



Voluntary College Godparents

As Determined by College Administration—30 June 2015

Context

College

Grace College is a residential college located on the St Lucia campus of the University of Queensland (UQ). It operates under the auspices of the Queensland Synod of The Uniting Church in Australia (UCA), and the Assembly of The Presbyterian Church of Queensland (PCQ). According to the Constitution, the College exists to:

- (a) provide proper accommodation and tuition for women students of the University for the purpose of giving such students the benefit of collegiate life and of making provision for their care, guidance, discipline and instruction;
- (b) encourage a liberal education for its students by endeavouring to draw its students from all faculties within the University;
- (c) provide all necessary facilities for the presentation of and instruction in the Christian faith, including worship, study, teaching and counselling; and
- (d) encourage students to relate their academic disciplines to Christianity and grow in the Christian faith.

Active Faith

In 2014, the Chaplaincy Commission of the UCA developed a new model for UQ Chaplaincy by shifting funding from an individual UQ Chaplain to a model shared by 3 local congregations—Indooroopilly, Toowong & St Lucia.

During 2014 and early 2015, Grace College partnered with Indooroopilly Congregation to have 2 chaplains on site on a regular basis.

In 2015 *Active Faith* was launched as a common identity linking the work of the UCA related individuals & congregations working in the UQ setting.

The vision of *Active Faith* is to continue to develop vital and vibrant ministry in the university setting grounded in service, humility and excellence and directly linked to local congregations. *Active Faith* seeks to:

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- bear faithful witness to the life and work of Jesus Christ;
- provide pastoral support, Christian formation, and community development within UCA residential colleges and the greater university community; and
- emphasise the core values of service, humility and excellence (*Beneficium – Modestia – Bonitas*).

Grace College is providing administrative support to *Active Faith* through the work of the Community Relations Coordinator.

Intention

In building upon the initial on-site chaplain experience in partnership with Indooroopilly Congregation, Grace College seeks to develop a framework for the recruitment, selection, training and oversight of voluntary college godparents. These volunteers will operate under the oversight of the College Principal with assistance from the Community Relations Coordinator. They will be available to Grace College staff and students as religious and pastoral care resource persons for the College. In the context of *Active Faith*, they may also be involved in similar work in other colleges and, through UQ's Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Centre, within the general UQ setting.

Once established, the model may be developed as a cooperative venture with other Colleges and/or be offered for use by other Colleges in their contexts.

Personhood

Voluntary College Godparents will be:

- adult practicing Christians centred in a confessional and active relationship with Jesus Christ and engaged in a local congregation or faith community;
- willing to work within the ethos of The Uniting Church in Australia;
- committed to serving the needs of the Grace College community, as well as interacting with members of other residential colleges affiliated with UQ, and particularly those connected with the UCA;
- supportive of an understanding of Jesus Christ as unconditionally self-giving to all people, of all heritages, any ethnicity, religion, nationality, including people of secular and agnostic orientation;
- capable of and comfortable with articulating their faith in ways that invite and engage university students in dialogue about questions and matters of faith across a spectrum of Christian beliefs and traditions;
- willing to engage members of other religious and philosophical traditions from a Christian perspective which honours the integrity of different religious beliefs and practices;
- willing to sustain engagement with students who are in the process of exploring, questioning, doubting, radically disagreeing or energetically denying the faith of others—as well as their own—without imposing premature closure or judgemental censure;

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- discerningly open to meet and accept students and staff on their own terms;
- willing to share in prayer, in liturgy and worship, as well as formal discussion on issues of both local and international importance, as the occasion arises; and
- be aware of relevant safety, confidentiality and privacy, and protective behaviour issues that may arise requiring appropriate pastoral judgements.

Role

Voluntary College Godparents will be available to attend one or more College campuses on a weekly basis during normal operation times; and on occasion outside of those times for the purposes of:

- listening to and observing the life experiences of College students and staff;
- reflecting back what they are hearing and observing to individuals and the community;
- theologically interpreting what they have heard and observed to individuals and the community;
- providing activities which may prompt and promote the listening, reflecting and interpreting process for individuals and the community;
- participating in the life of the College in any other ways that enhance these aims.

Voluntary College Godparents will work in the public areas of the College(s), i.e. Dining Rooms, Chapels and main Common Rooms. They will use the dynamics of the large public spaces to ensure appropriate levels of privacy, confidentiality and safety for residents, staff and themselves. They will not enter the accommodation blocks except in exceptional circumstances.

They will notify the Principal or Dean of Students of any incidents that may require follow-up by College Administration; or of which the Principal needs to be aware.

When interacting with College residents, they will always interact within the requirements of their role.

At least once a semester, Voluntary College Godparents will meet with Principal or Community Relations Coordinator as a group to reflect on the role, their experiences and related issues.

Voluntary College Godparents will meet individually with the Principal or Community Relations Coordinator on an annual basis to reflect on the role, their experiences and related issues.

Additional Requirements

Applicants for the role of Voluntary College Chaplain will be asked to provide:

- a completed application form including the names of 2 referees from whom confidential reports may be requested (*Note:* At least one referee must be someone who has had oversight of you in a ministry role, i.e. a ministry leader or pastoral supervisor (e.g. minister of Congregation; Presbytery Minister; professional supervisor); and
- a current CV.

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Applicants will be required to attend an interview with a panel comprising the Principal or her nominee, a member of the Grace College Council Executive and the Dean of Students.

Persons accepted as Voluntary College Chaplains will be required to:

- produce or obtain a Blue Card (Working with Children Check) or appropriate exemption; and
- undergo the Grace College staff induction program for the role including anti-discrimination and safety management training.