-Faith and Quiet Contemplation Room**

**1. Introduction**

SGUL is committed to creating a campus environment characterised by good relations between all its staff and students and to the promotion of tolerance, mutual understanding and inter-faith dialogue.

The institution recognises that prayer and meditation may be performed in different ways within the different faith traditions. Thus the institution provides a Multi-Faith and Quiet Contemplation Room (hereafter MFQCR) for the use of all its staff and students. This is a neutral space which can be used by people of all faith groups, and none, within the university. The facility is not intended to replicate or replace other places of worship, but to provide an additional resource for members of the University community.

Therefore, these facilities may equally be used as a quiet space for people to sit and contemplate, to pray, to take a few moments to de-stress from a busy day, or to recover from a traumatic life event such as a bereavement.

**2. Location, capacity and opening times**

**2.1 Location**

The multi-faith and quiet contemplation room is situated on the ‘Street’ in Jenner Wing, 1st Floor, between corridors 3 and 4. Additional access to the MFQCR is available from Corridor 3A.

All doors are for all users, regardless of sex.

**2.2 Additional Space**

For larger events and subject to availability, Teaching Room J1.1 is bookable as breakout space by SU societies via the General Secretary Student Union or by SGUL staff via the room bookings team. J1.1 is immediately adjacent to MFQCR. There is no connecting door between the two rooms.

**2.3 Opening times**

The MFQCR is available for bookings from 8am - 10pm, Monday to Sunday during the University’s academic year. It is closed during periods of University closure. When the MFQCR is unavailable, Staff and Students are invited to make use of the Spiritual Care Centre on the ground floor of Grosvenor Wing in the Trust.

**3. Who can use the facility**

**3.1 Access to the room**

The MFQCR is on swipe card access. Access to the room is granted as standard on University staff and student ID cards. The MFQCR may only be used by current university students and staff.

**3.2 Facilities for visitors**

Alumni, NHS staff, hospital patients and members of the public are not permitted to use the university’s multi-faith and quiet contemplation facility. Those from outside the university community are welcome to visit the Spiritual Care Centre on Ground Floor, Grosvenor Wing.

**3.3 Security**

As the MFQCR is located in a secure area, it is breach of University regulations to allow others to gain entry to the room. The University view this as a serious security matter and such staff or students may be subject to disciplinary action.

**4. Bookings**

The primary use of the MFQCR is for individual prayer, meditation and contemplation and it is expected that in ordinary circumstances the facility will be open for general use. The University recognises and values our student and staff faith communities; therefore the MFQCR may be booked by groups for organised events.

**4.1 Terms and Conditions of Booking**

Excepting in matters explicitly detailed by this protocol, all bookings of the MFQCR are governed by the *Terms and Conditions for Student Union Bookings of St George’s University of London Teaching Rooms, Lecture Theatres and Board Rooms*.

**4.2 Purpose of bookings**

It is expected that the MFQCR be booked for meetings, workshops, communal prayer or other group activities. The MFQCR may not be booked to reserve the space for potential use by individual members of a group, for storage of equipment or other materials or in order to deny others use of the facility. The university reserves the right to decline or cancel bookings if they believe they are not for the proper use.

**4.3 Booking procedure**

Bookings for the MFQCR may be made by students on behalf of an SGUL Students Union society or by university staff. All requests to book the MFQCR must be made using the following booking procedures:

Students wishing to book the MFQCR on behalf of Student Union Societies must do so via the SU General Secretary.

Staff wishing to book the MFQCR must do so through by contacting a member of the MFQCR management group at mfqcr@sgul.ac.uk.

The following information must be provided for bookings:

* the name of the society or staff member hosting the event/meeting
* date and time of the event/meeting
* name of the event/meeting
* whether it is planned that food or drink be consumed
* a description of the event using up to 15 words

**4.4 Confirmation of bookings**

All bookings remain provisional until formally confirmed in writing by a member the MFQCR management group.

**4.5 Events taking place in the MFQCR**

All events taking place in the MFQCR must be organised and hosted in accordance with the Events and External Speaker and Visitors Policy (for student-led events), or the Events and External Speaker and Visitors Policy (for staff-led events), as appropriate.

**4.6 Responsibility for booked events**

Event organisers assume responsibility for ensuring the Multi-Faith and Quiet Contemplation Room protocol is upheld while their booked event takes place. It is the responsibility of all event organisers to ensure they are aware of any events being carried out in their name. For events booked on behalf of Student Union societies, the president of the relevant student society will be considered to be the event organiser.

**4.7 Recurrent events**

It is understood that user groups may wish to make bookings for regular recurrent events in the MFQCR.

Recurrent bookings may be made for periods up to a term. As term dates vary for courses, the following standard dates will apply:

Autumn Term: September 1 to December 31

Winter Term: January 1 to March 31

Spring Term: April 1 to June 30

Summer Term: July 1 to August 31

MFQCR bookings will open 10 working days before the start of the relevant term.

In addition to other booking requirements, recurrent bookings must be authorised by a member of the MFQCR management group.

**4.8 Booking of breakout space**

Teaching Room J1.1 may be booked in advance for events that are expected to exceed the capacity of the MFQCR. In addition to other booking requirements, bookings of J1.1 as additional space for faith-related events must be authorised by the MFQCR management group.

J1.1 is available for student bookings after 5pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays; after 12:30pm on Wednesdays and all day on Saturdays and Sundays. The room is not available during the University Christmas Closure period.

The University anticipates that demand for additional space will be acute at times and days outside the normal availability of J1.1. It undertakes to ensure the room will be available on additional days and times to meet demand.

**4.9 End of booking**

At the end of any booked session, users must vacate the multi-faith and quiet contemplation facility promptly. When making a booking, the event organiser should ensure that enough time has been reserved to accommodate the packing away of any items and that the dividing curtain is in the correct place, so other users may find the rooms left clean and tidy ready for their use.

J1.1 is designated primarily as teaching space. If used, it must be returned to a state ready for teaching at the end of any event.

**5 External speakers**

It is permitted to use the multi-faith and quiet contemplation facility as a venue for external speakers.

**5.1 Definition**

The institution defines an external speaker as any speaker who is not a current member of SGUL’s staff or a current student at SGUL. Accordingly under this definition, this includes any speaker who is:

* a student alumnus
* an ex-SGUL employee
* NHS Trust employee
* other member of the public

All external speakers must be formally invited to the university in compliance with the procedures set out in the either the Events and External Speaker and Visitors Policy (for student-led events), or the Events and External Speaker and Visitors Policy (for staff-led events), as appropriate.

This restriction includes anyone other than a current student or current staff member who may be invited to give a sermon, preach, expound on a piece of religious text, as current staff and students are bound by the terms of their contracts with the university and by all existing institutional policies.

All external speakers may be subject to web and other security checks as standard practice by the university.

**6 External guests**

The university is aware that from time to time an event organiser may wish to invite an external guest to an event held in the multi-faith and quiet contemplation facility. For example, sometimes student alumnus may wish to worship alongside existing students.

All external guests must be formally invited to visit the multi-faith and quiet contemplation facility by the event organiser. The event organiser must always be a current member of staff or current student at the university.

Event organisers must complete and sign a ‘Guidance for external guests to the Multi-Faith and Quiet Contemplation Room form’ (see Appendix 1) agreeing that they will take responsibility for ensuring that the external guest is familiarised with this protocol andthe relevant Events and External Speaker and Visitors Policy.. Their guest also signs to state they agree to comply with the guidance set out therein.

The ‘Guidance for external guests to the Multi-Faith and Quiet Contemplation Room form’ must be completed each time the external guest is invited to visit the facility. This form must be submitted to mfqcr@sgul.ac.uk.

All external guests to the MFQCR are subject to web and other security checks as standard practice by the university.

**7. Physical set up of the facility**

**7.1 Disabled access**

The MFQCR is fully accessible to disabled people.

**7.2 Furniture fittings and equipment**

The university will provide suitable furnishings and equipment for the facility. This includes shoe and coat racks and two shelving units.

Only furniture, fittings and equipment belonging to the university can be used and stored in the multi-faith and quiet contemplation facility. Any furniture, fittings or equipment leftin the facility without the university’s permission will be removed and disposed of.

**7.3 Carpeting**

Office grade carpeting is fitted within the facility. Users are invited to bring prayer mats or other articles into the facility for their own comfort during worship or contemplation. It is expected that individuals will take their own property with them when leaving the MFQCR or ensure its appropriate storage. Any personal belongings left on the floor of the facility will be removed may be discarded.

**7.4 Lighting**

The multi-faith and quiet contemplation facility has an overhead lighting system. Users may wish to use lamps or other equipment to create an environment more conducive to prayer or contemplation for booked events.

Event organisers are responsible for ensuring that any lighting equipment brought into the facility has had appropriate safety tests.

**7.5 AV Equipment**

Audio equipment is provided to broadcast to J1.1 for events where the breakout space is required.

For events requiring additional equipment, including laptops and projectors, these may be booked by staff or SU organisations from the University Media Services Department.

No external AV equipment is to be used within the MFQCR without the written permission of the management group.

**7.6 Storage**

Shelving is provided at the rear of the MFQCR for storage of equipment provided by the University. The shelves may also be used for short-term storage of personal items, especially by users who may wish to visit the facility several times over the course of the day. Items are left at the user’s own risk. Belongings left out of hours by users may be removed and discarded.

There is a dedicated storage room in Corridor 3 to provide storage space for Student Union societies. Individual users wishing to keep belongings in the MFQCR storage room should contact the appropriate SU society or the management group at multifaith@sgul.ac.uk.

Use of the MFQCR storage room is at the discretion of the Assistant Registrar (Student Services) or their designee. Equipment should be stored tidily in the room and with respect for other user groups. No perishable or flammable items may be stored in the MFQCR storage room. Flammable or perishable items found in the storage room will be disposed of.

Serious or repeated breach of the guidance regarding the storage room by a user group may result in the withdrawal of the facility for the remainder of the academic year.

**7.7 Shoes**

Some faiths require users to keep their shoes on to pray, other require users to remove their shoes. Shoe racks are provided for individuals who wish to remove their shoes before prayer or contemplation.

There is no need for any individual to remove their shoes in order to use this facility.

**7.8 Coat hooks**

Coat hooks are provided for the storage of coats and similar articles during the use of the facility. Personal belongings left in the MFQCR will be removed and discarded.

**7.9 Room divider**

The University is aware that some faiths require women and men to pray separately, in others women and men pray together. Therefore the MFQCR contains a curtain which may be used to divide the room into separate male and female sections.

The dividing curtain may be drawn if a faith society has formally booked the room for its exclusive use in line with the room booking system. At all other times the curtain must be drawn back so that the whole room is available for use by both women and men.

**7.10 Ablution facilities**

There are facilities for ablutions situated in Corridor 1 (for female users) and Corridor 3 (for male users). Ablution facilities should be used respectfully and with consideration for others.

Individuals must refrain from getting water on the floor. It is the responsibility of individual users to clean up the area immediately and make it safe and dry for others.

Misuse of the ablution facilities will be treated as a breach of regulations as described in section 9.5 below.

Please note that opposite sex cleaners may enter the ablution facilities, following standard housekeeping processes.

**8. Specific Rules regarding the use of the facility**

**8.1 The responsibilities of all users**

All users must be aware that the university only provides use of the facility on the understanding that:

* this is a shared space provided by the university for the benefit of all staff and students
* all users must be welcoming to others who may wish to use that space at the same time

**8.2 Standards of conduct expected**

The Multi-Faith and Quiet Contemplation Room should be a safe space for all users. This means that everyone has a duty to respect other users and to ensure the environment remains welcoming to people of all faiths and none.

It is therefore of the utmost importance that all users of the MFQCR behave reasonably and considerately towards others who use this space. SGUL values diversity and is committed to creating a positive working and learning environment free of harassment and bullying, where all people are treated with dignity and respect. SGUL wants to enable staff and students to fulfil their personal potential and will not tolerate bullying and harassment of any kind.

The MFQCR must be free from discrimination and harassment, users of the area must not discriminate against people of the same faith, people of different faiths, or people of no faith. Allegations of bullying and harassment will be promptly and thoroughly investigated and, if appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken.

It is also recommended that all users of the room familiarise themselves with the following SGUL policies:

* *Events and External Speaker and Visitors Policy* (for student-led events)
* *Events and External Speaker and Visitors Policy* (for staff-led events)
* *Dignity at Work and Study Policy*

**8.3 Display of objects**

People of some faiths cannot pray in a room where imagery, signs, or icons or written materials from other religions are displayed. Therefore it is not permitted to permanently display imagery, statues, or written materials in the multi-faith and quiet contemplation room, or just outside the room. All users must be sensitive to others who may also wish to use the room.

During booked group prayer, groups are permitted to display religious materials during the course of their booked session. At the end of prayer, meditation or contemplation all these resources must be collected and removed from the room and stored appropriately.

**8.4 Use of personal objects within the facility**

Users are welcome to take hand held objects into the rooms to aid personal prayer or meditation such as prayer beads, prayer or meditation cards or books.

Users should be aware that others present may be of another faith and worship differently than them.

All users must take personal items with them. Personal belongings left in the MFQCR may be removed and discarded.

**8.5 Notices, posters, leaflets**

Notices, posters, leaflets, or advertisements for forthcoming events must not be left in the MFQCR. Instead, the University provides a notice board outside staircase 19, level 1, Jenner Wing. Permission to display all such materials must be sought:

* by students from the Students Union in line with Student Union policy.
* by staff from the Facilities Manager.

Any printed matter to be displayed must be in English (please see the Events and External Speaker and Visitors Policies for further details).

Any printed matter left in the MFQCR without permission will be removed and discarded.

**8.6 Directional Signage**

During booked events when the room divider is in use, or when a group is using the breakout space, appropriate signage may be displayed to direct members to specific doors. In all other circumstances, any directional signage not produced by the university will be immediately removed.

**8.7 Use of equipment in the facility**

Mobile phones, personal laptops, or amplifying equipment are not permitted to be used in the MFQCR.

During booked events, groups may make use of the provided AV equipment as detailed in section 7.5.

**8.8 Security and valuables in the facility**

No charity box, monies or valuables are permitted to be kept within the facility including the storage rooms. Any personal possessions left in facility will be removed and may be thrown away.

**8.9 Tidiness and cleanliness**

The university realises that it is very important the room is kept clean for all users, therefore the facility will be cleaned by the university on a regular basis. Users are required to ensure the MFQCR is left in a clean and tidy condition after use. Any rubbish must be taken out of the rooms and disposed of by the user.

In general, there is no charge for use of the room. However, if the MFQCR is left in an unsatisfactory condition, SGUL reserves the right to recover the cost of any loss or damage to the facility caused by any user or society and ban the user or society from using the facility for a period of time.

**8.10 Regulations regarding noise**

The MFQCR may be used for quiet contemplation, reflection and meditation. Unless group prayer is taking place, people using the room must be silent. Staff or students may wish to use the room for silent prayer, mediation, to de-stress from their busy lives, or as a place of calm after a bereavement.

It is permitted to use the rooms for devotional song, chanting or hymn singing if participants are

engaged in an act of group worship, contemplation or meditation and have thus reserved the rooms for their exclusive use.

**8.11 Fire regulations**

The MFQCR is a no smoking facility. The lighting of candles and burning of incense in the rooms is not permitted. While the University appreciates open flames are a component of many faith practices, it encourages users to seek electronic alternatives for use in the facility.

**8.12 Food**

Food or drink may only be consumed during a group booking. When a room booking is made, the person booking the room needs to state that food and drink will be consumed. The person booking the rooms will also be responsible for ensuring that the rooms are left clean and tidy after the consumption of any food and drink.

No food or drink may be consumed in J1.1 if used. For larger events involving food and drink, users are encouraged to consider suitable alternative venues, including the Board Rooms.

Breaking of these rules may result in the university deciding that no food or beverages will be allowed to be consumed in the MFQCR.

**8.13 University regulations**

In all other regards, the MFQCR is subject to the same regulations as other rooms on university premises.

**9. Management of the facility**

**9.1 Management Group**

Responsibility for the operation of the MFQCR and authority for its use will rest with a staff panel consisting of:

* the Assistant Registrar (Student Services)
* the Facilities Manager
* the University Chaplain

**9.2 Cleaning**

The MFQCR is the property of the University. Upkeep of the room and the facilities provided remain the sole responsibility of the University. Any resulting costs are borne entirely by the institution. This is to ensure that the facility is seen to belong to all staff and students who may wish to use the facility.

**9.3 Concerns about the facility upkeep**

If users of the facility have any practical concerns about the upkeep of the facility such as heating, ventilation, cleaning issues or concerning the fabric of the facility itself, they should contact the Estates and Facilities help desk immediately on extension 1234 and choose option 2.

**9.4 Conflict Resolution**

Conflicts between individual users or user groups will be referred to the University Interfaith Forum. The membership of that group consists of:

* the Presidents of the Student Union’s Religious Societies (currently Christian, Hindu, Islamic, Jewish and Sikh)
* staff faith representatives
* the Students Union Equality & Diversity Officer(s)
* the Facilities Manager
* the University Chaplain
* the Assistant Registrar (Student Services)

Conflicts arising between users or groups and the University itself will be managed through the *Student Concerns and Complaints Procedure.*

**9.5 Breach of Regulations**

Serious or repeated breach of the guidance for the student or society use of teaching rooms, lecture theatres and/or board rooms may result in the cancellation of all existing bookings by that student and/or society and the withdrawal of the privilege to book rooms for the remainder of the academic year. Any room users considered to be in breach of Section 20.3 (k) of the General Regulations of the University will also be referred to the Head of Student  Conduct and Compliance for potential disciplinary procedures

Use of university premises by for purposes other than teaching and learning is at the discretion of the Director of Estates and Facilities or their designee.  Decisions of the Director relating to the acceptance of bookings, scheduling and cancellations are final.

**9.6 Monitoring use of the facility**

In line with St Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and Peace guidelines, SGUL may monitor the use of the facility to check it remains inclusive for SGUL staff and students, and to ensure is treated with respect. Users should be aware that the facility remain the property of the university. Staff and students should be aware that from time to time the institution may carry out spot checks to establish that use of the facility is in accordance with this policy. Please note that members of the university do not need advance permission to do this, however any such checks will be done as sensitively as possible.

**9.7 Giving feedback**

Users of the space may wish to give feedback, ask questions or raise complaints. They may contact the Students Union, the president of a particular student society or the Assistant Registrar (Student Services). Any concerns or complaints regarding the MFQCR will be reported back to the Interfaith Forum.

Occasionally the University may also invite users of the facility to give feedback via consultation or questionnaire.

**10. Useful contacts**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Job Title | Name | Email Address | Telephone Number |
| Assistant Registrar (Student Services)\* | Gavin Taylor | gtaylor@sgul.ac.uk | 020 8266 6355 |
| Facilities Manager\* | Elizabeth Gilby | egilby@sgul.ac.uk | 020 8725 5006 |
| Chaplain\* | Christopher Van Darque | christopher.vandarque@stgeorges.nhs.uk | 020 8725 3285 |
| Student Union Equality and Diversity Officers | Jan Mukibi and Ramat Ayoola | equality@su.sgul.ac.uk | 020 8725 2709 |
| Student Union General Secretary | Nick Davis | secretary@su.sgul.ac.uk | 020 8725 2709 |
| Any heating,ventilation or cleaningissues | Estates and FacilitiesHelp Desk |  estates@sgul.ac.uk | 0208 725 1234option 2 |

\*m

\*Member of MFQCR management group

Appendix 1:

Guidance for all external guests to the Multi-Faith and Quiet Contemplation Room form

The university realises that from time to time, event organisers may wish to invite external guests to
visit the multifaith and quiet contemplation facility. (Please note this policy does NOT apply to
external speakers who must apply under the Events and External Speaker and Visitors Policy (for student-led events), or the Events and External Speaker and Visitors Policy (for staff-led events), as appropriate,instead).

All external guests to the multifaith and quiet contemplation facility are subject to web and other security checks as standard practice by the university. Event organisers may use this form to notify the university that they have invited an external guest

I, full name of the event organiser: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I wish to invite:

Full name of external visitor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

to attend an event to be held in the multifaith and quiet contemplation facility, namely

Name of event: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Time of event: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of event: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

As my guest.

I confirm that I have provided my external guest with copies of institution’s Protocol for the multi- faith and quiet contemplation facility form and the relevant Events and External Speaker and Visitors Policy and impressed upon them the need for them to abide by the guidance contained in both these documents.

I am aware that if an external visitor contravenes this guidance, the university reserves the right to immediately ban this individual/and or a particular group from using the multifaith and quiet
contemplation facility in the future.

Signature of event organiser: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I confirm that I have read and understood the institution’s *Protocol for the Multi-Faith and Quiet Contemplation Room* and the relevant Events and External Speaker and Visitor Policy and I agree to abide with all guidance contained within these documents.

Signature of external visitor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Please scan and submit this form to mfqcr@sgul.ac.uk**