ISLAM AT UNIVERSITIES IN ENGLAND

MEETING THE NEEDS AND INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

Report

Submitted to

Bill Rammell MP

[Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education]

On
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By

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Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

I was invited by the Minister of Higher Education, Bill Rammell MP, to write a report on 'what measures can be taken to improve the quality of information about Islam that is available to students and staff in universities in England. The report should serve as a resource that individual institutions can pick up and apply to their own individual circumstances, as well as something the Government can support.' The following terms of reference were set: What measures can be taken to

1. improve the quality of information about Islam that is available to students and staff in universities in England, in particular to ensure that students have access to material on how the teachings of Islam can be put into practice in a contemporary pluralist society.

2. improve the quality of spiritual advice and support that Muslim students can access in universities in England.

3. identify gaps between the needs and aspirations of Muslim students and the programmes of study presently available at universities in England.

4. facilitate effective joint working by Government, local communities, the funding council and educational institutions to support the recommended improvements.

This project began formally from mid- August 2006. I was seconded for three days a week for this project from the Markfield Institute of Higher Education. The project also appointed a part-time administrator and, to hold it within its objectives and provide guidance on critical issues, an Advisory Board. The Board members, who joined in a personal and voluntary capacity, were invited on the basis of relevant experience and research.

The investigation began by meeting the stakeholders – academics, community leaders and students. The following broad themes were explored during my conversations with them. Not all of the themes were explored with each interviewee, nor in equal detail.

1. The definition of Islamic Studies and the place and role of ethnographic and sociological studies of Muslims.

2. The types of general information on Islam that students have access to on and off campus.

3. Major gaps, if any, in the teaching of and research on Islam in today's pluralist society.
4. The relations, if any, that universities have developed with local Muslim communities to build up their skills and intellectual capital.
5. The training measures in place for university staff to address the specific cultural and faith needs of local and foreign Muslim students.
6. The measures in place at universities to meet specific cultural and faith needs of their Muslim students.
7. The measures that Government, local communities, funding councils and educational institutions can take to support and improve the current situation.

THE CHANGING CONTEXT OF ISLAMIC STUDIES

Interest in Islam and the Middle East can be traced back to the reign of Henry II in the twelfth century. However, Islamic Studies as an academic subject-matter in England dates to the establishment of Chairs in Arabic in Cambridge in 1632 and in Oxford four years later. Academic interest in the field has been sustained ever since, and its value and impact periodically assessed, notably in the twentieth century.

The **Reay** Report (1909) considered Islamic Studies provision from the perspective of those looking to go to the Islamic world in a civil service, military, business, medical or missionary capacity, as well as those interested in scholarship in its languages and cultures.

The **Scarbrough** Report (1947) took note of the post-War world when former British colonies were moving towards independence, its priority being to maintain influence in those colonies and in international affairs generally.

By the time of the **Hayter** Report (1961) most of the colonies had become independent. Hayter rightly emphasised that the 'universities have, a duty to meet in their own way the needs of the society in which they live' and recommended that 6 to 8 new 'area studies' centres be set up in different universities, and that 'the School of Oriental Studies in Durham and the Middle East Centre in Cambridge […] be supported and expanded as centres of Middle East or Islamic Studies…'

The **Parker** Report (1986) looked from a commercial and diplomatic perspective that had not been directly addressed in the two previous reports. It regretted the absence of a clear, coherent policy, particularly in the area of expertise in Asian and African languages.

These four reports work from different perspectives reflecting the socio-economic and political situations of their time. The points, on which they are in broad agreement as to what is required, are that:

a. Britain's economic and political influence can be maintained abroad, and academic study can and should be strengthened to serve that objective.

b. Whatever is needed, Britain is not doing it.

This report and its context are substantially different. It reflects the growing Muslim population in England and its growing interest in Islam as a faith and civilisation. Following the 9/11 and 7/7 bombings, the changed dynamics of relations between Muslims and policymakers in Western countries have added urgency to the need to ensure that the growing Muslim population is an asset to the country and not a liability. Though Britain's influence abroad has to be maintained for its economic prosperity and diplomatic edge, it is now equally important that different experiences and expressions of Islam are explored outside the needs of diplomacy and the exigencies of the situation in the Middle East. This is necessary for at least two reasons:

a. The young Muslims in this country and in Europe are looking to express Islam in a context that their parents' generation can hardly have experienced, namely living in a modern secular culture grounded in Judaeo-Christian traditions. The majority Muslim expression and experience of Islam in England is inherited from the culture of South Asia, with significant minority strands from Africa and from Europe – especially the Balkans and Turkey.

b. With the exception of a few individual initiatives, the study of Islam and its civilisation remains anchored in the colonial legacy and mainly serves the diplomatic and foreign services. Teaching and research programmes need to be re-oriented. Britain could give the lead to Europe in such a re-orientation if there were sufficient commitment from Government, funding agencies and universities, and from the resident Muslim community. Properly directed investment in resources and energies could turn relations between Muslims and Islam in this country into a sustainably positive direction.

THE CURRENT DEBATE

Much recent debate about the provision of Islamic Studies in the universities has moved appreciably towards the recognition that it needs to be more aware of its responsibilities within the country. This debate notes the fact that post-graduate courses are successfully recruiting students from abroad. It also notes the relative **failure to attract local students**, which is leaving a significant gap in terms of quality Muslim leadership within the country. Interest in Islamic studies has been growing at various levels, with pressure building at 'grassroots' level from students searching for appropriate programmes. However, this has not been picked up by the universities; instead provision for Islamic studies (with varying degrees of formal programmes) is being offered by institutions other than universities. The post-War 7 shift in focus at the

universities from 'Islamic' to 'Middle Eastern' studies may also be a factor affecting the priorities of university departments and their intake.

Motivations for the study of Islam vary considerably. No doubt the perceived resurgence of Islam, its socio-economic and political impact and its significance in world politics, is a strong factor. But individuals are also motivated by career opportunities in social services, health and psychology, public finance and politics, and the media. Students are increasingly looking to courses with an 'add-on' Islamic Studies element so that they have an edge over others in the job market. However, current syllabuses are so tightly defined that it is difficult to find a department willing to take an interested student of, say, psychology or medicine who wants to take a module on Muslim history: Islamic studies as an 'add-on' is just not available.

A quick overview of the current debate suggests that relatively little research has been done on Islamic Studies in higher education, and even less on its relation to the wider community, in particular the Muslim community. It is also revealing that in general the Muslim communities in England have given some support to higher education institutions run from within the community, but have put almost nothing into the universities.

A number of reports and conferences on Islam in higher education have highlighted the need to review the overall provision of Islamic Studies, ranging from a complete shift in orientation to building onto existing provision better relationship with the Muslim community. The key arguments may be summarised as follows:

1. The Arabic and Islamic Studies departments are concentrating 'on out of date and irrelevant issues'; there is a lack of clarity on 'where and how the subject ['Islam'] should be taught'. Strong emphasis is placed on the multicultural context and the need to 'adjust' understanding of Islam to it.

2. A major shift of the focus of Islamic Studies from an Arab and Middle Eastern perspective to that of a plural society in Britain is needed.

3. How and how far social science methods are appropriate to the study of Islam needs to be more vigorously questioned than it has been.

4. The academic institutions and their staff need to 'connect' with Muslim institutions.

5. As the issues relating to the future of Islamic Studies assume greater importance, both on university campuses and in the areas of funding and public policy, it is important to take account of and respond to the variety of interests involved in this subject.

6. Discussion over the years about Islamic Studies in higher education has been conducted quite separately from, and probably in complete ignorance of, the 8

Muslim community and their patterns of belief and practice. Equally, the teaching of Islam and the mentoring of students as mediated by the *madrasas* is, to a very large extent, oblivious of the realities around them.

7. University life has a lasting impact on, in particular, Muslim women students, and most notably on their employment outcomes. Their time in university helps them 'to rationalise and think through their gendered, ethnic and religious identities.'

8. Important strands in the debate, of special interest to policy makers and community leaders, are (a) how far Islam can be 'integrated' within the 'secular/humanist' ethos; and (b) how future leadership of Muslims can be formalised at higher educational levels so as then to provide a 'controlled position' for Islam. There is unease, for different reasons within the academic world and the Muslim community, about too much authority to define and direct Islam in the country.

A more general, widely expressed concern was that Islam has for too long been studied from 'outside in' while there is a need for and much to gain from looking 'inside out'. This failure of perspective – to the predictable annoyance of many in academia –is strongly indicated by the findings of the Student Study. However, as interviews with several religious and community leaders made clear, Muslims' own house needs to be set in order in this regard, so that, as a discourse, Islamic Studies must indeed look 'inside out' and not just 'inside in'.

DEFINING ISLAMIC STUDIES

There are marked disagreements about what Islamic Studies does or should cover. There are those who see Arabic language as the core of Islamic Studies, and who do not consider anthropological and ethnographic study of Muslim societies as a necessary or proper part of the Islamic Studies syllabus. There are others who believe that the teaching of Arabic and textual analysis does not address the issues facing Muslims in contemporary societies in different parts of the world. There is some consensus amongst the interviewees that while the knowledge of Arabic could form the basis for the understanding of the Qur'an and *sunnah*, some knowledge of other sciences has to be part of Islamic Studies.

There is also disagreement whether one should call Islamic Studies a 'discipline'. The Islamic Studies, some argue, has 'emerged from a melange of several disciplines into one well-defined discipline…' Others disagree and highlight that it does not have the required ingredients to be called a discipline.

WHO IS PROVIDING THE 'ISLAMIC STUDIES'?

Validation/accreditation

Both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, students are attracted to the basic ethos of Muslim-run institutions that offer a range of accredited academic and vocational courses. These institutions are largely run by Muslim charities, with the offered courses placed under the supervisory scrutiny of affiliated universities. Students want and expect their education at such institutions to be different from what they get in either secular university departments or a *dar al-'ulum*.

Madrasas and dar al-'ulum

These institutions offer traditional courses on Qur'anic interpretation, *hadith*, *fiqh* (jurisprudence) and *kalam* (theology). The subject matter is typically presented in an atmosphere of reverence, not critical scepticism. Nevertheless, these institutions are important resources for Islamic studies and, one way or another, play a significant role in the life of the Muslim community in England. The universities have paid little attention to the need that these institutions are catering for. *Dar al- 'ulum* are keen to develop a bridge to degree level studies with universities. A small number of *ulama* have completed MPhil/PhD courses in Islamic Studiesrelated subjects.

Online and distance learning.

With very few exceptions, increasing demand for such courses is being met from outside the British Isles. The objective of the courses, assessment, fees and curricula vary considerably.

UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITIES

Universities provide a physical place of meeting between staff, students and communities. People interviewed, both Muslim community leaders and university staff, would like to see a closer relationship between them develop.

1. There are some examples of good practice. In Birmingham, the University has provided the intellectual, and the community the financial, resources to teach a B.Ed. programme. Similarly, Leeds University has proactively engaged, at the initiative of the local Muslim community, to provide a 'Certificate Course in Islamic Studies'. More recently, some universities, such as Gloucester University, have engaged with the Muslim community to provide academic support to various Muslim institutions in England. Such engagement needs to be widened and involve more of the departments that teach Islamic studies.

2. Co-operation between a university and a *madrasa* or *dar al-'ulum* has yet to be tested out. Such providers and disseminators of 'Islamic knowledge' in Muslim communities have functioned independently and validated their work by their own

criteria. What is required is a clear formal link between such institutions and higher education qualifications. It is essential that those qualifications enable opportunities in the job market.

In general, the sense is that a university has a moral obligation to serve its local community. There is a need for the Muslim community to focus on making use of the good university facilities available in the country. However, misunderstanding of the role of a university remains, as well as doubts about the ability of the community to rise to the challenge.

CHAPLAINCY AND MUSLIMS

The Muslim 'chaplain' or 'advisor' is seen as someone able to give guidance and support not based solely on religious doctrine, and able to listen with moral attentiveness while not being 'judgemental' . The chaplain is often the only sustained link between students and university authorities, and makes a substantial difference to students' social and spiritual well-being. One chaplain from a Post-1992 university explained his role as helping students difficulties and anxieties (economic crises, relationship and family problems, etc.) 'in [such] a way that they can focus on their education'.

The chaplaincy role is the more significant as, by all indicators, the number of Muslim students will continue to rise. There are now some 30 Muslim chaplains/ advisors working in universities in England, almost all of them volunteers, whose understanding of their faith and their pastoral role varies widely. They are the least supported individuals providing chaplaincy, but still expected to advise university authorities, and to face occasional media outbursts on issues relating to terrorism, fundamentalism, government policies and student activities.

An overwhelming number of serving chaplains, academic staff and community members would like to see chaplains/advisors appointed and paid by the university for their work. Interviews with Muslim chaplains and community leaders suggest four broad areas of chaplaincy work:

Spiritual needs: Muslim students, whether partly or fully practising, have religious obligations that require basic needs – such as *halal* food and prayer facilities (especially for Friday prayers),) to be catered for. In one Post-1992 university for example, according to the chaplain/advisor, out of some 4 to 5,000 Muslim students, about 400 students require prayer facilities they do not have.

Counselling and emotional needs: A Muslim chaplain/advisor with over twenty years experience in a Civic university says accommodation, *halal* food, a place to 11 worship, and problems with the student supervisors, are commonplace issues. In addition, there

are relationship problems and instances of mental illness. All of these need a cultural and religious specific counselling.

Educational (religious specific) needs: In some universities chaplains, with the help of the student Islamic society, provide basic Islamic education such as the Qur'an, Arabic language, and jurisprudence in response to students' requests.

Continuity and point of contact: University students are a transient population. The chaplain/advisor serves as the point of contact for newcomers and continuity for those still finishing their education, and as the link between the university and the local Muslim community.

Difficulties of Inter-faith chaplaincy

Working in a team is not easy and working in an inter-faith chaplaincy may sometimes be particularly trying. Being too close to the Christian-dominated chaplaincy can pose problems for Muslim chaplains. If the Christians are seen to be too 'liberal' in their religious tradition that has an effect on Christian as well as Muslim fellow-chaplains who might disagree with that approach. If the Christian chaplaincy leader or team is strongly inclined to a fundamentalist/exclusive approach, this can lead to the exclusion of the Muslim chaplain from the wider workings of chaplaincy.

TRAINING OF STAFF

Public awareness among non-Muslims about Muslims and their faith has not progressed, despite the voluminous public attention given to 'Islam'. Departments where Islamic Studies is taught have rarely been approached by their universities to provide generic training about Islam to their own staff. However, there is increasing demand, from agencies outside university – social services, police, media – on any department that has even a vague link with teaching Islam to provide instant answers to some problem of the moment – the expectation is that they will get an 'academic' or unbiased view, as opposed to what they expect to get from the local Muslim community.

FINDINGS FROM THE STUDENT STUDY

The Student Study recorded discussions with focus groups of Muslim undergraduates and postgraduates from eight universities in England, using. The discussion were around the kinds of information about Islam available to students, with a focus on university courses and modules; Muslim student pastoral care needs; and student–community links.

Information about Islam

1. The main criticism was lack of depth of information about Islamic teachings and lack of relevance for Muslims. The courses on offer were generally viewed as the study of Muslim communities rather than of Islam.

2. All students saw the value of studying Islam in a formal university setting . However, when asked about learning Islam in order to inform their everyday practice of their religion, the overwhelming majority agreed that they would not go to a university for this purpose, but would prefer to study under a Muslim scholar or at a Muslim centre of learning.

3. The option of universities in England employing competent Muslim scholars was therefore popular among the students. 'Secular' aspects of learning such as Islamic history or Middle Eastern politics should remain as part of a comprehensive Islamic Studies programme with the theological elements of the course being taught by Muslim scholars.

4. Students' main source of information about Islam came from the student Islamic society – through organised seminars, books etc. – rather than from attending university courses. The internet was also cited, with caution, as a key source for information about Islam.

Muslim student care needs

Having a Muslim chaplain/advisor was seen as important for all universities, regardless of the size of the Muslim population, because of the specific needs of Muslims and the discrimination that Muslim young people and students encounter.

1. As student Islamic societies shoulder the main burden of caring for the needs of fellow students, a number of students were so over-stretched their studies suffered. The care needs should therefore be met by the university through appropriate student services provisions.

2. All students in the study agreed that the Muslim chaplain/advisor should have an understanding of student issues and university life, be approachable and have a certain level of training in counselling, and a good knowledge base about Islam. More particularly, a key factor emphasised by students is that the chaplain should be independent of the wider Muslim community and accountable to university administration.

3. Lack of prayer facilities, especially for the Friday prayer and *halal* food, were the principal care issues raised. *Halal* food provision was particularly problematic on those campuses located away from town centres and with few Muslim outlets.

4. There were examples of how students felt their concerns about faith issues were not fully appreciated by staff, and instances of students being picked 13 on by staff

because of their faith. There was also strong anxiety about the prospect or reality of being spied just because they were Muslims.

Student-community relationships

Links between students and the local community were not described by students as being strong. Even so, there were examples of how students had benefited from such links. Students in principle approved links with local communities but believed this could be difficult because of conditions and dynamics internal to the community.

1. Establishing links with the community was seen as a potential role for a Muslim chaplain/advisor.

2. University students should forge links with young people in their local Muslim communities and encourage them to go to university.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Given the growing number of Muslims inside the country, the Islamic Studies syllabus needs to look beyond philology/classical texts and area studies (particularly the Middle East). The underlying unity and the evident diversity of Islamic culture and civilisation in different epochs and different regions of the world (including Europe) deserve proper attention. Muslims in this country should be helped to understand their faith as practised in different contexts, perhaps especially contexts of minority existence, and not just to somehow rehearse – in an insecure alliance with Britishness – the local customs of their parents' communities of origin. Unfortunately, there are very few scholars qualified to teach the core Islamic subjects *and* relate them to different social contexts.

   i. The relevant departments of Government, funding bodies such as the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), and the Muslim community, should invest in a long term project to establish intensive language courses, research studentships, postgraduate awards, collaboration with universities abroad, and appoint suitably qualified staff.

   ii. Universities should be encouraged to work in partnership and share funding and, if need be, jointly establish a separate centre.

2. The provision of Islamic studies should be linked with job opportunities – chaplaincy and counselling, teaching, 'Islamic banking'. Appropriate courses in the past attracted significant number of participants, including imams and also women. Courses that addressed the culture-specific needs of likely 14 participants would undoubtedly be well subscribed. The Department of Education and Skills

could and should facilitate meetings between Universities and Further Education Colleges, the social service sector, and Muslim charities, in order to asses the needs and methods of delivery.

3. Islamic Studies syllabuses should focus better on theological and civilisational aspects of Islam relevant to contemporary practice of the faith. Such courses would provide non-Muslim students with insight into issues within Islamic doctrine that are pertinent now. Also, universities should be advised and resourced to provide add-on modules on Islamic studies for those whose main speciality is some other subject.

4. Students should be given the opportunity to learn from competent traditionally trained Islamic scholars in at least those parts of the syllabus that directly inform everyday practice of Islam.

5. All universities should consult and consider the appointment of full- or parttime Muslim chaplains/advisors. The number of Muslim students will grow very considerably in the future, and their cultural and religious specific needs should be catered for.

6. A generic qualification in pastoral care skills, and an overall understanding of the workings of higher education must be a minimum requirement for future appointments of Muslim chaplains/advisors. The standard of Muslim chaplain/ advisors' training needs to be raised, especially in the long term. The 'five qualities' highlighted in the report should help direct and improve the training process. The Muslim student body should be represented on the committee handling the selection process for chaplaincy appointments. This would prevent misunderstanding, and help in the smooth running of university and student affairs.

7. The Muslim community should use their resources to strengthen the chaplaincy/ advisor service, by (for example) producing relevant guides and reading material. Pastoral care should also be included in the training of future religious leaders, especially in *madrasas*, in the community.

8. Muslim chaplains/advisors should meet regularly to share experience and concerns. There should be provision for participation of other faith communities, student services and other concerned agencies.

9. On campus student Islamic societies should be acknowledged as key providers of peer-led support for Muslim students, and properly supported by universities (through human resources and by student services), by the local Muslim communities and other relevant parties.

10. Generic guidance should be available throughout the country to serve as a reference point for all university staff when dealing with issues such as prayer times, the significance of Friday prayer, *halal* food and Ramadan. Such guidance would lighten the burden of responsibility on students and help to universalise the best practice.

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INTRODUCTION

I was invited by the Minister of Higher Education, Bill Rammell MP to write a report to Government to see 'what measures can be taken to improve the quality of information about Islam that is available to students and staff in universities in England. The report should serve as a resource that individual institutions can pick up and apply to their own individual circumstances, as well as something the Government can support.' With this background in mind, following four terms of reference were set up for investigation:

1. What measures can be taken to improve the quality of information about Islam that is available to students and staff in universities in England; and in particular what can be done to ensure that students have access to material that helps them to understand how the teachings of Islam can be put into practice in a pluralist contemporary society.

2. What measures can be taken to improve the nature of spiritual advice and support that Muslim students can access in universities in England.

3. What measures can be taken in order to identify the shortfalls, if any, between the needs and aspirations of Muslim students and the programmes of study presently available at universities in England.

4. What measures can be taken to facilitate effective joint working by Government, local communities, the funding council and educational institutions to support these improvements.

It was clear from the outset that the decision to give the responsibility for preparing this report to one person and over such a short span of time implied that what was envisaged was a short, incisive report. A thorough, systematic survey was never going to be possible. The shortage of time and the importance of reaching as many and as diverse people as possible has inevitably meant that finer details are less well attended to than one would have wished.

This project began formally from mid- August 2006. I was seconded for three days a week for this project from the Markfield Institute of Higher Education. The project also appointed a part-time administrator. In order to keep the project within its objectives, and to provide comments and insight into some critical issues, an Advisory Board was also appointed[See Appendix A]. Its members were invited on the basis of their experience and relevant research. They joined in a personal and voluntary capacity.

While the Advisory Board has had a role in guiding this project, the overall responsibility for carrying it out and completing it lies with me.

The following broad themes were explored during my conversations. Not all of the themes were explored with each interviewee, nor all in equal detail.

1. The definition of Islamic Studies and the place and the role of ethnographic and sociological studies of Muslims.

2. What types of information on Islam, in general, students have access to both on university campuses and outside .

3. What major gaps, if any, exist in the teaching and research of Islam in today's pluralist society.

4. What relation, if any, universities have developed with their local Muslim communities to build up their skills and intellectual capital.

5. What measures are in place in universities to provide specific cultural and faith needs that Muslim students can access.

6. What training measures are in place to train staff in universities to address the specific cultural and faith needs of both local and foreign Muslim students.

7. What measures could be taken by the Government, local communities, funding councils and educational institutions to support and improve the current situation?

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'Of all the Oriental studies, Near and Middle Eastern Studies have the longest
history in this country. Adlelard of Bath, the tutor of Henry II, is known to
have translated a number of Arabic texts into Latin. The Crusades, and later the
Elizabethan quest for trade, brought adventurous Englishmen into touch with
the various cultures of the Middle East and brought back to this country some
knowledge of the ancient culture of Islam and of the Arabic language. Under
the Stuarts, Islamic studies took their place in the academic life of the country,
and within four years of each other, in 1632 and 1636, Chairs of Arabic were
founded at Cambridge and Oxford, the former by a layman, Sir Thomas
Adams, the latter by Archbishop Laud. Classical Arabic has since then held a
strong place among Oriental Studies in this country and medieval Persian was
from time to time taught in conjunction with it at both Oxford and Cambridge.
The study of Persian was one of the accomplishments of any gentleman
entering the service of the East India Company. Most notable among the more
recent British scholars, the late Professor E.G. Browne made such an
outstanding contribution to the progress of Persian studies that his death was
felt in Persia to be a national bereavement.' (1)

Scarbrough Report 1947, p. 8

THE CHANGING CONTEXT OF ISLAMIC STUDIES

Contacts between England and the Arab world and its colonies have a long history.
The contacts depended upon the political requirement to rule and to regulate the
colonies, and maintain an economic prosperity at home through business and trade.
The Reay Report 1909 (2) looked at the situation from an imperial vantage point,
scanning its needs in the colonies and recommending training for people who are
going to visit in a civil service, military, business, medical or missionary capacity,
and those interested in scholarships in languages and cultures (p. 6). Reay was self-
consciously aware of the fact that in the field of business and trade Britain was a
little behind. Germany seemed to be well ahead in the teaching of languages, and
showed an awareness of the customs and practices of the cultures abroad. They
were followed by France and Russia as well as Italy and Holland, where the
governments had invested in 'studies of living oriental languages' (p. 3). At the
heart of Reay is the preoccupation with the success and continuity of imperial

Britain, which had been able to influence certain elite colonies with 'the surroundings 18 of the West'. He suggests a need to go beyond the English-speaking elite and reach the 'locals' in 'their language'. This was becoming even more urgent because there were political tensions in the colonies and it was therefore important to equip people with knowledge of and sensitivity to the customs and practices of the 'locals'. There was also an underlying belief, influenced by Lord Cromer's assumption, that student trained as civil servants with the necessary language skills here in England were by far better than those who picked up languages in Arab countries. For Reay immediate attention was to be directed toward trade and commerce, where Britain needed not only to catch up but get ahead of her European competitors.

Four decades later the Scarbrough Report was published in 1947. It took note of the post-War world, when colonies were gradually becoming independent of the Empire. The decisions were no longer made from Britain; emerging countries were in a rush to assert their own identity separate from the Empire. Scarbrough's priority was to maintain a moral influence on former colonies and international affairs. For that he emphasised that learning about others' culture, history and faith was central to the British interest:

'…a nation which does not possess a sound foundation of scholarship is ill-equipped to deal with world affairs, for scholarship is the source from which a knowledge of other countries and an interest in their ways of living is spread among the people. At a time when great efforts are being undertaken to make co-operation between the nations the basis of world peace and future prosperity, this foundation of scholarship has an importance which cannot be disregarded without injury to the national, and to international and imperial interest.' Furthermore, he points out that '…in the interests of good international relationships we cannot go on ignoring the manners and customs of the greater part of the world's population. Interest in other peoples, understanding of their history, their achievements and their characteristics, are a part of the foundation on which lasting international friendships can be built'. But significantly he suggests that the studies should 'flourish in this country' (pp. 24–25).

While Scarbrough put much emphasis on 'language as the indispensable foundation of scholarship' he was well aware of the fact that the development of 'non-linguistic subjects' had not progressed very much, and a need for 'special concentration' was stressed.

The Hayter Report 1961 (3) came at a time when most of the colonies became independent states, and noted that the 'world is now a startlingly different place from what it was at the end of the War'. He found that the British educational system had 'taken little account of these developments' and remarked that the 'centre of gravity of the world … has now moved outwards east, west and south, [but the education system] does not consider any area outside the United Kingdom; it still seems able only to see western Europe, with an occasional bow to north America and the Commonwealth' (p. 41).

The immigration from South Asian countries was at its height. Britain was increasingly becoming a plural society. The immigration issue, particularly the restriction of immigration, was hotly debated. Asian and African studies were Hayter's priority. He rightly emphasised that the 'universities have, a duty to meet in their own way the needs of the society in which they live.' He recommended 6 to 8 new centres of 'area studies' in several universities, and also that 'the School of Oriental Studies in Durham and the Middle East Centre in Cambridge should be supported and expanded as centres of Middle East or Islamic Studies…'. He also recommended that the expansion of study of South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Far East should be supported. (4) However, this need was defined more internationally, and the local immigrant communities who arrived in England, and their faith, social contribution and the future impact of their presence, were not the focus of concern of the Report.

Twenty-five years later, in 1986, the Parker Report(5) looked at the situation from a commercial and diplomatic perspective, which had not been directly addressed in the earlier two reports. Parker assesses the centrality of the languages which he believes crucial for any influence in the future. 'Language and area studies,' he argues, 'are all-important means to that end: i.e. success in diplomacy and commerce', and then he approvingly states: 'I believe that the sharper our gift of tongues the sharper our competitive edge.' He finds 'an unwitting retreat from Scarbrough-Hayter principles,' which in his view, as far as Asian and African languages are concerned, 'is not happening as a matter of policy. It is the result of no clear policy' (p. 4). Elsewhere Parker remarks that 'there has been no monitoring of the national stock of expertise in studies of Africa and Asia' (p. 11). He highlights the need for expertise in the Middle East, where he observes that 'at present the Diplomatic Service needs as many Arabists as Japanese and Chinese experts combined…' Regarding South Asia, he comments that the 'growing population of South Asian origin in the UK is another link, as is our aid programme. Despite the widespread use of English, HMG 20 will need some specialists in the main languages, and knowledge of local society, religions and culture – Britons in

the sub-continent are expected to understand the background better than other Westerners.' (p. 26, 27)

All four reports convey different perspectives on the world. They reflect the socioeconomic and political situations of their time. The common points in all four reports, which are in broad agreement as to what is required, are that:

a. Britain's economic and political influence could be maintained abroad and academic study could and should be strengthened to serve that objective.

b. Whatever is needed, Britain is not doing it.

This government sponsored report and its context are substantially different. It reflects the growing Muslim population in England and its growing interest in Islam as a faith and as a civilisation. But, crucially, the changing dynamics of relations between Muslims and the policymakers in the Western countries brought about by 9/11 and the London bombing in 2005 added a new urgency to the need to regard the growing Muslim population and their future role in the country as an asset and not a liability. Though Britain's influence abroad has to be maintained for its economic prosperity and diplomatic edge, it is now equally important that the examples of religious expression, languages and experience of Islam should also be explored beyond diplomacy and beyond the Middle East. This is necessary for at least two reasons:

a. The growing generation of Muslims in this country and in Europe are expressing Islam in a context that their parents' generations had hardly experienced. This experience is lived against the backdrop of Judeao-Christian tradition and under the shadow of modern secular culture. The dominant Muslim experience of their faith in England and its culture is inherited largely from South Asia. Others are inherited from Africa and Europe, both western and eastern, especially Bosnia and Turkey. Studies of these aspects of Islam and its expressions – theological and jurisprudential, historical and philosophical, mystical and puritan, economic and political, cultural and civilisational – and their relationship, need to be undertaken courteously but without loss of academic rigour. Any positive outcome of this debate has much wider implications, both in this country and in Muslim countries abroad.

b. Over the years, with the exception of a few of individual initiatives, the focus on Islam and its civilisation is still anchored in the colonial legacy and 21 turns around the needs of the diplomatic and foreign services. It is necessary to re-focus teaching and research programmes, and this country could take the lead

in Europe in this field. The centres in Europe are constrained, either for ideological reasons, not to enter into faith specific researches, or for reason of the negligible presence of academics in social sciences, including Muslims disposed and able to interpretate events in the new context. This country is, relatively, in a better position through its academic expertise and the kind of pluralist context in which it functions. However, over the years, this area and its potential have been largely unattended to. There is an urgent need for commitment from Government and the funding agencies and universities in particular, and from the Muslim community in general, to invest in resources and energies that can turn relations between Muslims and Islam in the West in a sustainably positive direction.

The basic sources for the research are the people that I have talked to. This method has been very beneficial. It gave me the opportunity to explore the interviewees' analysis of the situation in depth. I was able to probe their thoughts and to examine, to some degree, their assumptions regarding Islamic Studies, guidance to students, relations with the local communities, research needs and overall direction of the Islamic Studies for the future in universities. Students' views on issues related to this research, gathered through focus groups from all three types of universities: Collegiate, Civic and Post-1992, are incorporated.

The position that I am taking in this research is that Islamic Studies cannot be conducted in isolation from the wider society. It has an intrinsic relation to society in general and the Muslim community in particular. In this report, perhaps for the first time, an attempt has been made to include the views of academics, students, some past and present student leaders, Muslim chaplains or advisors, community leaders and universities' administrative staff, Muslim seminary graduates and Muslim higher education bodies, as well as those who run distance/online learning. Opinions were collected largely through interviews but also some written materials were submitted.

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THE CURRENT DEBATE

A great deal of recent debate about the provision of 'Islamic Studies' in the universities has moved to an apreciable extent towards the recognition that Islamic Studies provision needs to be more aware of it responsibilities within the country. One of the workshop reports published by BRISMES [The British Society for Middle Eastern Studies] in 2004 highlighted the fact that 'too few British undergraduates are going on to do graduate research and thus provide the next generation of university lecturers and language teachers'. Significantly it underlined a serious issue, that in Islamic Studies, 'the overseas graduate recruitment is a striking vote of confidence on their part of the quality of UK postgraduate training. It leaves the UK's human resources base in the subject critically weak.' Furthermore, it states that this is 'particularly worrying in term of the quality of Muslim community leadership and the credibility nationally and internationally of Muslim spokespersons'.(6) Within the universities, there are indications that Islamic studies are dispersed in politics and economy, sociology and anthropology, gender studies etc. Although the interest in Islamic studies is growing at various levels, it has not been picked up by the universities. Today provision for Islamic studies, with varying degrees of formal programmes, is being offered by institutions other than universities.

Increasingly, pressure is building at the lower level, where the students are searching for 'Islamic studies' programmes. While students explore the possibility of admissions in Collegiate and Civic universities, they are deterred by the notion of a limited 'pool of ability' factor. Also, perhaps, the shift of focus from 'Islamic' to 'Middle Eastern' studies has changed the priorities of universities and their intake. Though the 'new' Post-1992 universities are less selective in their intake and provide more opportunities than the older ones (7), the courses that they offer do not include 'Islamic Studies' as such, and very rarely Theology or Religious Studies. Rather more recently, some (e.g. Derby University) have even decided to close down their Religious Studies departments.

Motivations for the study of Islam vary considerably. No doubt sudents are motivated by the perceived resurgence of Islam, its socio-economic and political impact and its significance in world politics. However, as the Dearing Report points out, 'It is often true that '*people respond to opportunities that are available*' (8). Islamic Studies is no different in this respect. Individuals are motivated by the opportunity for careers in the social services, health and psychology, public finance and the contemporary politics and media. Students are increasingly looking for the add-on factor: this means they want to do psychology *and* Islam for example, or some other aspect of Islam with another subject that will give them an edge over others in the job market. These modular programmes in universities are so rigidly defined that it is difficult to find a department willing to take an interested student of medicine who wants to take a module, say on Muslim history. The add-on option is not available. Despite the modular scheme of courses in universities it is difficult to find a department that will allow a student to take an Islamic subject along with others such as medicine.

A quick overview of the current debate on the subject suggests that relatively little research has been conducted on Islamic Studies in higher education, and even less on its relation to the community, in particular the Muslim community. It is also revealing that in general the Muslim community has given some support to the higher education institutions run by the Muslim communities in the country, but has put almost nothing into the universities.(9) For example, 'UK Islamic Educational *Waqf*' (trust), established in 1991, supports Muslim Schools, parents and children. More recently, the report *A Survey of Independent Muslim Schools with reference to Government Funding* by Ashraf Makadam, published in May 2006, showed the growing number of schools in the country and the support they receive from the community and Government. Students in universities, however, are largely dependent on student Islamic societies, which is in practice a peer group network. There is very little awareness of the needs of university students, and they are largely left on their own. Occasional Ramadan connection is not enough; they need sustained support, both in leadership and financial areas.

The *Islam in Higher Education* conference, held in Birmingham on 29–30 January 2005(10), brought together scholars from many diverse areas. The organisers were self-consciously aware that they were organising the conference against the prevailing socio-political and religious climate, making a point of reaching out not only to academics but also to the Muslim community and UK society. Along with other topics, it included a discussion on computer-mediated study of Islam in higher 24 education. The conference also debated whether social science techniques are appropriate for the study of Islam, and pointed out that as the higher education

Islamic Studies provision is inadequate, Muslim institutions are addressing it. It also stressed the need for the academic world to 'connect' with Muslim institutions.

Another timely contribution came from Edinburgh University. A one-day workshop, 'Islam on Campuses: Teaching Islamic Studies at Higher Education Institutions in the UK', held on 4 December 2006(11), was conducted as a direct result of the announcement of this inquiry. The workshop discussed four broad themes: the discipline of Islamic Studies, Institutional Settings, Politics and Academic Practices and Funding. It clarified the subject and gathered opinions held by the participants. It noted that the 'issues relating to the future of Islamic Studies are assuming greater importance, both on university campuses and in the funding and political arenas. It is important to take account of and respond to the variety of interests involved' (p22).

The Al Maktoum Institute's report, *Time For Change*: *Report on the Future of the Study of Islam and Muslims in Universities and Colleges in Multicultural Britain* (2006)(12), prepared by Professors 'Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi and Malory Nye, highlights the problem that the Arabic and Islamic Studies departments are concentrating 'on out of date and irrelevant issues' and suggests that there is a lack of clarity on 'where and how the subject should be taught'. It emphasises strongly the multicultural aspects of British society and the need to adjust the understanding of Islam in this context. It has tried to shift the focus of Islamic Studies from an Arab and Middle Eastern perspective to that of a British multi-cultural society.

As far as Muslim students are concerned, they have voiced their concerns through a report published by the FOSIS (Federation of Students' Islamic Societies UK and Eire): *The Voice of Muslim Students: A report into the attitude and perceptions of British Muslim Students following the July 7th London attacks,* published in August 2005(13). Although the report focuses largely on the issue of the London attacks and the perception of Muslim students, it also urges the university authorities, in order to secure better understanding, should build closer links with the local Islamic communities. However, the absence of any mention of Muslim chaplains or advisors suggests that their role has not been recognised as key players in university life.

The situation of some Muslim women students is highlighted in a report prepared by David Tyrer and Fauzia Ahmad): *Muslim Women and Higher Education: Identities, Experiences and Prospects* (2006)(14). It makes the point that university has a lasting impact on the lives of Muslim women students, including their employment outcomes. It also emphasises that their time in university helps Muslim women 'to rationalise and think through their gendered, ethnic and religious identities.'

Further afield, in Europe, similar debate is taking place. The University of Copenhagen has produced two reports on *Islam at the European Universities* which underlines 'a collision' between two different types of authority. The reports suggest that there is a conflict between 'Islamic/religious' education and 'European/secular/humanist' education. The question that permeates the discourse is: Which is the 'legitimate' Islamic teaching – one that is framed within 'religious boundaries' or the other that frames religious belief or behaviou within 'secular/humanist' boundaries? The second report examines three publicly-funded institutions, two associated with universities, and a third which is an academy providing Islamic theological trainings.(15) The bottom line of all such discourse is first, how far Islam can be 'integrated' within the 'secular/humanist' ethos; and second, how the future leadership of Muslims can be formalised at higher educational levels so as to provide a 'controlled position' for Islam in European societies. The idea is that, validated by the authority of positions at universities, the discourse of Islam and the agenda of Muslims in the country could be shaped and influenced.

There is a perception, particularly in Civic universities in England, that universities (whatever the past) are now 'secular' in the way they view and disseminate knowledge, and are not obliged to entertain any overtly religious activities. Muslim chaplaincy provision, facilities for religious requirements, etc., were debated within the secular nature of the universities' charters. Christian chaplaincy, however, exists on university campauses – it is not directly funded by the universities but it is facilitated by providing rooms and even, and in some cases, residential allowance to chaplains – which suggests that the universities do accept a *de facto* religious presence on their premises. Universities cannot just remain isolated or insulated from belief. In reality they are at once both 'religious and secular'.(16)

The changing religious landscape of campuses has challenged the universities to accommodate the diversity of their students and staff. This change and the relationship between religion and higher education have been thoroughly 26 investigated by Sophie Gilliat-Ray in her book *Religion in Higher Education.* This

research brought the challenge of faith to the universities, perhaps for the first time. 'The challenge for universities,' she writes, 'is to build a collective corporate unity of belonging while valuing a diversity of beliefs and values. This is easy to advocate, but much harder to put into practice. There is a danger of ethnic separatism and/or cultural isolationism when faith groups do not have the opportunity to contribute in the recognised way – perhaps through a chaplaincy/ committee – to the shaping of the campus community.'(17). There are growing signs that universities are opening up to the fact that they have responsibility towards their students to provide the necessary support for faith-based needs.

Another, distinct and important, issue is that of perspective in relation to Islamic studies. For too long, Islam has been studied from 'outside in'; there is, however, an urgent need to look 'inside-out'. This need has always been tentatively and implicitly acknowledged, to the predictable annoyance of many in academia. The Student Study finding suggests that this is what they, the students in the universities, want to see provided. But, as my interviews with several religious and community leaders made very clear, Muslims' own house needs to be set in order, and for this Islamic studies as a discourse must indeed look 'inside out' and not just 'inside in'.

The debate and discussion about Islamic Studies in higher education has been conducted over the years in isolation and probably in complete ignorance of the community and their patterns of beliefs. Equally, the teaching of Islam and the mentoring of students, as mediated in *madrasas* is to a very large extent, oblivious of the realities around them(18).

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DEFINING ISLAMIC STUDIES

The definition of Islamic Studies as an 'independent discipline' has been widely contested. There are those who believe that Islamic Studies has its own core subjects and methodologies. The classical intellectual discipline of Islamic Studies is informed and sustained by understanding of the Qur'an, *sunnah* and Arabic language, and the civilisation that flowed from those sources. Understanding the core subjects, engaging with their civilisational outcomes and observing the interconnections between the two – this roughly defines the tradtitional scope of Islamic Studies.

However, there are marked disagreements about what Islamic Studies does or should cover. There are those who see Arabic language as the core of Islamic Studies, and who do not consider anthropological and ethnographic study of Muslim societies as a necessary or proper part of the Islamic Studies syllabus. There are others who believe that the teaching of Arabic and textual analysis does not address the issues facing Muslims in contemporary societies in different parts of the world. There is some consensus amongst the interviewees that while the knowledge of Arabic could form the basis for the understanding of the Qur'an and *sunnah*, some knowledge of other sciences has to be part of Islamic Studies. For example:

> 'Islamic Studies is not just one subject, you have to look at history, philosophy, theology, art and architecture, to mention a few. But I do believe it has a core, a classical core which we in the universities should insist on teaching. That classical core would include the Qur'an as the actual foundation of everything. It would include *hadith*, it would include some knowledge of *fiqh*, and then at least an outline of classical Islamic history right from the birth of the Prophet Muhammad through to say 1258 at least.'

> 'Islamic Studies is the study of Islamic sources, Qur'an and *hadith* and the related sciences such as *tafsir*, Islamic law and theology and …Islamic history. These are the fundamentals.'

> '…the religion of Islam in all its manifold aspects …obviously the Qur'an and the *hadith* and *fiqh*, sufism …Islamic history, not as a set of

battles 28 but the whole appearance and the flourish[ing] of Islamic civilisation…is Islamic Studies.'

'Islamic studies is related to all the subjects that deal with the Qur'an or the *hadith*, or the sciences related to the *hadith* or *fiqh*, and also …philosophy and history of Islam.'

Others also agree with this interpretation but with emphasis on Arabic:

'Islamic Studies is primarily [study] of the religious tradition of Islam, the religious thought and the religious practice of Muslims, and whilst that covers a very broad area, I see as essential to any good grounding in Islamic studies a knowledge of relevant Islamic languages, particularly Arabic ….'

There are other views that accommodate a much wider perspective of Islamic Studies and include not only the past but also the present, and which argue that it should not be defined narrowly.

'Islamic Studies means studies concerning Islam, covering all its aspects – cultural and religious, economic and political, social and philosophical, past and present, regional and universal. This study has now emerged from a melange of several disciplines into one well-defined discipline …'

'It involves the doctrine but also the lived experience; anything which affects the …beliefs, the history and the social organisation of Muslims would fall under Islamic studies. It shouldn't be narrowly defined.'

While such definitions seem to have a wide acceptance among academics, there are some who point out that, as a result of looking at Islam as lived and expressed in the past, current trends can be ignored:

'Islamic Studies has tended to be the study of the Arabic language and the Middle East in particular. One of the biggest drawbacks of Islamic Studies in Britain is that it is a bit too historically focused, so when it comes to things like the study of philosophy, theology or sufism we always look at historical texts and figures and very rarely look at the contemporary world and the question of what sort of trends there are in theology and in Islam today … particularly how diasporas have developed and how they have behaved … what are their relations with other types of communities, social coexistence and pluralism issues and so forth, remain overlooked.'

There is broad consensus, however the subject matter is defined, that study of it must be critical and rigorous.

> '…a critical study of Islam as a total civilisation. By critical I … mean analytical, in other words academically rigorous without necessarily being hostile … an empathetic study is required.'

The way that Islamic Studies in universities has been associated with – primarily in Collegiate and Civic universities – Arabic language and traditional Islamic sciences, suggests that these institutions are ill prepared to research and provide guidance on the contemporary socio-political situations at home. What is missing is a bridge to connect the textual and transient in the constantly changing social realities of a complex world. The point was made particularly forcefully by one inerviewee:

> 'The current teaching of Islamic studies in British universities is directed largely at the non-Muslim student body, and focuses primarily on historical, textual, literary, linguistic and theological issues. Some courses may occasionally touch on modern Islam and contemporary, political and radical issues, but by and large the curriculum in faculties … has no relevance, positive or negative, to the development of Muslim radicalism …'

Islamic Studies is perhaps uniquely identified as having a core subject-matter and a periphery at once connected and different. The study of the core subject-matter and its interpretations has produced, within the Islamic world, a huge body of literature and debate and influenced successive generations of Islamic scholars and society alike. They have defined the understanding of their faith, in a living context, without losing the connection of that context to the core subject-matter. This rich tradition has been accessible but has rarely been utilised in a context such as England. Islamic Studies should include the cultural context of the society as it has done over the centuries, namely Arab, Persian or Turkish. The Islamic Studies syllabus taught in the universities has largely failed to deliver contextual aspects of learning and knowing about Islam and Muslims. The two are taught in parallels – one 'manipulating data less interested in delving into history', the other oblivious of social realities and contented in its own shell. This point was highlighted by some of the interviewees:

> 'It converges upon two poles: you have either heavy Islamic theological understanding of Arabic and the Qur'an, or the other side [the approach] is tokenistic, you are sitting outside and looking in, and 'they' are Muslims, 30 'this is what 'they' do. It's almost

anthropological, that you are just watching a group of people. You don't really get the feel or experience of it. You are trapped between …something heavy, so in-depth, or something that is so superficial that it really is non existent.'

Regarding methodology, two broad areas of concern were raised. One, that Islamic Studies does not have its own methodology, rather it cuts across various disciplines and there is no common methodology that holds it together.

'It doesn't have the tightness like anthropology or economics and yet, we all know that it has to be by nature interdisciplinary and has to cut across various things.'

Secondly, there are others who suggest it is because Islamic Studies has, from its very beginnings as dsicipline in the West, has been moulded to an already existent cluster of teaching, assessment and research criteria, and therefore the Muslims' own methods, which in their view have a sound basis, must compromise. It is said that:

'Islam[ic Studies] …has acquired a kind of straight jacket because when Muslims started to join Islamic Studies programmes there was already a kind of formula that was set and standardised and they [have had to adjust to it] … Over the years Muslim scholars who entered the [world of] academia have felt … torn between this, which has already been established, and where they would like it to be.'

Some interviewees raised sharply the unwillingness or inability of Islamic Studies departments in English universities to research Islam in Europe. Study of that topic is conducted

ironically, in social science departments, departments of law; and in France in particular in political science. In very few [universities in England do] you find that an Islamic studies department has a focus on Islam in Britain and Europe, and that is coincidental because there happens to be an individual who is interested in that research.

This has been the case e.g. in Birmingham University. The 'Islam in Europe' unit was initially established in the 'Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations' at Selly Oak College in Birmingham by Professor Jorgen Nielson. When the Centre merged with the Department of Theology and Religious Studies the unit moved with it, but lost its focus once Professor Nielson moved elsewhere.

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WHO IS PROVIDING THE 'ISLAMIC STUDIES'?

Validation/accreditation path

Both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, students are attracted towards the basic ethos of Muslim Institutions, because they seem to offer a wide range of choices – both academic and vocational. These Institutions tend to be largely run by Muslim charities, and the courses offered here are under the scrutiny of universities' rules and guidance.

A large number of students are attracted to the Muslim Institutions with a validated programme. They give several reasons:

a. Students are attracted to such centres because they are looking for a kind of 'half-way house' in a positive sence. There they see their education will be different from what they have learned in a *dar al-'ulum*, and will not face the academic 'inquisition', as they perceive it, if they had gone to a regular university department.

b. Some students, while still doing a course in a university, take admission to such centres after they become aware of their Muslim identity. There are cases of students who have taken study leave to do a post-graduate certificate or diploma in Islamic Studies.

c. There are others who, after they become aware of their Islamic identity, attend weekly or fortnightly study circles in universities, or attend summer schools organised by Muslim organisations. They intend to continue their Islamic studies soon after they complete university degrees.

d. There are others who join such centres because they want to increase their Islamic knowledge. They have done some Islamic studies, either through a university or through a *madrasa*, but had little opportunity to continue their studies while they were busy in their family life. They lack the self-confidence to sign up for degree study at a university.

'I work extensively with schools, teachers and pupils on a regular basis …I have organised numerous events and exhibitions on Islam to promote RE, respect for diversity, and Islamic subjects in schools. I have been a member of the [city] SACRE since 2002 and a member of the 'Agreed Syllabus Conference Committee'. I am increasingly being called upon to teach/present Islam to all sorts of audiences. I feel [I need to equip myself] with the information necessary to address these opportunities in the best possible way. I hope the course will also consolidate my knowledge of Islam and train me with skill …on how to address the contemporary debate on Muslim issues in varieties of situations." [A part-time MA student and mother of three children]

Madrasas **and** *dar al-'ulum*

Madrasas and *dar al-'ulum* offer traditional courses on Islam, particularly on Qur'anic interpretation, *hadith*, Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and *kalam* (theology). These sciences are taught largely with reverence and devotion, but they are important sources of Islamic Studies and, one way or the other, play a significant role in the life of the Muslim community life in England.

Students basically want to get a traditional and devotional learning. They also learn skills related to jurisprudence (*fiqh*) largely relating to family life, inheritance, financial transitions and virtuous living. Largely, the students in England take this route of Islamic study usually after they have completed their GCSE. More recently, some seminaries now offer 'A level' courses in conjunction with a local college for their students. [See Appendix B]

Dar al-'ulum are keen to develop a bridge to degree level studies with universities. A significant number of seminary graduates have already entered the universities through different routes, and some of them have completed degrees and postgraduate studies. There is a small number of *'ulama* who have completed their MPhil/PhD in Islamic Studies-related subjects.

This is an area the universities have paid little attention to, and if universities want to have a sustained flow of students in Islamic Studies, they need to look into this sector imaginatively and innovatively.

It is interesting to note that few Christian seminaries and Colleges also provide either Islamic Studies or Islam and the West modules such courses in seminaries are offered as part of a wider awareness of other faiths some are evangelically motivated.(19)

> If the *madrasas* and the '*ulama* are partly integrated through to university structures then we will have a chance to create this synthesis because it needs that interface and endorsement to get the community involved … we need some kind of process of recognition, where our major seminaries become part of the mainstream. We have to walk down that line, and it may be too early to do that …but would also meet the requirements of critical engagement and analysis within the university context itself.

"As I was growing up, my aversion to Islam also grew, till I went to University. During my childhood I was surrounded by my community where misinterpretation and misrepresentation of Islam is commonplace, and women were subjugated and oppressed in the name of Islam. Naively I attributed these traits to Islam itself, and developed quite a feminist mind frame.

When I left home for university, I had made a pact with myself to be open minded, meet people of all backgrounds and learn about other cultures and traditions as much as possible. Hence I met and even became close friends with some Muslim students. I was forced to accept that not all Muslims were the same, and these sisters in no way compared to the Muslims I had met before. These sisters tried to practise what they preached. And these were ladies who covered themselves fully, some coming from very practising backgrounds, but were obviously not subjugated. That's when I realised what I had known from long ago but refused to acknowledge: Islam should [not] be judged by the actions of a handful of Muslims.

One day, on the notice board, I saw a poster advertising a talk on Islam. I decided to go. I decided to give Islam a chance, or at least to find out about it. In the next years of my uni life I attended more and more Islamic Society activities, and learnt a great deal about the religion I had grown up with, but without much knowledge. One summer I went to a ten day Islamic Study course, and this course had a profound effect on me. I experienced the elation of learning, the beauty in the etiquettes of Muslims, and in loving one another for the sake of the Creator.

The more I learnt about Islam, the more fascinated I became. In particular, being a medical student, the scientific miracles of the Qur'an

gripped me, and increased my faith. Then the idea was thrown at me, that if one believes in the Qur'an, and God and His Messenger, then the whole message must be taken, or there cannot be full faith. It took me a few years to begin to implement this in my life. I started wearing the *hijab* and changing the way I dressed and behaved, to name a few changes, but I still feel there is much more to do.

Four years into this journey, I began to feel that my learning had been rather haphazard as I had gone to talks as and when available, and a few courses here and there, and when exams didn't get in the way. I yearned to have a structure to my learning and fill in the gaps in my knowledge. I decided to take a gap year to study Islam.

I searched for places where I could learn about Islam. But with little success at finding what I wanted. I wanted to learn and understand the Qur'an and *hadith*, but it seemed I couldn't properly do so until I knew Arabic. I was told Arabic would make understanding the Qur'an easy, so I decided to embark on that. And I thought where better to learn Arabic than an Arab country, so I decided on Syria. But before that, I decided to spend half my gap year at the Markfield Institute of Higher Education to study the Islamic sciences. Although not exactly what I was looking for, I felt it would provide me with a strong background on the Qur'an and *hadith*, and the Prophet's life (peace be upon him). The latter six months I spent in Syria, and learnt as much Arabic as possible.

At the end of this I have realised a year is nowhere near enough to learn fully about Islam, and try to learn a language from scratch as well! Nevertheless, it has been a great start to what I hope will be a lifelong learning experience."

[Student of a Collegiate University]

Online-Learning and Distance Learning.

There is increasing demand and market for such learning. With very few exceptions, the large number of courses originate from outside the British Isles. The objective of the courses, assessment, fees and curriculum vary largely. The field has moved away from classroom and student-educator modules. Opinions on religious issues are freely available on the internet and websites [Appendix C]

The Open University is in the unique position of being a recognised and established university offering courses through distance learning and more recently through online-learning. Over the years it has provided courses on World Religions, Islam included. Recently, in 2005, part of the module that discusses Islam was under 'Conflict, Coexistence and Conversion' and from 2007 it will introduce 'Islam and

the West: the politics of co-existence' entirely on line, with a clear emphasis that it will 'look at the issues raised *for* Muslims living in the West, and *by* Muslims living in the West…' However it is significant that the Open University is taking a great interest in Islam in the contemporary world but its intake of ethnic minorities are between 8-10%.

Insiders' perspective *(views expressed by the people inside the universities)*	*Outsider's Perspective* *(views expressed by the people outside the universities)*
1. The way the Middle Eastern Studies have been defined is still carrying colonial orientalistic baggage … and [is directed towards] foreign students … [as] they bring in more money. 2. University is secular and 'within the Western university tradition we don't see it is our job to teach them the faith'; we see our role as to 'encourage to study of the faith as phenomenon'. 3. Islamic Studies programmes neglect completely Islam and its expression in South Asia. A large number of Muslims in this country have their roots there and yet there is no provision to study aspects of Islam relevant to South Asia.	1. Islamic Studies departments' and research crops up when there is a problem. It is like 'Russian Studies' during the Cold war and 'Irish Studies' when the Irish issue was a real political issue. 2. The Islamic Studies programme in Universities gives more weight to the study of Islam as it is perceived and gives little room to examine Islam from a believer's point of view. 3. Muslims should be trusted to develop an approach that reaches British academic standards. Muslims are capable of this and have a proven track record.

With the exception of postgraduate studies in Islam, almost all recruits to Islamic Studies within England are young male and female Muslims. There is a great desire and interest to enrol in Islamic Studies courses. However, there are problems of perception, about the accommodation and engagement of universities with the wider community and the Muslim community in particular. My discussions with some academics and those community leaders who take an active interest the Muslim community's academic affairs, suggest that there is a need for the community and the universities to find ways to co-operate and collaborate in order to widen the influence of higher education among Muslims.

'…you have either university-based departments which study the Muslim world without the participation of Muslims or you have Islamic centres which provide religious service to the Muslims but without reaching out to the wider society. You have two parallel universes…'

To summarise

There is a realisation that there is a need for the study of Islam and contemporary Muslim societies but that the universities in England and their departments are not addressing the need either adequately or properly. There are very few qualified scholars in the core subjects of Islamic sciences outside the Islamic world who can teach and supervise Islamic subjects confidently. The upcoming young Muslims in this country need to relate to their religious and cultural heritage, not only to the particular culture of their parents' and grandparents' communities of origin, but also to the multi-faith and pluralist society that left a lasting legacy in Europe through Spain. Islam needs to be studied through its many different legacies and in different contexts, not least the context of experience as a minority in such places as China, India, South Africa or Thailand, as well as the West. This kind of subject matter, if dealt with at all, is taught under sociology or anthropology, history or politics, but the teachers fail to make much of the underlying and unifying faith dimensions. The diverse cultures and practices Islam has influenced or engendered are indeed different, nevertheless fundamentally identified with each other through a common source. There is a need for substantial investment in syllabus design and in attracting qualified teaching staff, if English universities want to be ahead in this field.

Secondly, it is necessary to recognise the fact that the study of Islam without its believers is incomplete. It is not only the believers but also the nature of their belief that deserve serious attention. In a pluralist society like England it is imperative that we recognise the 'otherness' of the other. This means recognising others' self definition and the way they approach various subjects and disciplines. Plurality should exist not only at social and communal levels, but also at an intellectual and academic level. The understanding of a faith-based approach may pose some challenges to a secularised worldview, but to ignore and marginalise it on the assumption of an intellectual superiority that the 'other' considers unconvincing and unfounded, does not solve any problems – worse, it can breed resentment. The increasing interest in Islam and its civilisation – however unwelcome some of the reasons for that interest – should be seen as an opportunity and a challenge, and universities should be directly involved.

Thirdly, there is a constant growth and interest in Islamic studies. For example, a university representative told me that they have started an online programme on Islam, and in a very short period they have registered almost 2,000 students, 95% of these from Britain. The courses they offer are not validated by the university but are under its supervision. However, there are a growing number of Islamic study classes in the country that do not provide any quality assurance to their customers. Here the Muslim community as well as others have a responsibility to provide some kind of assurance that they will comply with the standard that the subject deserves. There is also an opportunity for universities to provide accreditation to such courses.

Finally, the universities are aware of the fact that a large number of Muslim students are going to be enrolling for quite some time to come.(20) It is necessary to provide both intellectual and spiritual space. Students need courses for their academic pursuits, but they also need an assured intellectual space where they can discuss Islamic issues freely, without inhibitions and intimidation. For young people, and particularly young women, that free space is a blessing. It is important that the universities do not succumb to 'outside' pressure of any kind that requires them to curtail that freedom. Student needs should be addressed spiritually, not dogmatically, and considered discerningly. This is a theme to which we will return later.

'This awareness of Muslim youth about Islam can not be separated from this growing awareness throughout the world. Within racist context this awareness is very empowering. To put it bluntly if you spent most of your time being told you are an ethnic minority you look around and you see the Muslim *ummah* and realise you are not an ethnic minority. A fifth of the planet can not be a minority and that changes [the perception]. There are one thing to be called 'paki' and 'wog' and another thing to be called a Muslim. This is a question of empowerment that comes through this.'

"The second and third generations [of young Muslims] are interested in keeping up [their connection with the culture of their parents] not that they want to become a fifth column in this country but because they have some cultural aspirations… we can convert that into becoming a British influence in the Muslim world rather than the other way round."

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UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITIES

Universities by and large are places where ideas are aired and contested, where students and teachers can debate even very controversial issues openly, encounter and understand other perspectives and make sense of what the other is saying. Diversity and difference bring out the best in students; they taste their freedom but also learn tolerance and respect for intellectual debate. Muslim students value the shared intellectual and social space they find on campus. Questions that they wanted to ask their mosque elders, community leaders and even family members, but never did, are usually raised here. Looking at the Islamic studies provision, a senior lecturer of one university said that 'the aim is to give an impartial objective view of the faith from an outsider's perspective, or even someone from within the faith community might deliver a course which aims to be as impartial and objective as possible. In other words it's not advocating anything, it's demonstrating and illustrating…' A university can in this way provide a service to a faith community, and help empower their growth. This report discovers that many Muslim students seek moral guidance through the Qur'an and believe that this could be provided in two significant ways; through pastoral support and through academic teaching from an 'insider', Muslim perspective.

In the context of a real and perceived decline in public adherence to relgion, can universities also nurture morality and ethics? Professor Steven Schwartz's analysis is positive in this regard, even encouraging. Speaking to a university audience in a debate on the theme 'Higher Education is more than a degree', he argues that '…students learn ethics by being part of an ethical community. Our universities should provide good models for our students.' He reminded them of their role and responsibility to the wider society. He concluded by saying that '…it is time for contemporary universities to once again articulate a moral vision of what they are trying to achieve, and then live up to it. If we fail, then we run the risk of becoming little more than utilitarian institutions. As we will be providing mainly private goods, there will be little justification for government subsidies and public support.'(21)

Many universities are typically located in the heart of communities, with strong connections with the local population. As one interviewee said, '62% of our students come from within a six mile radius; interestingly, another 20% of our students come from European Union countries other than the UK.'

Universities provide a physical place of meeting between staff, students and communities, but also between communities. People interviewed, both Muslim community leaders and university staff, would like a closer relationship. The universities are comfortably engaged in local regeneration and generic education like race awareness and human rights issues, or support for local charities where their role as facilitators has been appreciated, but what the Muslim community needs is for universities to provide much more support to empower those who want to provide services and support in the community.

Describing the relationship established in the mid-90s with the University of Birmingham for a B.Ed. programme, in conjunction with the local Muslim community, one of the former lecturer highlights:

> Students were looking for a career in teaching, especially in the primary schools, and many went on to become teachers. When I look at the type of students we brought in, they were looking for a place to get on to the higher education ladder. Some were not interested in the in-depth academic study of Islam or in education, but wanted to combine something else to build a career for themselves. I found the majority of the students were satisfied with the course content and the opportunity to get into PGCE and beyond.

The community saw this project as an important landmark in their presence in the city. The local Muslim community formed a committee to liaise with the university. The committee consisted of academics, religious leaders and community activists. The idea was to start B.Ed. and PGCE courses. One of the academic members was asked to design a draft syllabus which could be presented to the university. The syllabus was prepared and put through the university's acceptance procedure and was approved. The community began to publicise the course and its benefits, and encouraged financial support. As part of the agreement the community has agreed to sponsor a lecturer, and encourage young people to take up this opportunity. Once the course started it was received very well.

It worked very well; a large number of the intakes, perhaps 95%, were girls, and they completed their degrees. I feel that this is a great achievement. The degree was awarded by the university, its administration and quality assurance was provided by the university.

There was good cooperation between the Muslim community of Birmingham and the Birmingham University. However, increasing changes within the university, and particularly mergers between departments and colleges, have made it very difficult to sustain the teaching provision in this form, and the course was closed. It was not the community but the internal dynamics of the university that resulted in the closure of this provision. Referring to the difficulties in the university another staff member highlighted that:

> The university has made it increasingly difficult for us to do that. Linking with the community is something that on an individual basis you will find the majority of lecturers here do take very seriously. When I first joined, we did engage with large projects which were not primarily connected with the university life. But because of various layers of mergers we have become academics within the university, and the community-related aspects of our activities have rather diminished. It is not a lack of commitment, but of time.

There are others who argue that the way the community teaches religion in evening mosque schools and in some day *madrasas* is focused very narrowly on Arabic or the teaching of the Qur'an and the basic rites. They hardly ever teach general history or relate their own curriculum to contemporary society. The running of a parallel course providing this knowledge is not validated officially. All the time, effort and money invested in such schooling has no relevance when one enters university to do a degree. The improvement of relations between the religious sector and the university is therefore an urgent need. Giving an example in America, one of the interviewees said:

> The African American [case] is very good example. They tried running parallel knowledge networks telling stories about themselves, but until those stories and narratives become validated as part of the official knowledge they are considered to be cultish things.

The teaching of Islam also puts pressure on those who teach it. Islamic studies tutors are consciously aware that because they are not Muslims they have been seen with a certain hesitancy by the Muslim community. It is also possible that a Muslim student may have reservations about his/her tutor belonging to a different

denomination. However, some universities try their best to reach out to the community and assure them that their faith is not in any sense under attack. A senior member of a Post-1992 university describes the way he and his colleagues try to assure the community on the one hand, but also explain clearly the purpose and approach of the university:

> I feel it is true that we try to reach the community through our existing Muslim students. We give presentations to FE colleges, sixth form centres and even younger groups. In this sense the university is almost an evangelistic missionary or *da'wah*-oriented institution. I think this university would welcome its information to be disseminated through the *masjid*s or *madrasa*s. I would be more than happy to make provisions for staff to visit these centres, without expecting grand results, but simply to build bridges. We would encourage existing students to make those links. On the more formal academic side of things, how might one study faith in what is essentially a critical atmosphere where objectivity and precision are paramount? The way we teach Islamic studies here, whilst seeking to point out idiosyncrasy and diversity within Islam, we also indicate that there are profound unifying factors as well. So although we will raise questions, for example about the provenance and the origin of the Holy Qur'an, it is not to lead a student into rejection of their faith, but for them to be aware that such questions are posed from within as well as without. Hence in this context, and this would apply pastorally as well as academically, it is significant for a Muslim student not only to read the Gospel of Barnabas but also to hear contrary perspectives on the Gospel of Barnabas, because it may well be that through some *madrasa*s, through some very traditional *'alim*, he or she may perceive that document as the true *injil* or gospel, whereas to listen to a Christian voice is to indicate quite the contrary. So in that sense we are establishing immediately both interfaith as well as intra-faith dialogue. Our aim is that if a student graduates from here with their degree, which is a few years of study of Islam, it will not mean the demolition of their faith, but will have meant their enrichment, and to some extent the stripping away of what are cultural accretions defined as authentic. That is simply our goal that a person leaves here with a mature understanding of their own faith as well as an awareness of how they are seen by others in a dialogical sense.

The fear that a person who is not a Muslim cannot teach Islam has been raised by several academics, but they have also insisted that they see their role as a constructive mentoring of their students. They would like to see as many students as possible entering their departments.

> There may be a fear amongst the Muslim community that large portions
> of the people who teach Islam in higher education are from a non-
> Muslim background like me. I think that might be a residual fear, how
> can a non- Muslim teach my children about Islam? I don't know how
> prevalent that is. Universities are falling over themselves trying to get
> as many students as possible to enrol as part of the widening
> participation initiative. We are trying to do as much as we can for ethnic
> minorities in our departments.

The intra-denominational issues of the Muslim community are also sometimes
reflected in the classrooms:

> We have students who say in class, we shouldn't be learning about that,
> it's not Islam. With some of these people it's much more problematical
> dealing with the internal pluralisms within Islam than doing
> Christianity.

Several examples of co-operation between Muslim communities and universities
have helped to develop good relations. These are largely the work of people of good
will in the Muslim community and individuals in a university. But the potential for
co-operation between a university and a *madrasa* or *dar al-'ulum* has not been
tested. Such traditional providers and disseminators of 'Islamic knowledge' have
functioned independently and validated their work by their own criteria. Graduates
of such a system, as this research found, suffer two disabilities. Firstly, if they do
not have A levels or equivalent [and there are to our understanding a good number
of these], they have little chance of moving on to Higher Education. A *madrasa*
qualification rarely equips them to take on a university or professional syllabus with
confidence. Secondly, such graduates are left largely to their own devices when it
comes to finding jobs and opportunities within the system they have graduated
from; many would elect to become teachers or imams in mosques – a job market
that is (like the mosques themselves) becoming increasingly crowded. What is
required is to establish a clear, formal connection between such institutions and
opportunities in higher education. The qualifications attainable through higher
education should give those who attain them an opportunity to enter and compete
effectively in the job markets. Keeping in mind the course structures and other
considerations, this approach may help produce a confident new generation of
Muslim leadership in the community.

The conclusion that we draw from all this is that there is a moral obligation upon a
university to serve its local community. There are very good university facilities
available in the country, and there is a need for the Muslim community to focus on

43 making use of them. The irony is that that the universities that came forward to validate or accredit courses provided by the Muslim communities in England were largely those post-1992 and civic universities who do not have Islamic or Arabic studies departments, nor even Religious Studies. It is imperative that departments that have Islamic Studies connections should proactively and imaginatively engage with the wider Muslim communities. There seems to be some misunderstanding of the role of a university, as well as the ability of the community to rise to the challenge. There are avenues still open to connect the university to the community. One of the imams and lecturers in a university said: 'Areas such as counselling, [the] social services sector, computer technology, student services, chaplaincy, and teaching in schools – in all these areas there is sufficient room to engage with [the] *'ulama* and involve them.' It is of great importance to note that in connecting with the community, especially with the Muslim community, through community-oriented courses, 'the larger beneficiaries are the women.'

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CHAPLAINCY AND MUSLIMS

Chaplains/advisors are individuals of faith who provide advice and care adapted to a specific institutional context: a church, a prison, a hospital or a university. They may well conduct religious services but their particular and principal function is to minister in the broadest sense to anyone, of any faith or none, who seeks guidance and support. There is a clear and evident need on university campuses in England to support Muslim students, whose numbers have risen significantly and are projected to rise further. Now, there is no formal concept or procedure of ordination in Islam, nor is there a religious or bureaucratic structure in Islamic communities or societies that has the authority to determine for all Muslims what they should be and do. The perceived need for chaplaincy has led to the creation of a range of Muslim chaplaincy training programmes in Britain and the USA, underpinned by the hope that the concepts within Islam of women's rights, interfaith relations, business ethics and environmental ethics can, and should, be mediated through a combination of religious understanding and building of bridges with secular society. The Muslim chaplain or advisor is seen as a person with the skills and knowledge to give guidance which need not rest solely on religious doctrine and will also include the ability to listen and support with moral attentiveness and yet do so non-judgementally.

There are Muslim chaplains/advisors who are providing this service in universities in England. At times they serve as the only sustained link between students and university authorities, and make a substantial difference to the social and spiritual life of the students. As one chaplain (from a post-1992 university) explained, his role was to help students at all levels, whether they face economic crisis, family and relationship problems, or anxieties and worries in other areas, and 'to guide them in [such] a way that they can focus on their education'. This role becomes the more significant as all indicators suggest are that the number of Muslim students will continue to rise. Academics, community leaders and chaplains themselves agree that the essential nature of the job demands training and knowledge of their own faith and other faiths, and that it does make a difference to the social and spiritual life of students at all levels.

The provision of chaplaincy in collegiate universities sits reasonably well with their histrory and ethos. Most colleges fund the post and appoint an Anglican Christian or Dean of Chapel to fill it. In the redbrick or Civic universities, however, it is a different story. Their ethos is largely a secular one. Churches have made inroads in such universities through providing hostels for students away from home, and the universities have gradually adopted the appointment of chaplains with funding being provided by the churches. Some of the Post-1992 universities appear to be experimenting more boldly. The London Metropolitan University employs an imam as a full-time 'Muslim advisor', and more recently, Westminster University and Wolverhampton University have employed part-time Muslim advisors within the chaplaincy team.

The role of chaplaincy itself has been changing considerably, the churches' focus moving 'away from being primarily a ministry to vulnerable young students, to becoming a ministry to adults (both students and staff) in their place of work, be it university or college.'(22) Chaplaincy for Muslims has in general been both tentative and precarious. Muslims as a whole are only just catching on to the idea of chaplaincy. Muslim students in higher education through the 1970s and 80s were largely from foreign countries, the majority of the intake being mature students sponsored by foreign governments or universities. Their priorities were largely to find *halal* food, accommodation, and places for communal meetings and gatherings. The presence and role of chaplaincy was almost unknown to them and if they felt such needs they looked either to the local student Islamic society or elsewhere, and so Muslim chaplains/advisors were rarely appointed. The need was more recognised when local Muslim students began to arrive in higher education during the 1990s, but even then chaplaincy for Muslim students was largely associated with churches.

However, in the 1990s (after the first Gulf War and the Bosnian crisis), the demand for chaplains/advisors to cater to Muslims on university campuses began to make more impact. The nomination for Muslim chaplains came from within the existing chaplaincy teams, and the Muslim community was either uninterested in or unaware of the need. As Sophie Gilliat-Ray remarks: '…it appears that faith communities have not actively nominated individuals to liaise with universities and work with students. Most religious advisors are recruited due to the initiative of chaplains and students, rather than community-sponsored action.'(23)

However, the community did begin to take note when press advertisements for Muslim chaplains in the prison and hospital services began to apear. In 2002 training courses were initiated for the first time, at Markfield Institute of Higher Education, where the Churches' experiences were drawn upon in the preparation and assessment of the training.

The situation as it stands is interesting. There are now perhaps over 30 Muslim chaplains/advisors working in universities in England. Almost all of them, with only a few exceptions, are volunteers. Their understanding of their own faith and its pastoral role varies widely, and they are the least supported individuals providing chaplaincy ministry. They have, nevertheless, been required to advise university authorities, and to face occasional media outbursts on issues relating to terrorism, fundamentalism, government policies and student activities and groups. Once a Muslim chaplain is appointed, he or she is entitled to have an e-mail address, perhaps a car park facility, and to book a room for a meeting. Some Muslim chaplains/advisors exist only on paper and they hardly ever meet any students at their university.

Discussions with the chaplains/advisors suggest that they did not have any particular training for this job. Even imams who are volunteering for this post admit that they did not receive any particular pastoral training while in the *dar al- 'ulum*. The idea of service and help to those in need is of couse a very basic tenet of Islam, but it would be difficult to find a book that is written and adapted for pastoral care of Muslims in particular institutional contexts. There are various interpretations of the role of chaplains/advisors in higher education – from being a link between university authorities and students, occasional appearances (e.g. in freshers' week) and leading the Friday prayers, to being involved in almost every possible student matter to the extent of practically becoming gatekeepers for students. The lack of definite expectations about the role of chaplains/advisors has been the source of much confusion and some resentment.

Funding of Muslim chaplains/advisors was raised in our conversations. Three different approaches have emerged:

> First, an overwhelming number of current chaplains/advisors, academic staff and the local community members would like to see, chaplains/advisors being appointed and paid by the university for their work. As one of the interviewees said '… the university should pay for chaplaincy because it is a service provided 47 for the university [and] which benefits the university…'. They argue that this gives the chaplains/advisors legitimacy and a recognised role on campus. They

suggest that there should be full-time appointments where there is a large number of Muslim students and part-time appointments where the Muslim students are less numerous. Muslim chaplains/advisors, they argue, will be able to play a proactive role in generating activities and helping both students and staff at the university.

The second approach suggests that chaplains/advisors should be appointed and paid for by the local community. This would be in line with the current practice of the Churches, who argue that chaplains are then seen as neutral, and automatically establish credibility to work with religious persons within the secular university culture . As one said, they should 'have a voluntary position' at the university while being supported in some way by community funding.

The third approach would be to continue the voluntary way of working. A chaplain/advisor could be a senior student, perhaps doing a PhD (therefore more likely to be on campus for a longer period), who is a suitable candidate. This person would have something in common with the students and an understanding of their situation. He or she could be paid, a nominal 'wage', or expenses, but it should not be a full-time position. By contrast, a person appointed from outside, specially if full-time, '…is living a separate life from the student.' The community's role would be less that of providing funding for the position, and more that of providing basic help, e.g. accommodation and transport facilities, assistance if a student is in a financial crisis and if he or she requires special help during Ramadan.

Although there are very good reasons for not accepting any funding from the universities, a large number of chaplains/advisors suggest that depending on the Muslim community for funding would not be the right way forward. Two reasons given. One, the community paying a chaplain/advisor's expenses or salary may not necessarily appoint or continue to fund the people most qualified for the job. Two, the community's funding is in any case not a stable, reliable resource. If the sponsoring body changes its priorities, it may drop the support to the chaplain/ advisor, and that may affect the work in the university. On balance, the conclusion that I have reached is that the chaplains/advisors do provide a service to the university, and therefore it is the university that should pay for that service; and that chaplains/advisors having a secure and reliable income will in the long term help students and staff at the university.

> In the minds of some Muslim chaplains payment is not the only question. Rather, what also concerns them is recognition of their services and being accepted as a part of the university. 'Another difficulty that I feel,' a chaplain in a Post-1992 university says, 'is that if I leave this place I am not sure if a young Muslim would be prepared to [cary on doing] this job on a voluntary basis.' This was also highlighted by an imam who over the last 16 years led the Friday prayers in another Post-1992 university [where there is no Muslim chaplain] on a voluntary basis, using his own car and petrol and paying parking fees. He asked younger imams to help him out and they asked 'How much are you going to pay me?'

The interviews conducted with Muslim chaplains and community leaders suggest there are four broad needs of chaplaincy:

(a) Spiritual needs

People interviewed, both academics and chaplains/advisors, were asked why they think that the Muslim students need special attention. They highlighted the fact that the Muslim students have religious obligations, and if they are practising Muslims they would like to have their basic needs (such as prayer facilities and *halal* food) met. In one Post-1992 university for example, according to the chaplain/ advisor, there are between 4,000 and 5,000 Muslim students, of whom at least 300 to 400 students require prayer facilities. Prayer is not a huge issue on weekdays when students can adjust their time of prayers around the academic time-table, but on Fridays this becomes a problem. They want to attend the Friday prayers, but do not want to go out off campus to a local mosque as this means they may miss their classes.

(b) Counselling and emotional needs

A Muslim chaplain/advisor with over twenty years of experience in a civic university says the issues of accommodation, *halal* food, finding a place to worship, as well as problems with the [students'] supervisor, are commonplace. However, dealing with the emotional problems such as 'wanting to marry, they fall in love and girls ask about marrying a non-Muslim', brings a different kind of test for a chaplain/advisor. He also has to deal with mental illness problems. For example, the case of an overseas student 'who was mentally disturbed and admitted into a secure unit' required the advisor to contact the overseas relatives, who did not speak English. Dealing with the emotional problems of students he finds 'very difficult'. But the following example seems to be even more serious.

"Whilst this university is largely white, and most of its ethnic minority intake is from overseas, there are a growing number of Muslim home students attending. They, along with the overseas Muslims, have needs that can only specifically be fulfilled by a Muslim chaplain on campus. Local imams do not necessarily have the skills or cultural semiotics to deal with campus issues; the appointed chaplain is unknown, hence suggesting that that he is not proactive. It appears that the Islamic society offers pastoral care to itself, informally. Chaplaincy care, however, needs to be provided independent of the Islamic society, under the auspices of the university. Whilst the Christian chaplains concentrate more on British students' issues and perhaps need [to organise] more activities for overseas students, the reverse is true of the Muslim community: the overseas Muslim population is stronger than the home students, who therefore need a support system. This has been more evident as a result of three cases, amongst others, which have surfaced at the university: the first involved a British-born student whose domestic setup meant that she was discriminated against by her father, and not allowed the freedom to stay on campus and study late in comparison with her brother who was allowed to live away from home. Concerns about trust, preservation of religious and cultural identity, family structures and expectations, could only be dealt with by a Muslim chaplain. The second case involved a series of emails and letters that had been sent to the Islamic society by a Muslim male student a few years earlier, voicing fears, concerns and the need to speak to someone about homosexual tendencies. The student society had been unable to support the student. There was no record of him having sought help via other faith chaplains. The lack of help available to this student was a serious example of the gap that is left by chaplaincy services that do not have Muslim representation. A third and final case in hand is that of a Muslim female student, who availed herself of the opportunity of a female Muslim chaplain trainee, to talk about her rape by a Muslim male student two years earlier on campus. Whilst there was little practical resolution that could be offered two years later, the moral and cultural support was invaluable, in simply listening to her cultural reasons for not reporting the crime, her resentment with God for not 'being there' for her, her distrust of Muslim men, and how to cope from a faith perspective."

[Raana Bokhari – Member of the Executive Board, Association of Muslim Chaplains]

(c) Educational (religious specific) needs

With the help of the Islamic society, one chaplain highlights his role regarding students' Islamic education in this way: 'We arrange lectures, seminars for the students on different topics, that's the usual thing, [but in addition] we [have started

lessons] on the Qur'an. Some people want to learn Arabic, … and sometimes we have conducted intensive courses in the study of the Qur'an, hadith and *fiqh* as " " 50 well. To update knowledge of Islam – there is great interest and longing for knowledge … and we try to cater [for it] as much as possible. I make myself available to the students even before they come, by sending them an introductory letter, and when they first join [the university] I introduce myself … and I am there to help them. They know my e-mail address and they know my telephone number and home address, so people do ring and send e-mails to seek help.'

The work of this individual, and the trust that he has developed over the years with the students and the university has led him in other related directions: he has also served on the Equal Opportunities Committee of the university.

(d) Need for continuity and point of contact

University students are non-permanent: they come and go. What is needed is a point of contact for newcomers and continuity for those who have yet to finish their education in the university. As one chaplain/advisor said, the role of a chaplain is to 'balance and stabilise'. They are also the point of contact between the university and the community. Sometimes a chaplain becomes the key figure of continuity and contact. For example:

In one Civic university a local Muslim chaplain has played a significant role. He was involved in the Islamic society while he was a student and maintained a good relationship with the chaplaincy. After he had completed his education he volunteered to become a chaplain/advisor and worked with the chaplaincy team on a regular basis. He finds having a full-time job elsewhere and attending the needs of the students not easy. He has to juggle not only the duties of being chaplain but also managing the hiring of a room for Friday prayers, Eid functions and occasional conferences and meetings. 'Ideally a part-time chaplain appointed to deal with [such] affairs would have been better', he says. He appreciates the support that he has received over the years from the university authorities and students' union.

Difficulties of inter-faith chaplaincy

Working in a team is not easy and working in an inter-faith chaplaincy may sometimes be particularly trying. 'I should admit that I have not been very happy with … the chaplaincy … in the university. In the last committee meeting I did raise this question.' The non-Christian chaplains felt they have not been consulted on a number of issues and 'left out of the loop'. They then took a decision that they would meet more often and one of them would represent non-Christian chaplains in any future committee meetings.

Concerns have been raised by Muslim chaplains/advisors and community leaders. Their very close proximity to the Christian-dominated chaplaincy brings its own problems. If the Christian chaplain is seen to be too much of 'liberal' in his/her own religious tradition, that has an effect on fellow Christian chaplains who might disagree with him/her. Those who disagree, distance themselves from individual concerns and also from the chaplaincy itself. In some cases the chaplains of other denominations, with intra-denominational issues, have different ways of dealing with Christian students on campus. This clearly has an impact on Muslim chaplains/ advisors.

If, on the other hand, the Christian chaplaincy leader or team is strongly inclined to fundamentalist/exclusive methods, they may see the service as exclusively Christian, which can lead to the exclusion of the Muslim chaplain from the wider workings of chaplaincy. In one case in a Civic university, for example, the Muslim chaplain is not allowed to join the chaplaincy team, and regards it as 'not a multi-faith chaplaincy'.

Perhaps such a scenario has prompted some academics to argue that a complete reliance on chaplaincy is not a wise move for Muslims. Maleiha Malik from Kings College London makes that case very strongly.

> "It is important that higher and further education institutions and Muslim advisors liaise with Muslim students directly rather than mediating their work through the existing Christian chaplaincy services. I believe that Muslim student institutions should develop their relationship with mainstream institutions directly rather than relying on mediation through existing structures for accommodating religions which have been developed to [suit] the very different case of Christianity in Britain. Islam and Muslims face a very different set of challenges. In terms of chaplaincy, my own experience is that Muslim students have different types of problems in relation to their religious needs in higher education to those that are addressed by Christian chaplaincy.
>
> It is therefore important to have an independent voice for Muslim students on campus. The way to achieve this is through the equal opportunity structure which will often be a more room appropriate framework for Muslim student issues than the interfaith paradigm. Previously the Race Relations Act 1976 encouraged Muslims to fit into a race paradigm. However, equality law now offers Muslims the ability to present their claims 'as Muslims' and therefore as a distinct social and religious group. This trend will be strengthened when the Government amends the equalities framework to introduce a public duty on public institutions (such as higher and further education institutions) to promote equality " 52 on the grounds of religion. This will be an invaluable opportunity for Muslims to be included in consultation and discussion about their distinct needs in higher and further

education. This direct consultation with Muslim students and their representative organisations can provide the basis for a reasonable discussion between Muslim students/their representatives and the University administration. This discussion will provide the foundation for reaching a consensus about whether and how Muslim student needs can be accommodated in higher and further Education. This type of open discussion and direct negotiation with Muslims, rather than discussions mediated through existing chaplaincy frameworks, can provide the basis for (a) open and democratic discussion; (b) compromise; and (c) an agreed settlement that does justice to the sometimes conflicting needs of (i) Universities, (ii) Muslim students, and (iii) other majority and minority students whose rights on campuses also need to be accommodated by higher and further education institutions.

It is also important to ensure that Muslim student issues are dealt with in the context of the equalities framework because, unlike majority religions, there is an additional issue where Muslims students face a complex range of issues. Sometimes these relate to their religion but often there is an overlap between religion/faith issues and race/culture and ethnicity. The equal opportunities paradigm provides the ideal framework within which these overlapping sets of issues can be addressed in a consistent and coherent way.

In my own personal experience, I have noticed that those who deal with student issues on campuses are becoming more sensitive to the way in which some students face an overlapping set of problems that are related to religion/faith, race and culture. Equal Opportunities officers and student counsellors are becoming more open-minded about the fact that to perform their pastoral work for Muslim students they will sometimes need to address the role played by religion/faith. I recently sent a young Turkish Muslim female student who was going through quite a bad depression for student counselling. Some of the issues that were relevant to her case related to her relationship with her parents and her family background. The student counselling service ensured that they found a counsellor who had experience of working with issues of Muslims/religion/faith.

There should be a mainstreaming of Muslim student needs into the existing equalities and student services provided by Higher and Further Education rather than relying predominantly on chaplaincy services. The prospect of law reform and the forthcoming introduction of a public duty to promote equality on the grounds of religion provide an ideal paradigm for accommodating Muslim student needs in Higher and Further Education.”

[Maleiha Malik, King's College, London]

Conclusion

As a result of consultation with Muslim chaplains/advisors and community leaders, there was agreement that all universities should provide as a matter of urgency to explore the possibility of employing Muslim chaplains/advisors on a full or part-time basis. The numberof Muslim students will increase manifold in the future, and their cultural and religious specific needs should be catered for. In the selection process of a Muslim chaplain/advisor, the Muslim student body should be represented. All Muslim chaplains/advisors employed in the future must have a generic qualification, which must equip the trainee with pastoral care skills and an overall understanding of the workings of higher education. Every effort should be made to raise the standard of Muslim chaplain/advisors' training, especially, in the long term, the 'five qualities' highlighted below. This should help to direct and improve the training process. The Muslim community should use their resources to help strengthen the chaplaincy provisions, especially in the production of necessary guides and reading material relevant to pastoral care. The pastoral care should also be included in the training of future religious leaders, especially in *madrasa*s, in the community. At least once a year Muslim chaplains should meet to share experience and discuss the issues and concerns on the campuses. There should be provision for participation of other faith communities, student services and other relevant agencies.

QUALITIES REQUIRED OF A MUSLIM CHAPLAIN/ADVISOR:

There is a consensus among the academic staff and community leaders, as well as amongst the Muslim chaplains/advisors themselves, on the qualities that a Muslim chaplain/advisor should have:

1. A good knowledge of Islam, preferably some kind of formal Islamic qualification.

2. Understanding of British society and university culture.

3. Understanding of other faiths and willingness to engage with them positively.

4. Communication and counselling skills and willingness to listen and be approachable.

5. Being open to all denominations within Islam.

"After spending several months working in a Christian chaplaincy within higher education I have learnt to understand the importance, and serious need, for inter-faith chaplaincy within universities and colleges. The role of a chaplaincy can sometimes be understood in its narrow sense – to provide emotional and pastoral care to students. However the development of learning centres and the increase in the number of students from various cultures and countries has led to a gap in the provision of chaplaincy care for students and staff alike. The historical or traditional understanding of chaplaincy is no longer sufficient to cater for the needs of the increasing levels of support required by the chaplaincy users. For example students deal with complex financial systems, which has increased since the re-evaluation of fees and grants, this means students are under greater financial pressure. The chaplaincy's level of support therefore extends beyond pastoral care in a narrow sense [and] needs to include advice and information from those knowledgeable in the field of understanding different faiths in a world that is increasingly preoccupied with faith identities. Raising awareness and understanding of issues relating to the entire student community, understanding Islam as a religion, including myths surrounding Islam as a threat to campus security, are all key areas in which it would be useful for chaplains to be skilled. A cohesive inter-faith chaplaincy in further/higher education should proactively establish sound relationships with all university religious and cultural societies. In order to establish such extensive networks the chaplain(s) must ensure [that] a safe and welcoming environment exists within the chaplaincy, being aware and sensitive to the needs of people of different faiths and cultures is key to the success of an inter-faith chaplaincy. Broadly, the role of a chaplaincy is to welcome [people from] all quarters of its jurisdiction, to ensure [that] people recognise that as a student or staff member the chaplaincy is for them to use at their discretion. Therefore in order to cater for all sections of communities the chaplaincy must adhere to religious and cultural sensitivities by ensuring the needs of the Hindu, Jewish, Sikh and Muslim communities are met when it comes to dietary requirements, to understand the religious significance around worshiping issues, to provide appropriate space in order to allow worship. The chaplaincy I worked at had a culture of meeting and 'catching up'; it seemed the pub played in an important role in this. However, considering chaplaincy is based on faith essentially, and some religions prohibit alcohol,in order to encourage and engage people of all faiths to participate in the extending of this unit it would have been beneficial to give the pub less of a focal role. One way of doing this would be to meet in the chaplaincy lounge (which would also raise the chaplaincy's profile at the institution I worked in) and to provide refreshments etc. so that people felt welcome and understood. In turn this would help the chaplaincy unit to be perceived as a professional outlet, caring for both people of faith and no faith, an all encompassing system of care, one which does not discriminate nor one that purports prejudice – something which all chaplaincy's (within or outside of Education) should aim for. "

[Sughra Ahmed – Secretary, Association of Muslim Chaplains]

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TRAINING OF STAFF

As regards training for staff in universities in relation to Muslim students and staff needs, a number of issues were raised. As Muslims are constantly in the news the discussions that go on around 'Islam' are pervasive. It is always difficult to distinguish information from misinformation and disinformation about Islam and Muslims. The atmosphere off the campus has a direct bearing on the university. As the National Union of Students' guide remarks: 'the world in which we live and study is shaped by relationships developed outside lecture halls and libraries. In a context where we have a "war on terrorism" and racism, these have had a clear impact on campus life, affecting Muslim students in particular' (24) But public awareness among non-Muslims of Muslims and their faith has not progressed at all, despite the voluminous public attention given to 'Islam'. Departments where teaching of Islam is in place have very rarely been approached by their universities to provide generic training about Islam to their own staff. However, there is increasing demand, from agencies outside the university – such as social services, police, media – on any department that has even a remote link with teaching Islam to provide instant answers to some problem in hand. They approach such department staff in the expectation that they will get an unbiased opinion as opposed to a view obtained from a member of the local Muslim community.

> There is always more that we can do. About this place – people attempt to remind the rest of the university about how to deal with Muslims because, not only do we have a large number of Muslims students, we are seen as the model as how it should work. We are asked continually by the university for advice over this or that. Students from this country or from abroad, [of] Muslim background [from] within this country or abroad, we the staff do [care work] on an individual basis. This shows that there is a need and I think that the thing which we could do, which would be more effective, is if we were to work towards some sort of national awareness training for university staff particularly administrative staff. It could go through the union or it could perhaps be done more effectively as part of the universities' personnel development. All universities would have personnel development [programmes] which would require to attend such trainings. If you could feed in a certain element of training for administrative staff about

general procedures about how to deal with Muslims students – [about] specific problems that [they] might face – and where to go for information, [and for] things they don't have. I think that would be something very useful. The fact that we get asked questions all the time shows that there is a need but we are not always qualified to deal with the specifics of a particular case. And we do it for the police here – interestingly enough we do it for an outside body! ... [it is something] which we can contribute towards the running of the university. And if there was some sort of national standard or a national programme that anyone could adopt that would be very useful you could somehow tailor it towards the particular need of your institution that would be really useful

Another comment highlights the issue of intolerance:

My own experience is that there is relatively little understanding because of that insensitivity creeping in regarding their dealings with groups of Muslim students [or] indeed Muslim staff. And so I suppose a greater effort is needed, in terms of providing that kind of awareness and training that would sensitise the staff to the needs and issues that Muslims might have. I think that there is now a greater awareness of Islam because of what has happened since 9/11 and the development globally. But it's patchy and I think that the dissemination [of such information as there is] is also relatively unstructured and not necessarily followed through, certainly in terms of the impact, because quite a bit of the material and the knowledge that is disseminated can be counterproductive and has been counterproductive. Hence the sort of stereotype has become more prevalent. There is certainly the need to try and reduce the kind of information becoming popular and being disseminated. I don't think there is enough of an effort to actually do that. So while people constantly talk about Muslim society operating in an intolerant [way], there isn't that much being said about Islamaphobia. This could, in a sense, act as a trigger, as a phenomenon, to which the certain intolerance and the extremism that people are talking about, could be a reaction to. I think that there is an argument that suggests quite a bit of the intolerance and extremism, if you like, that is manifesting in university environments. It is in response to the kind of Islamophobia that exists in a variety of ways, either individually or in an institutionalised form.

One of the valuable services provided by the Higher Education Academy which has 24 subject centres of which Philosophical and Religious subjects are a part . This was the new name of the earlier Learning and Teaching Support Network. Although

the training is not the specific objectives of the service and it has recently produced a series of *Faith Guides* including one on Islam. It was not targeted towards a religiously aware sector such as Religious Education teachers. Rather, its intended audience are people who are involved in some way [with and] would like to know more about a particular faith. 'It is not going to tell you everything' says the general editor of the series, 'but it basically as user friendly accessible introduction which points the way in order to appeal [the readers] to look further.' This tool has helped particularly at a time of heightened awareness of Islam and Muslims, particularly in universities.

> "I joined this university in 2001 to look at developing classes in diversity, within the university particularly in staff, in terms of providing learning type of experiences and others along the whole spectrum. One of the things that I have set up is seminars to look at specific aspects, and we did some seminars looking at race equality, staff and student issues. Then last year [2006] we did in fact two very well attended seminars on Islam. The first one was led by one of our Muslim employees here but [someone who]works with the students and I asked him to run a seminar looking at Islam. He provided a very useful session; people found it very useful; and they wanted it a bit more in depth of information. That went well, and the one that we did is 'what do we know about Islam' and he called it *Introduction to Islam* and explored Islamic values in British life and the workplace and also gave some common misconceptions, but unfortunately because it was such a short session there were quite a lot of things left unexplored. At that session we had about 60 people came from all departments. We had some people from X that provide health and safety officer [training] within the university – obviously they were Muslims – and they provided quite interesting debate, involving academics, students, people from research area, admissions, accommodation and marketing. 'All Muslims [are] part of the university' seminar was again very well attended. People wanted more than just an introduction. That was in March In July we had a seminar attended by 80 people and [it] was quite popular. And the thing is what happened at the end of the first session was that people said we want to know more things, we want to know about this that or the other. So we invited them to ask questions and they did, a lot of the questions showed a lot of naivety. So this time it needed a different approach so I asked for the local imam to come along to lead the sessions, and he was very good actually. It was a very long session and very well attended. But at the end of it I think people went away knowing a lot more than they did."

[Based on telephone interview]

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FINDINGS FROM THE STUDENT STUDY

The student study recorded discussions with Muslim undergraduate and postgraduate students from eight universities in England, using focus groups. The three areas of discussion surrounded types of information available to students about Islam, with a focus on university courses and modules; Muslim student pastoral care needs and student-community links. [See the full Report - Appendix G]

Information about Islam

The majority of Students interviewed during the research were not studying Islamic Studies degree courses, however many have some experience of being taught about Islam related topics at university, under various subject headings, such as Politics, Middle Eastern studies, History, Sociology, Social Policy and Media Studies. The main criticism of courses was the lack of depth of information taught about Islamic teachings and lack of relevance of the course contents for Muslims. The courses on offer were generally viewed as 'Muslim studies' or the study of Muslim communities rather than Islam.

The majority of the universities offered some courses which explored themes within Islam or modules about Muslims. Although these were available, students generally did not seek them out or go out of their way to attend such classes voluntarily even when they did know about them. The main reason given for not doing so was lack of time available to students to sit in on extra modules. However some students expressed reservations about attending courses due to being viewed negatively by other students, as the only Muslim student in the class when discussions became heated.

All students saw the value of studying Islam in a formal setting yet this question generated a significant amount of debate when it came to preferences on where to study Islam. Current courses available at English universities with a more 'secular' focus were seen as worthwhile and having intrinsic value in themselves, however the overwhelming majority when asked about learning Islam to gain practical understanding of their religion for implementation on a daily basis, agreed that 59

they would not go to a University for this purpose, but would prefer to study under a Muslim scholar or at a Muslim centre of learning.

The option therefore of Universities in England employing Muslim scholars was popular among the students. The students thought that this would be a better approach to Islamic studies for everyone not just Muslims, but non-Muslim students learning about Islam. This was seen as something that needed to be positively encouraged by universities. What was suggested by most students was to not neglect the more 'secular' aspects of learning such as Islamic history or Middle Eastern politics but to incorporate those into an all encompassing Islamic Studies programme with the theological aspects of the course being taught by Muslim scholars.

The vast majority of students stated that within the University their main source of information about Islam came from the Islamic Society through organised seminars, books and leaflets in the prayer room or university mosque and through speaking to Islamic Society members, rather than by attending university courses. The internet was also cited as a key source for information about Islam among the students, although there was a general awareness and agreement that care needed to be exercised when accessing information in this way.

Muslim Student Care Needs

Muslim students in the UK often face difficulties both as young people in a society increasingly demonstrating Islamophobic characteristics and as a minority within institutions often ill equipped to meet their needs as a faith community. The idea of having a Muslim chaplain/advisor was seen as important for all universities regardless of the size of the Muslim population due to the specific care needs and discrimination Muslim young people and students encounter. The chaplaincies already in existence at universities were seen as inadequate for meeting the needs of Muslim students. The main reason given was that they did not understand that Muslim students could face problem that differed from other students.

Currently student Islamic Societies were shouldering the burden of caring for needs of their fellow students which meant that a select number of students were over worked and stretched. There were numerous examples of how committees were providing pastoral care to the Muslim student body at their universities. English universities need to acknowledge that Muslim students have many care needs which should be dealt with by the university through appropriate chaplaincy provisions, rather than these needs being shouldered by a small number of students.

There was general agreement among all the students in the study that the Muslim chaplain or advisor should have an understanding of student issues and university life, be approachable and have a certain level training in counselling. However it was also agreed that the Chaplain should have a good knowledge base of Islam. The key characteristics students believed the Muslim chaplain/advisor should possess are that he or she is a learned person in Islam; should have an understanding about life in England and issues that face young people and students; be approachable with counseling skills/ training and finally; possess an ability to work with non Muslims in order to negotiate and with work the university successfully. Further to these characteristics, a key factor raised by students in the study is that the chaplain should be independent from the wider Muslim community and accountable to University administration.

In addition to Chaplaincy provision other care needs were raised by students. Some universities not been provided with adequate support in terms of addressing Muslim students' religious and spiritual needs. Lack of prayer facilities and Friday prayer provisions were two key care issues that were raised by some of the students. Another issue that was raised was the provision for *halal* food on campus. Some universities do provide *halal* food provisions and this was particularly problematic where universities are located on campuses outside of main town and city centres and limited Muslim outlets close to the university and even within these centres.

In addition to facilities and faith community provisions there were some concerns that were raised by students which require attention. These areas should be addressed as part of pastoral care for Muslim students. None of the students were asked directly about the issue of 'spying' or whether they felt marginalised either within society or at university, yet these topics were raised in some of the focus groups despite not being issues that the researcher set out to investigate. There were some examples of how the students felt their concerns regarding faith issues were not fully appreciated by members of staff. There were also examples of where students had been picked out by staff because of their faith.

Student-Community relationships

Links between students and the local community were generally not described by students as being strong. However this differed from university to university for varying reasons. Some universities had a mosque close by to their campus which meant students attended the mosque regularly and made strong links with locals 61 as a result. One university in the study is located in a city with a very small Muslim population, therefore potential for links were not there. However, there were some examples of how links between students and local communities had benefited

students. Students felt that in theory it would be good to have links between universities and local communities but believed this could be difficult due to an acknowledging that communities are often internally divided and also lack of ability on the part of communities to support students due to high levels of disadvantage experienced among some of the Muslim communities surrounding university campuses.

This was seen as a potential role for a Muslim chaplain/advisor to have. Links with the community were seen as an area which had potential to be developed. When discussing Muslim disadvantage and underachievement, students at over half the universities felt there was potential for current university students to make links with children in their surrounding Muslim communities and assist in mentoring or encouraging young Muslims to go to university. Although this was an area which required more attention than this study is able to provide, there were many possibilities for students working within communities and helping to inform policy development for targeting young Muslims and their communities in encouraging greater educational attainment and participation in post compulsory education. Speaking from experience students in the study were able to add insight into barriers to education within Muslim communities.

<div align="right">[Summarised by Dr. Serena Hussain]</div>

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TRAINING OF STAFF

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There is awareness that the universities, through their different departments which teach the study of Islam and Muslim societies, are not addressing the subject-matter properly or meeting the growing number of Muslims students. The Islamic Studies syllabus needs to look beyong language and classical texts and/or area studies, particularly those anrrowly focused on Middle East. Both the underlying unity and the evident diversity of Islamic culture and civilisation in different epochs and different regions of the world deserve proper attention. The growing population of young Muslims in this country need access to the unfiying and diverse legacy of Islam, including its legacy in Europe, and to come to some understanding of their faith as practised in different contexts, perhaps especially contexts of minority existence, and not just to somehow rehearse – in an uneasy alliance with Britishness – the local customs of their parents' or grandparents' communities of origin. Unfortunately, there are very few qualified scholars who have the expertise to teach and supervise the core Islamic subjects and relate them to their various social contexts.

   i. Therefore, with some urgency, the relevant departments of Government, the funding councils such as the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), and the Muslim community, should invest in a long term project for the establishment of intensive language courses, research studentships, postgraduate awards, collaboration with universities abroad, and the appointment of suitably qualified staff.

   ii. Where practicable, partnership between two or three universities should be encouraged to share funding and, if need be, to establish a Centre especially for the purpose.

2. There is a need to link the provision of Islamic studies with job opportunities. Openings in the jobs market – such as banking with ethical ethos, teaching,

chaplaincy and counselling courses etc., – need be created and then widely advertised. Such courses in the past have attracted a significant number of people, including imams and also women. Courses should be prepared keeping in mind the religious and cultural specific needs of the community. Universities and Further Education colleges, the social service sector and Muslim charities should meet to asses the needs and methods of delivery. The Department of Education and Skills could and should facilitate such meetings.

3. Islamic Studies courses currently being offered at Universities in England should adopt a greater focus on theological and civilisational aspects of Islam which are relevant to practising Muslims. As a result courses will also provide non- Muslim students with the opportunity to gain a greater insight into the issues within Islamic doctrine that are particularly pertinent to Muslims . There is also a need for Islam to be offered as an elective option, and wherever it is possible departments should be fully resourced to provide such add-on modules.

4. Students at universities should be given the opportunity to study under competent scholars of Islam who have been trained via traditional Islamic routes and in subject areas which are of particular relevance to Muslims.

5. All universities should consult as a matter of urgency to explore the possibility of employing Muslim chaplains/advisors on a full or part-time basis. The number of Muslim students will increase manifold in the future, and their cultural and religious specific needs should be catered for.

6. All Muslim chaplains/advisors employed in the future must have a generic qualification, which must equip the trainee with pastoral care skills and an overall understanding of the workings of higher education. Every effort should be made to raise the standard of Muslim chaplain/advisors' training, especially, in the long term, the 'five qualities' highlighted in the report should be the requirement in future appointment of a chaplain/advisor. This would also help to direct and improve the training process. In the selection process of a Muslim chaplain/advisor, the Muslim student body should be represented. This will prevent unnecessary misunderstanding, and may help in the smooth running of university and student affairs.

7. The Muslim community should use their resources to help strengthen the chaplaincy/advisor provisions, especially in the production of necessary guides and reading material relevant to pastoral care. The pastoral care should also be included in the training of future religious leaders, especially in *madrasa*s, in the community.

8. At least once a year Muslim chaplains/advisors should meet to share experience and discuss the issues and concerns on the campuses. There should be provision for participation of other faith communities, student services and other relevant agencies.

9. Student Islamic Societies on campus should be acknowledged as key providers for peer-led support within universities in England and should be encouraged and supported by universities (through human resources and active engagement initiated by student services), the Muslim communities and relevant authorities.

10. Generic guidance should be produced in order to provide a reference point for all university staff for dealing with issues such as prayer and understanding the significance of Friday prayer, provisions for *halal* food and Ramadan. Such guidance removes the burden of responsibility for students and will outline best practice for implementation within all universities. This generic guidance should be accessible to all university staff and students across England.

Glossary

'alim (female: 'alima)	a scholar of Islam, also a graduate of *dar al-'ulum*
Bukhari	one of the six major *hadith* collections and the most trusted within sunni Islamic traditions. Named after the compiler and editor Abu Abdullah ibn Ismail al-Buhkari (d. 870), who was from Bukhara in present-day Uzbekistan.
da'wah	invitation to the Path of God
dar al-'ulum	an Islamic centre of learning, a place where an *'alim* is trained in the religious sciences [also spelled as *'uloom*]
du'a (pl: *ad'iya*)	supplication
fiqh	Islamic Jurisprudence
Eid	Islamic festival
Fatwa (pl: *fatawa*)	a considered opinion on issues of shariah
halal	lawful/permitted
hadith (pl: *ahadith*)	saying of the Prophet Muhammad
hafiz (pl: *huffaz*)	one who has memorised the entire Qur'an.
hanafi	one of the four schools of thought within sunni Islamic traditions. Named after Abu Hanifa (d. 767)
iftar	breaking of the fast at sunset.
injil	the Scripture (Gospel) revealed to the Prophet *Isa* (Jesus)
jum'a	Friday, weekly congregational prayer takes place on this day
kalam	speech/speculative theology
madhhab (pl: *madhahib*)	school of thought
masjid (pl: *masajid*)	mosque
mufti	a person who is qualified and capable of issuing *fatwa*
niqab	a veil which covers the face
Ramadan	the ninth month of the Islamic calendar when Muslim observe fasting from dawn to dusk
Shari'ah	lit: the way, the sacred law of Islam
sirah	biography and study of the life of Prophet Muhammad
tafsir	Qur'an commentry or exegesis
'ulama	plural of *'alim*

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16. This is very effectively argued by David Ford, in 'Universities ought to aim above all at contributing to the long-term health of society by forming people in intellectual values, knowledge, skills and *wisdom* [emphasis added] to live responsible lives,…' *Studies in Christian Ethics*, Vol.17 part I, 2004, p.29. See also more recent articles by David Ford 'Faith and Universities in a Religious and Secular World' (1) and (2) in *Svensk Teologisk Kvartalskrift*. Arg.81 (2005), pp.83-91 and pp.97-106.

17. Sophie Gilliat-Ray, (2000) *Religion in Higher Education: the Politics of the Multi- Faith Campus*; Aldershot: Ashgate, p. 148.

18. *Madrasa* is largely associated with the training and promotion of religious scholars in a seminary or *dar al-ulum* (lit: a house of knowledge). The current syllabus in such institutions owes its origins to Mulla Nizamuddin Sahalwi (d. 1748) who prepared it in the declining years of the Mughal Empire in India. The East India Company bought the rights from the Mughals to administer in some provinces in North India, where the company had already established its economic and political influences. The rights were conditional that the Company would continue to run the affairs of the locals according to legal provisions based upon the *hanafi* school of thought. Any disputes over property, business transactions or family affairs, including inheritance, should be decided accordingly. Nizamuddin's syllabus (*Dars-e-Nizami*) became the standard for training its staff, and civil servants in particular. This syllabus was continuously used for this purpose until 1857, when India came under the direct control of the Crown and its civil servants were no longer obliged to train their staff under this system. However, the syllabus continued to be followed in various *madrasa*s and with full support from the Mughals until the death of the last Mughal, Bhadur Shah Zafar, in 1862. Soon after that the establishment of the Deoband seminary in North India (1866) adopted the syllabus to train future religious leaders. The syllabus has gone through various changes, but the structure remains largely unaffected. The Muslim seminaries in England, of different persuasions whose origin is in South Asia, continue to follow this syllabus to train their religious leadership (*'alim*). See also Gilliat-Ray, S. (2006) "Educating the *'Ulma*: Centres of Islamic Religious Training in Britain" *Islam and Chrisitan-Muslim Relations* Vol.17, No.1, January pp.55-76.

19. For example – Birmingham Christian College, Birmingham; Bristol Baptist College, Bristol; Heythrop College, London; London School of Theology, London; Mattersey Hall, Mattersey, Doncaster; Nazerene Theological College, Didsbury, Manchester; Peniel College of Higher Education, Brentwood, Essex; Redcliffe College, Gloucester; Regents Theological College, Cheshire, Nantwich; Trinity College, Bristol.

20. **'Demographic/age/ethnicity:** [1] Pakistani and Bangladeshi students make up 10% or more of the total student population in 14 UK HEIs [out of 161 Institutions], with the highest incidence at the University of Bradford [38%]. Alternatively, 10 HEIs account for 37% of all Pakistani and Bangladeshi students, and 20 HEIs account for 59% of Pakistani and Bangladeshi students [2] Pakistani and Bangladeshi students are most likely to have progressed to HE from a sixth form college: in 2002, 28% of Pakistani and 32% of Bangladeshi applicants to full time degree courses attended FE colleges (compared to 23% overall); for Sixth form colleges the figures were 20% and 24% respectively (compared to 14% overall). [3] Minority ethnic group participation is higher at new universities and geographically concentrated in London **Course choices:** [4] Family influence on choice of establishment higher for Pakistani and Bangladeshi students [5] (research also suggests the influence of family on subject choice was more marked and amongst minority ethnic than White potential students. Minority ethnic parents often favour traditional professional areas for their children. However, we need to look more closely at subject areas for Pakistani and Bangladeshi students) [6] There is a higher representation of minority ethnic students in computer science, medicine and dentistry and law **Positive developments**: [7] Participation rates are high among all ethnic groups, but are lowest for Bangladeshis [although this is still above the percentage for white males. Participation is lowest of all among female Bangladeshis (at 33%) while Pakistani rates are above average at 49% [8] Pakistani and Bangladeshi students tend to pursue A level route to HE'

Students in [Secondary Education]	2003	2004	2005	2006
Bangladeshi	30,241	30,790	31,420	32,680
Pakistani	76,272	78,060	79,710	82,900

Information supplied by the Department for Educational and Skills.

21. *Higher Education: More than a Degree.* Summary of a consultation held at St. George's House, Windsor Castle January 19–20, 2005. p.9

22. www.cofe.anglican.org/about/gensynod/agendas/gs1567.rtf

23. Gilliat-Ray, S. (2000), op. cit. p75

24. 'NUS and its Muslim Members – A Guide for Students' Union, see www.officeonline.co.uk

Appendix A

DR. ATAULLAH SIDDIQUI is the Director of Markfield Institute of Higher Education, where he also teaches 'Islam and Pluralism', 'Inter-Faith Relations'. He is a Senior Research Fellow at The Islamic Foundation and Visiting Fellow in the Centre for the History of Religious and Political Pluralism, University of Leicester. Ataullah is the co-editor of *Encounters: Journal of Inter-Cultural Perspectives*, a bi-annual journal published by the Islamic Foundation. He is the Vice-Chair of recently established 'Christian-Muslim Forum' and the President of the 'Leicester Council of Faiths'. His publications include: *Christian- Muslim Dialogue in the Twentieth Century* (1997), *Islam and Other Faiths* [a collection of Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi's articles] (1998). *Christians and Muslims in the Commonwealth*: *A Dynamic Role in the Future* [Co-Edited 2001]. He has contributed chapters in several books including: '*Believing* and *Belonging* in a Pluralist Society – Exploring Resources in Islamic Traditions' in David A. Hart (ed.) *Multi-Faith Britain* (2002), 'Islam and Christian theology' in *The Modern Theologians*, Edited by David Ford 2005.

MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

DR ALISON SCOTT-BAUMANN is Reader in Cultural Hermeneutics at the University of Gloucestershire, with a specialist interest in interfaith work and social cohesion. She has a national and international reputation for developing collaborative partnerships with Muslim groups in England, Pakistan, Kashmir and South Africa.

Alison is Course Leader for the taught doctorate (EdD) and teaches across the university on research methods for research students. Her specialism in philosophy is the work of Paul Ricoeur, and she is an international member of the *Fonds Paul Ricoeur* in Paris. She is writing a book on the hermeneutics of suspicion, and also using her French links to build connections with French-speaking Muslims in France, Algeria and Tunisia.

Alison has strong links in England with Sunni, Shia and other groups, and is developing an ESRC/AHRC bid to work with these groups in collaborative partnerships. Her focus is upon respect for Muhammad as a factor in the identity of Muslims and the friction with secular society. Digital storytelling will create a digital archive about identity to help staff and students to develop better working relationships and a buddy system between Muslims and non-Muslims will be piloted to enhance the social cohesion on campus.

DR SOPHIE GILLIAT-RAY. Dr Gilliat-Ray, of the School of Religious and Theological Studies, is a leading figure in the developing area of research into Muslims in Britain and has established a major new centre in Cardiff. Her publications include *Muslims in Britain: an Introduction*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (forthcoming 2007/8); *Religion in Higher Education: The Politics of the Multi-Faith Campus,* Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000, *Religion in Prison: Equal Rites in a Multi-faith Society,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. Her main areas of research are: Islam in Britain (especially the training of *imams/'ulama*), religion in public life in Britain, and chaplaincy (prisons, hospitals, higher education, the military, etc). She also co-ordinates the 'Muslims in Britain Research Network'.

DR ANIL KHAMIS. Dr Khamis is Lecturer in Education and International Development at the Institute of Education, University of London. On CREATE (Consortium for Research on Educational Access), Anil is looking at access and alternatives to formal education particularly for Muslim communities. His research interests include education and development with special reference to Muslim communities; school improvement, teacher

education, and educational change with respect to developing countries; research methods; and education for disadvantaged/at-risk communities.

SHAYKH MICHAEL MUMISA Shaykh Mumisa completed four years of training in Classical Arabic Language and Literature from Iqra Darul Ilm Academy and went on to study and graduate with the '*Alimiyya* (Al-Azhar University graduate degree equivalent) with distinction from the *dar al-ulum* after six years of training in Islamic classics and classical Arabic Literature. He then joined the Department of Semitic Languages at the Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit and graduated *cum laude* with a BA Honours degree. He taught Classical and Modern Arabic Literature and Islamic Studies in the Department of Semitic Languages at the same university. In 1998 he joined the University of Birmingham's Graduate Institute for Theology and Religion, Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations where he completed a postgraduate research degree specialising in Law, Hermeneutics and Social Change in Muslim Legal Theory. He is currently pursuing PhD research in English Literature specialising in Contemporary Literary and Critical Theory (Post-modern/Postcolonial Literature and Theory). Shaykh Michael Mumisa is now lecturer and researcher at Cambridge's Centre for the Study of Muslim-Jewish Relations. He has also been visiting lecturer in the Department of Theology at the University of Birmingham, the Department of Theology at Newman College of Higher Education in Birmingham, and has taught Philosophy/Theology and Mysticism at Markfield Institute. He has also published works in Islamic studies ranging from hermeneutics, Arabic Grammar, theology, religion and pluralism, Islamic law, and philosophy.

RESEARCHER

DR. SERENA HUSSAIN. Dr Serena completed her PhD on Muslims in Britain from University of Bristol. She has several years of experience of working with community organisations with different ethos and goals, at local, regional and national levels. She has also worked within academia and has hands-on experience of producing applied policy research. Serena's principle expertise is in Muslims in Britain; however, she has also researched extensively a diverse range of areas including family formation, educational attainment and participation, housing and service provision, faith communities, community tolerance, young people and unemployment, asylum seekers and 'hidden' ethnic communities. She is currently working with OPM (the Office for Public Managemet, London) and the Greater London Authority on an empirical study exploring Islamaphobia within universities in Greater London. Her forthcoming book is: *Muslims on the Map: A National Survey of Social Trends*, London: I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd, (2007)She was commissioned to conduct and write a report for this project on Muslim students' view on campuses.

ADMINISTRATOR

MRS SUMAYAH UDDIN. Sumayah completed her undergraduate degree at the University of East Anglia in 2001. Whilst there she was the president of the Islamic society. Since then she has worked at two independent primary schools in the city of Leicester. She later completed her PGCE specialising in science at the University of Leicester and completed her induction year at a multicultural school in the city. She has also worked on various temporary assignments including as an administration assistant at Ministry of Agriculture**.**

Appendix B

LIST OF *DAR AL-'ULUM* THAT PROVIDE FURTHER AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

1. Azhar Academy,(London), Further Education*

2. Darul Uloom Daawatul Imaan, (Bradford), Secondary

3. Darul Uloom Al Arabiya Al Islamiya, (Bury), Further Education

4. Darul Uloom Chislehurst, (London), Further Education

5. Darul Uloom Islamic High School and College, (Birmingham), Secondary

6. Darul Uloom (Leicester), Further Education

7. Ebrahim Community College, (London), Further Education

8. Al- Hijaz College, (Nuneaton), Secondary

9. Al Jamiah Al Islamiyah, (Bolton), Secondary

10. Jamea Girls Academy, (Leicester), Secondary*

11. Jamea Al Huda, (Sheffield), Further Education

12. Jamiatul 'Ilm wal-Huda UK, (Blackburn), Secondary

13. Jamea Al Huda, (Nottingham), Further Education*

14. Jamea Al Kauthar,(Lancaster), Further Education*

15. Jamia Madinatul Uloom UK, (Plaistow, London), Secondary

16. Jamea Ulumool Qur'an, (Leicester), Secondary

17. Jame'ah Riyadul Uloom Islamic Da'wah Academy, (Leicester), Further Education

18. Jamia Siraj Ul Uloom, (Leyton, London), Secondary

19. Jameah Islameah Islamic Educational Institute, (Crowborough), Secondary

20. Jamea-tul-Imam Muhammad Zakariya, (Bradford), Secondary*

21. Jamiatul Uloom Al-Islamia, (Luton), Secondary

22. Al Karam School, (Retford), Secondary

23. Madinatul Uloom Al Islamiya School, (Kidderminster), Further Education

24. Markazul Uloom, (Blackburn), Further Education

25. Mazahirul Uloom School, (London), Secondary

* For Girls

[Spelling of *dar al-ulum* varies such as *darul uloom* but means the same thing]

Appendix C

ONLINE ISLAMIC STUDIES PROGRAMME

NAME OF COURSE PROVIDER

1. Sunni-Path

Details of course

Each course consists of approximately twelve lessons. Lessons are either live or recorded.

Examples of courses:

- The Journey to Allah(Spiritual Guidance for Muslim Women and Men)

- Introduction to the Qur'an, *Ulum al-Qur'an*: Sciences of the Qur'an· Introduction to the Prophet's Life

- Introduction to Islamic Finance

- Essentials of Islam (*Hanafi*)

- Foundations of Islamic Law

Website: **www.sunnipath.com**

NAME OF COURSE PROVIDER

2. Shariah Programme

Details of course

This virtual gathering, supplemented with pre-recorded material, aims to deliver a complete and comprehensive study of centuries old traditional Arabic sciences. Beginners and advanced courses are available.

• Two-Month Online Arabic Distance Learning Course, July-August

Website: **www.shariahprogram.ca/online-arabic-course-registration.shtml**

NAME OF COURSE PROVIDER

3. Zaytuna's Distance learning Programme

Details of course

The distance learning programme offers the Islamic studies taught at Zaytuna Institute online.

Website: **www.zaytuna.org/distancelearning.asp**

NAME OF COURSE PROVIDER

4. The Islamic College for Advanced Studies

Details of course

Courses offered [Diploma in]:

• Quranic and Hadith Studies

• Islamic Philosophy

• Islamic law

• History and Social Studies of Islam

• Introduction to Islam (through eight sessions gives you general knowledge about Islam and Islamic studies)

Website: **www.openstudy.org.uk/os**

NAME OF COURSE PROVIDER

5. University of Exeter

Details of course

Distance learning programme: Introduction to Islam

This course is intended to provide students with an introductory overview of the basic tenets of Islam from its historical roots, through its theological and legislative concepts, to its place in the modern world. This is taught through the presentation of written and audio-visual learning materials on the World-Wide Web and includes the provision of selected additional reading material by post;

Syllabus Plan

• The historical background to Islam;

• the Prophet Muhammad and the Quran;

• the early expansion of Islam;

• the Quranic concept of God and other major theological issues;

• the Islamic law as expounded in the Quran and Prophetic Traditions;

• rituals and institutions;

• Islamic mysticism;

• Islam and women;

• Islam and modernity.

Website: **www.education.ex.ac.uk/dll/details.php?code=DLT01**

NAME OF COURSE PROVIDER

6. Al-Sirat

Details of course

> A Diploma in Arabic (accredited by European Institute of Human Sciences) is issued on completion of Module 6.

> Currently, they are enrolling for a distance learning course delivered via the internet using real-time methods for interactive lessons that will meet the individual demands of the students.

*Website***: www.intensivearabic.co.uk**

NAME OF COURSE PROVIDER

7. The Open University

Details of course

> Online distance learning programme.

> Course title: Islam and the West; The Politics of Co-existence

*Website***: www.open.ac.uk**

[This is only an indicative list]

Appendix D

CONNECTING A UNIVERSITY WITH ITS LOCAL MUSLIM COMMUNITY

Dr. Pauline Kollontai, York St John University

Introduction

Addressing ethnic minority under-representation was an objective of the work which I was engaged in at the University of Leeds (1995 –1999). In response to the local Asian community the Project developed a package of courses to provide nontraditional students with the opportunity to progress from pre-university study through to a university Level 1 Certificate in Islamic Studies. The momentum for developing this Certificate came from the interest of local Muslims, particularly women, in the study of Islam.

Opening up a pathway

The aim was to ensure that consultation was a collaborative two-way process so that (i) the university would hear and respect what the local Muslim community were saying and be seen to be responsive to their needs and (ii) the local community would gain understanding and information about the university.

Immediately the community/FE/HE cultural divide became apparent as issues such as course location; the gender of tutors for courses made up predominantly of Muslim women etc. However, the willingness of all parties to listen, to be responsive and to comprehend each other's sensitivities was sufficient for the collaboration to proceed and finally resulted in the design of a Certificate in Islamic Studies delivered both on and off-campus.

Student recruitment, progression and retention

As part of the Project's 'responsible recruitment', (preparing students adequately for study at HE level), information sessions and individual and group advice and guidance was offered in community venues. Also a series of short non-accredited courses in Islamic Thought and Arabic Language ran as a return-to-learn-opportunity for students. This included on-campus activity where students explored aspects of their subject area through specially designed on-line course materials.

The Certificate Programme started in April 1998 with 39 students and another 41 students enrolling in September 1998. By the end of 1999 a number of students will have successfully completed their courses or be half-way through the Certificate.

Students making a choice

The aim of the Widening Provision Project in designing this Programme was to provide the local Muslim community with an accessible pathway into higher education as well as raising educational aspirations. However, the reasons why people actually enrolled were manifold and did not primarily centre on HE progression and gaining university credits. Some students said that they came to do the course 'for something to do'. This is illustrated by the comments of one student who said:

When I started coming to the Arabic for Beginners course I had no interest in gaining credits. I just thought it would be something different to do on a Tuesday morning.

Most students spoke of attending the courses to gain a better understanding of their religion and imparting this knowledge to their children and also to counter fundamentalism within their own communities:

My interest in Islamic Studies was because I wanted to know more about my religion and be better informed to teach my children ….

Studying about our religion and culture in a university environment brings us into contact with books which give different information about Islam which we wouldn't get within our own communities.

Two issues emerge from these comments. Firstly, that the Certificate will have an intergenerational effect as grandmother, mother, aunt, cousin relay their learning to younger members of their families. Secondly, that the academic study of Islam is a 'liberating' experience for individuals as they unravel the intertwining of religious and cultural traditions.

Sixteen months after the start of the Programme most of the students are aiming to complete the 60 credit Certificate; some are planning to continue studying on the new 120 HE Certificate in Islamic Studies; a small number are considering applying to take a full-time degree in the subject area; and others are thinking about using the generic skills they have acquired for other HE studying, e.g. teacher training.

CONCLUSION

The Certificate Programme is innovative at national level and this has been borne out by substantial interest from other HEIs. We consider the innovation to be in terms of curriculum development and the collaborative process used in order to achieve it.

Earlier this year the Certificate in Islamic Studies was awarded one of NIACE's national 'New Opportunities Learning Awards' under the CVCP sponsored category of 'Progression into Higher Education'. The CVCP award statement noted that the Programme, 'provides a valuable example of the imaginative projects that will need to be developed if a wide range of adult learners is to benefit from the opportunities which today's higher education system has to offer (Bruce, 1999)'.

References

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Appendix E

BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN MUSLIM ACADEMIC COMMUNITIES AND BRITISH UNIVERSITIES, 1997-2007

Dr Alison Scott-Baumann, Reader in Cultural Hermeneutics, University of Gloucestershire

Introduction

Divisive tensions exist within the Muslim world and between the Muslim and the non-Muslim world, at many different levels, from the *niqab* debate and the Danish cartoon furore to major conflicts in the Middle East. There are various hybrid models such as social capital or citizenship, where theory has been repeatedly reworked and re-arranged in order to furnish an evidence base (Scott-Baumann 2003c). Another model is that of social identity, which describes the forming of groups at the expense of those outside the group, and the negative stereotyping of the outsiders (Tajfel, 1970, Hogg and Abrams, 1988).

The huge and damaging divisions within British civil society can clearly not be resolved only by intellectual activity such as we find in philosophy or social theory, because these theories have been available for centuries, indeed since Socrates, who believed that people only do wrong out of ignorance. These theories *can* however be useful in supporting action: the only way to unite divided peoples is through practical application of these inspirational ideas (Scott-Baumann 2003b, 2003c, 2006).

In the context of Islam in Britain there are two parallel worlds in higher education: on the one hand there are British universities and on the other hand there are Muslim seminaries, *maddrasa*s and colleges that are not acknowledged by the higher education system. Our research shows that British Muslim students value their faith base very highly, and indeed, for the devout Muslim, their life *is* their faith. They would like their faith base to be supported on campus, as the faith of Christians and Jews is. They express surprise that Muslim studies are offered [Islamic studies] on most British campuses by non-Muslims, and without the depth of theological understanding to be found in the *maddrasa*s.

The Department of Education at the University of Gloucestershire has been involved in a working relationship with several Muslim educational groups over the last ten years. The major aim is to improve understanding between the two parallel worlds and try to bring them closer together through interchange of expertise.

Opening up a pathway: collaborative partnerships

Over several years, good relationships have developed between three British Muslim groups: Markfield Institute of Higher Education (MIHE), the Association of Muslim Schools (AMS), Kashmir Education Foundation (KEF) and the University of Gloucestershire. Each organisation has worked towards realisation of an educational goal, in which the other partner is necessary.

The following collaborative partnerships have developed, each of which is different. In some cases the university validates courses that belong to the other organisation and that aim to emancipate Muslim groups into higher education. We provide the following support:

• Course development guidance

• quality assurance

We receive:

• Expertise in teaching Islam from Muslim academics

• New ways of looking at our own secular culture

BA degrees

EBRAHIM COMMUNITY COLLEGE (ECC)

• A BA in Islamic Sciences and Society (starting with Certificate in Higher Education) (2007–)

One major purpose of the course will be to provide some aspects of *'alim/ 'alima* training (trained religious and mosque community workers who can help to interpret the Qur'an, *hadith*, the laws etc). This course could provide a necessary but not sufficient component of the *'alim* qualification.

AL MAHDI INSTITUTE (2008-)

• A proposed BA in Islamic Studies

This is a new development with a Shi'a group

Initial Teacher Education

ASSOCIATION OF MUSLIM SCHOOLS (AMS)

- An initial teacher education course for Muslims (AMSSCITT, 1998–2001)

- PGCE in Arabic, Assessment only Route to Teaching (2004–

- QTS for teachers in British Muslim schools, through Assessment Only route (2004–)

Higher Research Degrees

MARKFIELD INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION (MIHE)

- A new M.Ed in Islamic Education (2006–)

- Three MA courses and several short courses (2007–)

- Shared doctoral supervision (2007–)

Teaching will take place at Markfield Institute of Higher Education that provides a Muslim friendly environment (good prayer facilities, *halal* food, a good library and high quality provision, and at the University of Gloucestershire for other modules).

Volunteering work for staff and students

KASHMIR EDUCATION FOUNDATION (KEF-UK and KEF-Pak),

Developing schools and teacher training in Pakistan.

Student recruitment, progression and retention

Recruitment is often slow, due to friction within local Muslim communities about issues like the education of women. Young women do not always want to be educated alongside men, and this takes time to arrange.

Students making a choice

We are collecting evidence that show trends in support of our work from within the Muslim communities. This work is slow and takes time.

Impact assessment

There is research evidence of the value of this from work already done by this university (Scott-Baumann, 2003b). The efficacy of these projects is clear in the long-term relationships that the university continues to enjoy with a range of different Muslim groups. Consultation is crucial and always takes place before the project starts.

Academics have explained why such collaborative partnerships are attractive:

SA 'At the University of Gloucestershire you understand us'

SM 'This is definitely the way forward, this type of collaborative partnership'

Conclusion

The aims of the courses include understanding Muslim culture, and promoting development of relationships between Muslims and those of other faiths and of none. This is attractive to both Muslims and non-Muslims with an interest in Islam, secular society, social cohesion and conflict resolution. The projects feature active collaboration between Islamic scholars and secular academics. One major purpose of the courses is to provide guidance for teachers, community workers and academics in the interplay between Islam and secularism through community based projects. Teaching methods include lectures and seminars, led by experts in Islamic fields. Topics include the meaning of Islamisation, the sources for education, the Qur'an and *hadith*, and the tensions created within secular cultures. The intention is to combine the academic with the practical in each project, intending to reduce Islamophobia on the one hand, and suspicion of secularism on the other, and replace them by mutual respect, when Muslim and other groups work together towards a common goal.

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Appendix F

SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION FOR A RECENTLY APPOINTED MUSLIM CHAPLAIN IN A UNIVERSITY

STUDENT SERVICES

JOB DESCRIPTION & PERSON SPECIFICATION

1.   JOB INFORMATION

Post Title: **Muslim Chaplain – Fixed Term for 2 years**

Grade: **Grade 4**

Salary Range**: [salary stated]**

Mode: **Part time, term time (18 hours per week)**

Ref No:

2.   JOB DESCRIPTION

The Chaplaincy provides:

    I.   A focus on the spiritual dimension of life

    II. The opportunity to develop multi-faith relationships within the community

    III. The provision of special ministry to those who need personal support.

.1   Purpose

To provide broad based pastoral support for students and staff at the University, working closely with other members of the Chaplaincy team

.2   Main Duties and Responsibilities

1. To work as a member of the University Chaplaincy team to develop a multi-faith environment for staff and students.

2. To provide pastoral care to students and staff.

3. To co-ordinate and facilitate links within the Muslim community of staff and students.

4. To provide faith awareness training as required.

5. To foster relationships between denominational groups both internal and external to the University.

6. To develop effective collaborative relationships with the other areas of Student Services (e.g. counselling, disabilities, Student Welfare Officer)

7. To promote the work of the chaplaincy amongst staff and students of the University.

8. To undertake visits to students and staff as required e.g. in cases of bereavement, hospitalisation.

9. To develop effective links with the Student Islamic Society and the Student Union.

10. To undertake administrative duties related to the Chaplain's role.

11. To create and promote the University's links with regional and national Islamic centres.

AND such other duties as are within the scope and spirit of the job purpose, the title of the post and its grading.

The appointment and conditions of service

1   The appointment is in the service of the University, specifically within Student Services

2   The post is for a period of two years

3   Working hours cannot be strictly defined given the nature of the appointment. Within the University the norm is 18 hours per week, although this should not be regarded as either a minimum or a maximum. If the post-holder has to work longer hours during term time, agreement may be given to compensatory time off during vacations.

4   Annual leave will be 25 days plus public holidays. Leave will normally be taken outside term time.

5   Notice to terminate the appointment will be month in writing on either side.

Supervision Given: None

Supervision Received: This post reports to the Chaplaincy team leader Deputy Director Student Services

Appendix G

THE STUDENT STUDY REPORT
by Dr. Serena Hussain

Introduction to the work

The Student Study report is intended to supplement the Islam at Universities in England report by providing an insight into the experiences and perceptions of courses and pastoral care of Muslim students attending universities in England. The report incorporates aspects of the Student Study and refers to findings for recommendations, together with empirical findings taken from fieldwork conducted with academics, Muslim community leaders and other organisations involved in education. This report gives greater attention to the findings from the fieldwork conducted specifically with students; a discussion of key findings are presented at the end of the report in this section.

Methodology and approach

In order to gain a representative sample of Muslim students across England, students from eight universities were invited to take part in the study made up of three red brick or Civic universities, three former polytechnics or Post-1992 universities and two collegiate universities. Over twenty universities were contacted to take part in the study through students societies, such as the Islamic society or through contacting course leaders and academics teaching Islamic studies and Islam related courses (such as Middle Eastern studies, Islam and Education, Islamic Law and Middle Eastern studies, Islamic Feminist Legal Theory).

There was a higher level of reluctance on the part of students to become involved in the study than expected by the researcher. On further inquiry it turned out that this was mainly due to reasons to do with suspicion (the issues are outlined below under the heading 'victimisation'). In addition the timing of the fieldwork clashed with 'Islam Awareness Week' programmes being held by most of the universities contacted, which meant Islamic societies were already stretched and did not have the time available to take part. Some of the universities that did take part in the study had already recently held their Islam Awareness Week or were about to begin their events and activities the following week. The researcher was therefore able to find a convenient slot to conduct the field work in such cases. Other reasons for universities not taking part in the study were due to numbers of Muslims students on courses (when course leaders were contacted) or difficulties in finding a suitable gate keeper to access students.

Despite difficulties in accessing students, every effort was made to ensure that the original methodological considerations for inviting a representative Muslim student sample were met. The following universities were included in the study in order to

gain the desired geographical spread, differing concentrations of Muslims within the university student population and type of university:

University of Durham
Cambridge University
University of York
University of Nottingham
University of Warwick
University of Huddersfield
University of Hertfordshire
University of East London

Care was taken to 'match' universities as closely as possible to those who were unwilling or had been unable to take part in the study, for example London Metropolitan University and the University of East London. In addition, universities in areas with well known 'research fatigue', such as Bradford and Leeds, were avoided in favour of universities in Muslim communities, such as Huddersfield, that are generally overlooked when researching Muslim youth and Muslim students.

Recruitment
Muslim students at each of the eight universities were recruited for focus groups. Students were contacted via student societies and through academic departments. Students were given information sheets, which some societies and academics were willing to distribute directly to their members. Other universities, such as the University of East London, needed approval from their own relevant ethics committees before doing so. In terms of numbers of students recruited, the most successful route was through the local Islamic society.

A total of sixty one students took part in the study. Numbers of students varied for each university; the average group size was six. The smaller focus groups provided greater opportunity to explore themes and produced far more interesting data. This is due not only to the subject matter being explored but also the nature of participants and the sensitive position that many of them felt, as Muslims, they are in. At one of the universities in the study two separate focus groups were held for male and female students, as students felt more comfortable in that they felt their cultural norms were being respected.

Approximately one-third of students in the study were international students and there were proportionally slightly more male students than female students. The majority of students in the study were undergraduate although, with the exception of one, all focus groups contained at least one postgraduate student able to provide insight into their experiences in both undergraduate study, often at a different university, and their current course of study.

Fieldwork
Half of the focus groups in the study took place at university prayer rooms or mosques. This worked particularly well, providing students with a comfortable 85 and congenial environment in which to express themselves on what were sometimes

sensitive issues. The remaining focus groups took place in seminar rooms, and one in the university chaplaincy. The discussion period for each focus group lasted over an hour, averaging one hour twenty minutes.

Three themes were explored during the discussion. The initial questions corresponding to these three themes were:
1. What type of information is available to you about Islam at your university?
2. There are provisions for chaplaincy in almost all universities in England. What is you perception of chaplaincy?
3. Are there links between the resident Muslim community in [the particular location] and the Muslim student body at your university?

Key questions were also listed under each of the three questions on the interview schedule; however efforts were made to allow the discussion to develop with as little prompting as possible by the facilitator. Additional themes, not covered on the interview schedule, were raised at several of the universities, indicating current issues of concern among Muslim students in higher education. These have also been highlighted under pastoral care in "pastoral care and chaplains"

FINDINGS

Information about Islam

Courses
The majority of the students interviewed during the research were not studying Islamic Studies degree courses. This is representative of the Muslim student population in England, the majority of whom are not enrolled on such courses. Despite this, many of the student interviewees had some experience of being taught about Islam-related topics at university, under various subject headings, such as Politics, Middle Eastern studies, History, Sociology, Social Policy and Media Studies. There was a general awareness expressed about the relevance of Islamic and Muslim related topics within many areas of study in the current political climate. Students were asked about their experience of being taught about Islam and Islam-related topics during their time at university. Despite attending some of the most respected universities for Islamic Studies, the overall expectations and experiences of students did not differ significantly from those attending centres with an established reputation in the teaching of Islam and Islam-related subjects and those attending universities that offered only limited modules covering Islam-related topics.

– I came to a summer school two or three years ago at X and we were given an introduction to the Middle East and Islam. It was basically, 'point out where Iran is on the map', and no one could do that, 'what is the capital of Iraq?' and people didn't know that. And I think that's what you're generally dealing with at this university…the so called upper middle class – people who have grown up in sheltered environments, gone to private schools because it has the highest

private schools ratios in the country and that's the kind of public you are dealing with. Based on that perhaps the modules 86 wouldn't stretch Muslim students. Perhaps if this was Manchester University, Bradford University, where you have got [a] much higher percentage of Muslim students I am not sure it would work as well for them, it wouldn't stretch them as much. Because you get people who come from specialist Islamic schools backgrounds in those areas; for them this would be a couple of steps back so if you get someone like that at X I'm not sure it would be for them. (Collegiate university)

– The postgraduate courses, the modules that we took didn't really involve so much information about Islam per se, it was more about the historical development of Islam, Muslim political thought. There isn't a module on offer, in my course anyway, that teaches the principles of Islam. (Collegiate university)

– My course is so disappointing. There should be more information, this course should cover more history and basic beliefs, that's not taught very much. It tends to be about statistics in Britain, and they tell you about the whole politics and terrorism thing, rather than [about the] life of the prophet (SWS) and what Muslims actually believe. I thought there would be more information about Islam since it's an Islam course, other religion modules cover a lot of information but when it comes to Islam it drops, even the stuff they have taught us we already know that at home from parents and friends. Non-Muslim[s] don't turn up to this lecture and one of the major reasons [for that is that] they don't get any information, they're frustrated too. I have given a lot of books to a couple of my friends, my sister has given [books] to her friends, and that's how they know about it. The course needs to be developed definitely. (Post-1992 university)

The main criticism of courses was the lack of depth of information taught about Islamic teachings, as one student expressed

– I think what Universities in the UK especially the ones that are renowned for their Islamic study centers [in universites]... I think what they tend to lack is the depth of knowledge about Islam that maybe Muslim students and non-Muslim students will benefit from, maybe they focus too much on the cultural and the historical aspects, contemporary political aspects that people for example, people will graduate with Islamic studies or Middle Eastern studies without knowing the five pillars of Islam. I mean you don't need to know what the five pillars of Islam are if you are non-Muslim to understand Muslim political thought but also I think it's essential to know certain aspects of Islam in order to analyse aspects of Muslim societies. (Collegiate university)

The majority of the universities offered some courses which explored themes within Islam or modules about Muslims. Although these were available, students generally did not seek them out or go out of their way to attend such classes voluntarily even when they did know about them. The main reason given for not doing so was lack of time available to students for sitting in on extra modules. However, some students gave other reasons also:

– I think it's about having the time really. They do sound interesting and you think about going if you could but then I also think if I do sit in, how am I going to feel and what questions I might be asked as the Muslim in the class. Like I'd be worried that I'd be expected to provide answers cos I'm the Muslim in the class. You just have that fear as well. Otherwise it would be good to hear what the lecture teach[es] about Muslims. (Post-1992 university)

A similar view was expressed by another student;

– With my module even though it's not Islamic, Islam comes into it because I'm doing Social Politics. With politics and Islam it's always combined together, even in seminars and stuff when it gets heated you find that the debates gets heated when it gets to the subject of Muslims. Sometimes you find you are the only Muslim there or you are the only practising one there and you think what I am going to say, am I going to get jumped [on] by everybody if I say this! You need to be careful what you say. They really do get the wrong end of the stick because you are Muslim. They think you are going to be biased whatever you say. (Post-1992 university)

Preferences about how and where to study Islam

The students interviewed were asked whether they would consider studying Islam formally, if they had not done so already. All students saw the value of studying Islam in a formal setting. However, this question generated a significant amount of debate when it came to preferences on where to study Islam. Who would be teaching Islam and the content of the courses were the main areas of focus. All students, regardless of the university they currently attend, were split in their preferences on studying Islam at English universities or at Muslim-led Islamic centres of learning.

Reputation of universities for future study and career development was particularly important to those who were already at universities with perceived good reputations. It was felt that if a qualification was to be pursued it should be done so at a university that will put the student in good stead for future career aspirations.

– I think for a lot of people when you are entering higher education you are not just thinking of the course you are thinking about the name of the place for future employment reasons as well. That's not always the consideration for people studying Islam but that does come into it. The more credible the place the more likely that I will go to that place. And some of these new places they might be Islamic institutions [but] there is not much information out there about them. You hear of them, how big are they, but how credible are they? What are they actually teaching which is a huge point to consider whereas if you go somewhere like Oxford or Cambridge, Warwick or Durham they are already credible universities. You assume they are not going to be of a low standard, whether it is Islamic studies or Geography they are teaching. (Civic university)

However the most important variable in choosing where to learn about Islam was the students' motivation for learning about Islam and what the student wanted to gain from the experience.

It was generally felt that it was preferable to go to an English university to study Islam for the following reasons:

- To gain a Western perspective on Islam that will supplement and provide an alternative to the students' more authentic Islamic sources
  - We've learnt ourselves from home and we don't question ourselves about what we learn - Who? Why? What happened? And stuff – and that's why I would like to do it. Learning from home is different and if you want to question some of the stuff you can see different aspects of Islam and that's what I would like to do. (Post-1992 university)

- To gain an understanding of how Muslims are viewed through a Western lens
  - I haven't taken any but there are modules about theology as well. My sister is learning about Islamic studies taught from a Western perspective so you have to keep that in mind. You could argue that they are fundamentally flawed because they are taught from a Western perspective. But I suppose it's useful because it gives insight into how Islam is viewed.

- To equip students with specialist knowledge for careers such as in Islamic finance
  - Right now there is a huge boost in Islamic finance, and a need for it in places like London and Qatar and Dubai, not that many professional are doing that here, there are a few but there is a need to go and study and there are places like in Durham and other places where I think you can take Islamic economics courses but it's a good area to look at because there is a need (Civic university)
  - Like it depends on the field, if you are looking at the spiritual side yes, it is important to have a Muslim speaker or lecturer. If you are talking about finance ideally you want someone who has been in the finance market and talks about more than just what's in your textbook. Practically say 'this is what is in the book but this is what happened last week in the market, because I was there'. So I think whoever it is, depending on the field, whether you are looking at [the] academic side of things or the spiritual side you should be taught by someone who has put their knowledge into practice not just someone who is running off on the book.(Civic university)

- For an interest in 'Muslim studies', that is learning statistics about Muslims disadvantage and other social phenomena within the Muslim community

- To promote integration and understanding about Muslims
  - When I look at the modules it seems to me more of a history rather than an understanding of Islam. Despite this I am personally not in favour of very sectarian schools or universities. Going to a Muslim college would 89 be out of the question not only do you come to universities to learn and gain a degree, but you also come to universities [to] gain so many more

experiences, you want to meet a wide range of people, you want to meet non-Muslims so they can understand Muslims better. Rather than stay in a specific group it's much better to go out and sort of expand the name of Islam if anything, so I would choose a place like […] X or any of [the] British universities (Collegiate university)

– A Muslim institution is good but me personally I would rather go to somewhere like Birmingham. I would go to a Muslim run centre to learn but I'd rather go and [be] somewhere where I can and learn and teach others and be able to get a broader view not only of our religion but to understand other people's religions. You have to be able to talk to them and get to know about their beliefs and they can get to know yours. I would rather go somewhere like Birmingham where they have their own department. (Post-1992 university)

Current courses available at English universities with a more 'secular' focus were seen as worthwhile and having intrinsic value. However, they were not seen as being comparable as sources of learning about Islam to being taught by Muslim scholars of Islamic theology or to learning Islam at a well know Muslim centre of learning such as Al-Azhar in Egypt. The students felt strongly about this. Despite those who had given reasons for studying Islam at English universities, the overwhelming majority, when asked about learning Islam to gain practical understanding of their religion for implementation on a daily basis, agreed that they would not go to a University for this purpose, but would prefer to study under a Muslim scholar or at a Muslim centre of learning. There were no notable differences in opinion on this matter when it came to the type of university the students were studying at or whether the student was male or female, a home student or international student, a postgraduate or undergraduate.

The following are statements from students at each of the eight universities that took part in the study:

– I think it comes back to what you are looking for, if you are studying Islamic studies from an academic point of view then you don't necessarily need the Muslim scholars. If you want to go for the spiritual side of Islam, as a Muslim I think it would be a preference to have Muslim scholars teaching both Muslims and non-Muslims… If like during the course you have a question that may not be directly related to the lecture but to another aspect of Islam it's much easier for a Muslim scholar to answer at that time and say 'well there is a varied opinion on this and you do it like this' but if non-Muslims are teaching this course then they are more or less going to specialise in a certain area only. For the betterment of the students it would be easier because having a Muslim teacher it would probably be 'Islam in practice' its not just this lecture, you see some parts of it in practice there. (Civic university)

– I agree with that. Personally I would like to be taught by [a] Muslim scholar and it's just [that] for me it gives [me] that sort of confidence that I am 90 getting taught the right way, whilst if it's not a Muslim scholar I will be like, Is this right? (Another student from the same university as above)

– I think they [Muslim students] would definitely go to a *madrasa*. Everybody knows that a non-Muslim cannot teach a Muslim about his or her religion. We

have got non-Muslim teachers here [at university teaching Islamic issues] and we get biased views. (Post-1992 university)

– Having studied Islam at university I would prefer to go to Islamic scholars rather than studying here. Studying here the focus is very different and the method of learning is very different to how you would learn under [Islamic] scholars. I was considering doing an M.Phil I think for me personally at this moment in time I would really prefer to learn from Muslim scholars before pursuing that.(Collegiate university)

– I wouldn't go to a university to learn Islam because it wouldn't be taken from an Islamic perspective and obviously I am practising Islam and hopefully I want to put it into practice so if I was to do it at a university, I would have to do both together, like studying with a good Muslim so like I can compare and see like the misconceptions that they picked up because you can't be sure [that] what you are learning from a non-Muslim lecturer is going to be in accordance with what you actually believe and practise. (Civic university)

– I think it would make a difference if you went to a Muslim institution, you would be able to communicate what you want from the heart, like the mannerisms, everything that Islam makes you into will come across in how you communicate. Non-Muslim lecturers or lecturers that are Muslim in a more university environment have a more academic approach in everything. I don't think you would get that spirituality thing from them. So if you are trying to benefit spiritually and in your Islamic knowledge I think it makes a difference where you go to learn. (Post-1992 university)

– On aspects of Islam that refer to its theology and creed – I would definitely prefer Muslim teaching that, I have to say [in a]well established Islamic institution. Things like politics in Islam, economics in Islam which have a secular aspect to it which is Western orientated – I don't have a problem [about] whether I get it from [a] Muslim or non-Muslim. Aspects of my creed or my basic Islamic knowledge I would prefer Muslim teaching that. (Civic university)

– I meant to say exactly what he says. Its not a fair comparison, because if you go to Egypt or Saudi Arabia or Morocco to study you will be taught to qualify [as] – as we call them – a *mufti* or imam. But if you go to the Western universities you will be studying things like economics, civilisations, difference between Islamic civilisation and the Western civilisation and how they integrated together at a certain point. You will not be studying Shariah law or how to give a *fatwa* or to work as an imam. So it's completely different.(Another student at the same Civic university)

– I think I would prefer to go to a Muslim run institution because knowledge is much more traditional and hence purer and less interference from outside influences. The accreditation is important as well but I think I would probably try to stick to traditional sources as much as possible – information that comes down the centuries for Islam. It's better to go with places that 91 have passed information down form scholar to scholar for example. I want to get an authentic view, so I prefer to go to institutes with short courses. I wouldn't

really do a degree in Islamic studies but want to learn the stuff that I could implement in my day to day life as a Muslim rather than say 'look I have a degree from x or y' because what is that degree? I don't think the information would really help my practical issues with my prayer or reading Qur'an etc. (Post-1992 university)

– But isn't there a difference between Muslim students studying Islam and non-Muslims studying Islam? I think there is. You know you have courses, *'alima* courses back in Blackburn, where you can go into *tafsir*, *hadith*s, Bukhari. That's because we have an interest, it [is] something that we need to equip ourselves [with] in order to become more fully functioning Muslims where you are apply[ing] Islam to everyday life, as opposed to picking and choosing. For example when we were in [the] mosque, there was the forty *du'a*s [supplications], for entering the house, etc that as Muslims [it] is intrinsic [for us to known] to how we [are supposed to] play that role. How do you explain that to a non-Muslim? (Collegiate university)

The majority of students, regardless of the university they were currently attending, felt that a Muslim led organisation or Muslim centre of learning would be their preference to learn theological aspects for practical implementation of Islamic teachings. However as the statements above show the issue is generally related to who would be teaching the students Islam, rather than where they were to taught. During three of the focus groups, students expressed a preference to go overseas to study theological aspects of Islam, however when probed further, they agreed that although this is the ideal, it was not a viable option for the majority of Muslim students in England.

Muslim scholars at universities in England

The option of universities in England employing Muslim scholars was popular among the students. It was agreed that this would be a better approach to Islamic studies for everyone, not just Muslims, but non-Muslim students also learning about Islam. This was seen as something that needed to be positively encouraged by universities.

– I think it is intrinsic in Islam to ask questions and I think that what a non-Muslim learns about Islam a Muslim should [also] know about Islam. If they [Muslim students] come with prior knowledge that's something else. These things such as the *du'a* – when you are learning something like that – I think is something equally beneficial for a non-Muslim to understand, because what you are learning about is a way of life. Islam is a way of life, it's not just like religious studies because you are trying to understand concepts that help, [that] would help culturally, [that]would help non- Muslims understand what Muslims are about. I also think there is quite a large problem with how the government or indeed anyone trying to give these courses would regulate what is taught. Among Muslims themselves there are so many divisions, and the different *madhab*s, there are so many problems. If you create something as broad as you can and you encompass everything that you possibly can, you make the effort to continually change that and improve it, then you can't go

wrong. There will be a course available providing there are teachers, staff and funding. If you broaden it as much as you can then I think it can please everyone, you will have non-Muslims and Muslims sitting side by side and actually learning – the whole point is to understand something you didn't know before. Every Muslim's principal aim is to strive for knowledge from the moment you are born to when you die, you can never say I know everything about Islam now. You never know everything, and Islam is all about questioning. Muslims and non-Muslims should equally have the same courses.

Employing scholars from the Muslim world meant that the type of Islam Muslim students were more interested in learning about would be more accessible. However, there were several issues raised;

– I think there would be a lot of students who aren't Muslim who would rather study the more academic things like the history and the political implications and the things like that. A lot of Muslims who do want to study Islam do want to study the *fiqh* etc. but I don't think the university would want to do what a *dar al-'ulum* is doing and teach from the point of [Islamic] scholars because then you will be neglecting all the other non- Muslims who want to learn about it from a more academic perspective. (Collegiate university)

What was suggested by most students was that the more 'secular' aspects of learning about Islam – such as Islamic history or Middle Eastern politics – should not be neglected but incorporated into an all encompassing Islamic Studies programme, with the theological aspects of the course being taught by Muslim scholars. One student commented on this approach;

– To be fair if we look at Christian theology departments they are normally run by priests and bishops rather than straight academics so if we were going to make it fair for all religions then you would want Muslims to be teaching Islamic theology as well. (Civic university)

Other sources of information about Islam at university
The vast majority of students stated that within the university their main source of information about Islam came from the local Islamic society through organised seminars, books and leaflets in the prayer room or university mosque, and through speaking to Islamic society members, rather than by attending university courses. When asked about how they access information on Islam at university, students replied:

– Mainly through the Islamic society. I often find it is through the talks, the study circles which the Islamic society organised and also the 'experience Islam week' I think that's really informative.(Civic university)
– I think if people want information they probably would rather come to the Islamic society. I think the majority of our activities are targeted towards Muslims rather than non-Muslims though.(Collegiate university)
– I personally think the only place where you can actually get information from is the Islamic society and even then that's just students being proactive and [it]

depends on how actively you seek information about Islam. For courses like Sociology, Politics a lot of issues and debates are around post 9-11 and post 7-7 so obviously all these questions come up about Islam when people want to get the empirical evidence etc. but they haven't got anywhere to go for that. (Civic university)

The Islamic societies at all the universities visited for the student study are essentially peer-led support groups. It was therefore not surprising that committees also saw this as a key role for the society to play.

– If they find that the courses available do not cater for their needs they can find that in the university mosque or the Islamic society. I think that's a role of the Islamic society, to supplement what you learn about on your own, independently. (Collegiate university)

– I will always go to one of the brothers if I need knowledge about something. We're very fortunate, we have good people surrounding us who have a lot of knowledge about Islam and we are all in the same boat trying to help each other and share this with each other. I wouldn't really think about having to go to anyone else here at university for that kind of thing. (Post- 1992 university)

The Islamic Societies provide crucial information and support structures for Muslim students during their time at university. Every university visited for the student study had an active Islamic society, although some were more active than others in promoting Islamic knowledge and organising events. All the universities organise an annual Islam Awareness Week, which is the main event of the Islamic society calendar, second to Ramadan and organising provisions for the month.

Internet
Although the use of the internet for accessing information about Islam is not restricted to university students and is an external source outside the university domain, use of the internet as an avenue to access information about Islam was raised during many of the focus groups and generated a significant amount of discussion. It was generally felt that the internet could be misleading:

– You have to take care with the internet. There are so many ideas, so many perspectives on Islam, many different schools of thought that – you have to be aware of that because some people see one website and pick out that view but don't know that there may be others and take it as the right ruling, but it may not be. The internet can be a problem for that reason.

– Yes, I think it is [a problem for that reason]. There are some forums on the internet where people ask questions when they have problem. Other people answer them but we don't know who they are and from where they are getting their information to answer the question. It's really a problem. The internet can be good for knowledge, you can learn a lot, but keep in mind that you don't actually know who is behind the website, etc.

Despite an acknowledgement of issues related to the use of the internet as a source for reliable information about Islam, the majority of students did not find this problematic. They spoke of backing up internet findings with authentic sources such as the Qur'an and *hadith*.

– A way to get around that is to go back and discuss what you read or learnt with others. It's good for drawing your attention to certain things you know. So once you've seen something you can gain clarification elsewhere too.

– Most of us youth, we think twice, we are not that gullible, we can always go back to sources and check. Most sites if they are good sites provide you with the source, the verse from the Qur'an, the *hadith*. When you're talking to non-Muslims who have ideas about Islam, it's the same you ask them to go back to the sources, the original text and come to their own conclusion.

The possibility of having regulated internet sites caused the most debate. Providing some form of site reviewing by a trusted body that recommended sites judged to be authentic was not popular among the students. This was primarily due to disagreement on who should review and 'green flag' sites.

In addition, varying schools of thought and opinion meant that what was seen as a good site for some was not for others.

– I don't think in a way it would work because there are so many diverse opinions and scholars and in the way they think. You could say like MCB [Muslim Council of Britain], says like it's the voice of Muslim[s] but a lot of people don't generally relate [to] it so it's really hard to keep everyone happy. How a site can be accredited – it's too hard, you can't say this one's ok but this one's dodgy because people can take offence. There is no type or one thinking of Islam and its a huge responsibility to try to accredit sites because you are trying to give one single version of Islam.

Pastoral care and chaplains/advisors

Some of the students in the study had some experience of a Muslim chaplain/advisor. None of the universities in the Student Study had a Muslim chaplain/advisor in place during the course of the research, although the University of York has a Muslim advisor, who is also a Professor at the university and the University of Nottingham was in the process of putting a chaplain/advisor in place. The idea of having a Muslim chaplain/advisor was seen as important for all universities regardless of the size of the Muslim population. Students at two of the universities felt that it was even more important where the number of Muslim students is small.

– I think it's even more important to have a Muslim chaplain at places where the Muslim population is small, because the bigger institutions, the places with the most Muslim students, it happens already, but in places like Durham or Scotland, its less so, but it sounds to me like it could be a part-time role where there are less Muslims, but they should definitely still have one. It's needed more. Imagine a Muslim student coming from far [away] and having to only

socialise where there is alcohol, they'd probably stay in their rooms all the time, have no one to ask about anything. I asked the man in the local shop where the mosque was when I first got here, I couldn't find any other Muslims on my course. (Post-1992 university)

– It might be even more important to have a Muslim chaplain where you have got less people [Muslims] because at least in a big society most of us when you asked where we get information or support have said 'other people within the society'. If you have got a smaller group the more you need to be able to get information, so it [is] probably more necessary to have someone of special knowledge.(Civic university)

A key reason expressed by students for requiring a Muslim chaplain/advisor was to provide continuous support for Muslim students. Many expressed concerns regarding the turnover of Islamic society committees, which could leave the student body feeling apprehensive about the approachability of the next president and committee and about the hard work that had been done by the previous committee going to waste;
– With the Islamic societies you find the leader of the Islamic society is around for three years and when he leaves someone else takes that place, but he might not be as experienced in dealing with certain issues. If you had a chaplain of Islam he would have that knowledge and experience and he is always going to be there. (Post-1992 university)
– It's really important to have some level of continuity in the Muslim community on campus. The only organisation [in] more or less the majority of universities, the only Islamic organisation that anyone can have any contact with even [in] the university is the Islamic society but the turnover of the Islamic society is so huge – how can you have any long term planning? For example one year the Islamic society may be this way and then the next year it could change and it takes a different direction. (Civic university)
– Three years ago I remember there was a guy running the Islamic society. Something went on politically [and] he had to leave – whether he was forced to [leave], I don't know. The Islamic society collapsed, there was no activity going on at all. Then a few sisters tried to do what they could. They were running it for few years. Almost [always] hitting brick walls. I had a look at what we could do to build it up again. By this time everything had completely flopped; we didn't get anybody to lead *jum'a* [Friday prayer], so nobody would come to the prayer room – of course it's understandable – there was no one to lead prayer. So students would go to a local mosque. That's [why any] sense of community had vanished. We built it back up slowly. (Post-1992 university)

Another crucial argument for the need of a Muslim chaplain/advisor was to relieve Islamic society committee members of the care roles they provide. Many Islamic society members that the researcher spoke to for this study were over worked and stretched. Keeping in mind the primary purpose for all students attending university

is to gain a degree, it is the researcher's opinion that many students might well be taking care of the rest of the student population to the detriment of their own studies. There were numerous examples of how committees were providing pastoral care to the Muslim student body at their universities, a role that one should not expect to be taken on by a select number of students. English universities need to acknowledge that Muslim students have many specific care needs which should be dealt with by the university through appropriate chaplaincy provisions, rather than these needs being shouldered by a small number of students.

– It's a huge amount of work to run an Islamic society, especially if you have to raise money constantly. And I mean, generally I think, students do enjoy being involved with the work of the Islamic society and its activities. So in terms of people wanting to do it it's not usually a huge problem, but I think a lot of people do have their studies affected. I know at [a civic] University the president of Islamic society would fail his exams every single year; in fact, half of Islamic society [committee members] would fail their exams. Here at this university we haven't seen that. But if there was a chaplain who could take on most [of] the responsibility it would help us a lot (Collegiate university).

– Being a Muslim in this country isn't easy. So we have to push harder for everything. A lot of Muslim students get involved in the societies and tend to be overworked. You have to help and sort out things, if students are having problems with their landlords or accommodation we help, and write letters on other students' behalf. And [it] can be overwhelming; these are some services that the university does provide but a lot of people are not aware of who to go to and how to approach them. If there was an advisor and students have problems they know [they could take to him] – like we advised a student to go through international office etc. We had some problems with supervisors and things like that and the students' union is there to help represent them. But most Muslim students would come to us [Islamic society] either because they aren't aware of other services or they feel more comfortable, like we'll understand them. Islamic societies do take the responsibility of helping them, which [is a burden that] could be passed to the advisor. We can say from our own experiences here that there are so many Muslim students, both home and foreign students, that there is the need for an advisor even if they were part-time. (Civic university)

– I would say that there is no support structure. Fine you have got the Islamic society, you have got the committee, sub committee obviously we are still students we need someone to go back to, like when we have questions or when we need help. We don't have an imam for example and there is no one local because there isn't a local mosque. I think this really is affecting a lot of people. If we did and we had the five prayers every day that would help. It's not really a masjid now because we don't have that. Students would be more likely to go to the prayer room and get involved with Islamic society etc. because it's a fixed structure and you could also have classes and hadith classes and Qur'an classes. It's really interesting because on this campus we don't have any [Muslim] chaplain, we have a Christian chaplain, Jewish chaplain, we don't have a

Muslim one. When we have issues and we want to discuss things with an older person we don't have anyone. (Post-1992 University)

Many students felt that the term 'chaplain' was particularly unhelpful and was associated with the Church. In additional the role of chaplain/advisor was 97 questioned particularly in regards to accountability and who they work for. Muslim students felt that it was imperative that the Muslim chaplian/advisor was independent of the community of affiliated mosques during his or her time at university and working with students. This will be explored further during the section on community.

Qualities and characteristics of a Muslim chaplain/advisor

There was general agreement among all the students in the study that the Muslim chaplain or advisor should have an understanding of student issues and university life, be approachable and have a certain level of training in counseling. However, it was also agreed that the chaplain/advisor should have a good knowledge base about Islam. For some, this level of knowledge was crucial and more important than all other qualities, although the other qualities were not dismissed as being unimportant. The ideal advisor/chaplain was described as:

- A learned person in Islam, preferably a *hafiz* [one who has memorised the whole Qur'an] and an imam;
- Someone with an understanding about life in England and issues that face young people and students;
- Someone approachable with counseling skills/ training
- someone with an ability to work with non-Muslims in order to negotiate and work successfully with the university.

One student described a chaplain/advisor who encompassed all the qualities listed above. He is an imam working as a hospital chaplain, who had been asked by the university and students to assist with issues on several occasions

– We have this imam, he leads the prayer here sometimes on Friday. He's the chaplain at the local hospital. I have met up with him, the student union have met with him a couple of times outside of his duties with the Islamic society. That tells you that he is [well] regarded not just by us guys but by the university, the students and the union. Having a chaplain is the most important thing because the Islamic society membership presidency may change but you need a permanent advisor who is qualified to give advice and someone who is in touch with people. You can't pick any imam off the street, it's got to be someone who is aware about issue[s] among students – that students are dating, that people listen to certain types of music, that there are thieves, murderers in our communities, someone who is in touch with what goes on. The chaplain at the hospital is that type of person, and it's extremely difficult to find someone like that, I'd say it's a very difficult task. Despite all his work and the fact that the university knows and recognises him as a good source, he has never charged us for anything [that he has done for us]. (Post-1992 university)

All the qualities listed above were seen as important. However, students ranked various qualities more highly than others, for example it was felt that although the chaplain/advisor should be knowledgeable in Islam, it would not be essential to their role to lead prayer at the university prayer room or mosque and that someone else, even a member of the student body could do this. The statements below sum 98 up the general discussion about whether it is more important for the chaplain to be knowledgeable or approachable.

– For me the main purpose of a Muslim chaplain is to be approachable. Its ok having knowledge but we live in Coventry and there is a Muslim community already and you can go to others for that knowledge base. But what you find is it's hard to go to someone when you have problems and you want to be able to go to someone who has got experience in dealing with these things. For me that's the first thing. (Civic university)

– I think it's very important to have someone as a base. You see them as the ultimate source within. I think it's important especially to those who are new to the religion or trying to develop their knowledge of the religion. You need someone in authority and reliable as a chaplain.(Post-1992 university)

The statements about what qualities the chaplain/advisor should have are not mutually exclusive. Even where students felt approachability was crucial, someone who represented Islam well, was an example of a good Muslim, was seen as an essential quality.

– I personally would not go to a chaplain who was not well acquainted with British society, I would not go to him. If you are coming to advise students who live in Britain and study in Britain and you yourself are not acquainted with the society and people in Britain you can't do it. Why are they chaplains in the first place? It's essential to know the society we live in. If you don't know British society, the norms the cultural aspects, if you don't know about East Enders, just little things like that. You have to have a strong theological knowledge, [though I am] not saying [he] has to be qualified imam. When you are dealing with Muslim issues they are usually religious issues, but you need to know society and they are not contradictory – to have good knowledge of Islam and to be acquainted with British society.(Civic university)

The debate therefore lies with how knowledgeable the chaplain/advisor should be about Islam, and whether this should be to the level of a mufti for example. Although this might be ideal, it was generally accepted by most students that this was not the main purpose of a Muslim chaplain or advisor. All students welcomed the idea of generic chaplain/advisor training, which incorporated all aspects discussed above and which would ensure that the chaplain/advisor had a minimum level of Islamic knowledge, counselling skills and understanding about the issues that face students.

The chaplaincies already in existence at universities were seen as inadequate for meeting the needs of Muslim students. The main reason given was that they did not

understand that Muslim students could face problems that differed from other students.

– You have to look at the difference in the way Muslim youth approach their problems and the way that differs between Muslim youth and say British youth. I think we tend to be a bit more reserved about getting our problems out in the open so maybe a chaplaincy would require someone who is very 99 welcoming first of all, and someone who has extensive training on dealing with these issues. A normal chaplain I don't think would think about the differences. (Civic university)

– When I started university here, we were given a leaflet about the chaplaincy, it was basically a couple of sides of Judaism, Protestants, and Catholics, Methodists, Scientologists, but there was no Islamic [representation]. I was shocked: there are one billion Muslims around the world but when you come to an international university you don't have recognition and there is no Islamic representation. That was my first impression of chaplaincy – that it doesn't really cater for us.(Civic university)

– As international students, until the second year I thought it [the chaplaincy] was a church. But I think a lot of the chaplains like you say are advisors, organise a lot of social events, they have a lot of music, in terms of a quiet place to go though, that wouldn't be the first place I would go. It's arranged in such a way that you could walk in and people could be playing the piano or could be sleeping on the side, for advice/help I wouldn't go.(Civic university)

– From my understanding there have been cases where some Muslims have gone to the chaplain and looked into the chaplaincy and the chaplains for advice on certain issues but its not the norm, its quite rare that things like this happen. I personally know the chaplains quite well and I interact with them on a regular basis because of my involvement with isoc but I don't think that's the norm either with Muslims. (Civic university)

Other care issues

One Islamic society in particular indicated their appreciation for the support they had received from their university, so much so that they felt their university should be an example of good practice for other universities.

– We were talking to the vice-chancellor at the University last week and thanking him for all his support and he was saying how the University has one of the best Islamic facilities for students and he's really proud of that fact. And we have another prayer room project on another campus, and they are very willing to come to the table and discuss it. Both parties meet in the middle.

Others clearly felt they had not been provided with adequate support in terms of addressing Muslim students' religious and spiritual needs. Lack of prayer facilities and Friday prayer provisions were two key care issues that were raised by some of the students:

– One issue that a lot of unis tend to have is the *jum'a* prayers and everyone has real support for the men [who want to establish the Friday prayer] Lecturers are

not very lenient and they [lectures] are bang on the same time [as the prayer]. Lecturers won't give them the time to go and pray but today there was an issues about a brother where he couldn't come out of his lectures – they wouldn't let him. She said, 'If you go out you are not going to come back in' so that's sort of strictness that's not right. That's something that is an obligation on him, it [is] something he has to do. It seems like changing the lecture times for those hours or giving the Muslims 100 that opportunity to go and come back – a lot of colleges face that issue as well. I know I did face that issue where if a lecture is for 2 o'clock and prayer is at 2 pm, if you are late you can't come in to the lecture. You can't take ten minutes, you have to be on time. They are not very lenient in that sense. I know a girl she had a lecture at two and prayer is at two, she still took five minutes and said 'No, I have to pray!' They should give [the Muslims] that five or ten minutes slot.(Post-1992 university)

– *Jum'a* is a big issue for us. At the moment we are putting a petition together because it's a problem for many of us here. We have one of the highest, I think maybe even the highest percentage of Muslims at this university but still we have problem about *jum'a*. We are just saying, even if we [must] miss the lecture let it be without additional penalty to us. Its penalty enough that we have to miss work for this but on top of that we are looked at in a bad light.(Post-1992 university)

– There are a lot of Muslims at this university and you think the lecturers would be more aware but they're not. I mean we had an incident last week. [A] few students were complaining to me that they wanted to report [the matter] to the imam. We had to calm them down and asked them what happened. They missed a test and they wanted to change the time for Friday prayers. I said ok I understand they missed the test because the timing might not be convenient for everyone and we have a person who comes in to lead *jum'a* so I said I'll try to change the times from 1 pm to 2 pm or that I'd see what I could do. But they were really upset and angry because the lecturers didn't understand about it and they had problems because of missing the test. It's an issue because yes they know there are Muslim here, and not just a few. And it made me think, what should I do, should I go to speak to the lecturers and explain the significance of Friday prayer, but I'm just a student myself. So we couldn't do anything about it. (Post-1992 university)

Prayer room and *jum'a* prayer issues did appear to be more prevalent at the Post-1992 universities. The Islamic societies at these universities also appeared to be less established, despite the efforts of the committee members. The irony of the situation is that these universities have the higher proportions of Muslim students, and therefore clearly require these services. Students spoke about going to a near by mosque for *jum'a* or waiting till they got home to pray their prayers late due to the lack of prayer and ablution facilities on their particular campus or close enough to where lectures were taking place. The Islamic society committee members were actively involved in trying to change the situation for their fellow students, but as stated in the last quote above, they are only students after all. The researcher found that the level of support at these universities needed to be increased significantly and the best way to do so is through the employment of a Muslim chaplain/advisor.

Another issue that was raised was the provision for *halal* food on campus. Some universities do provide *halal* food. For universities such as Bradford or Manchester University halal meat provision is not as pressing because of their location as city universities, surrounded by Muslim food outlets. It is a more a care issue for Muslim students at York University or the University of Hertfordshire, which are located 101 on campuses outside of main town and city centres with limited Muslim outlets close to the university and even within these centres.

– Also more importantly for international students who come from a long way [away] and who are trying to fit into the culture, I think in the universities there should be places where there is *halal* food because it's a welfare issue. For local students it might be easy to say 'yeah I can go home', but as an international student ideally you shouldn't have to leave the campus for any of your basic needs. I think dietary needs should be catered for – not just *halal* but kosher meat [too] if it's required. If you can't take care of such things and you are trying to attract international students and charging fees of 12,000 pounds it tells us you want our money but can't cater for our needs. It's something I feel really strongly about. These are basic things and they don't take a huge amount of effort, especially if you are in an area like near Coventry, Bradford or Leeds, the university has got Muslim areas close enough to contact suppliers easily. (Civic university)

– Also in the economic sense as well, because of the growth of the young Muslim population, we have such a young demographic, the amount of numbers that are going to university that, if not already [increasing], will be increasing soon. If university outlets want to remain profitable, especially in the major cities, they are going to [have to] start providing *halal* food even if there is no immediate campaigning or pressure and I think I read somewhere in the paper that Sheffield University because of the number of Muslims – they have there just turned all its food to *halal* options just because it made more economical sense. (Civic university)

In addition to facilities and faith community provisions there were some other concerns that were raised by students which require attention. These concerns should be addressed as part of pastoral care for Muslim students.

Victimisations and Islamophobia
A topic that was raised by students at all three types of universities was the issue of universities 'spying' on Muslim students and Islamic societies. This was seen as an area of concern and anxiety for some students; others saw it as an example of the marginalisation of Muslims in Britain. Keeping in mind that the majority of the students who were interviewed for the study will be part of the next generation of Muslim professionals and very likely be active within their communities, 'spying' and marginalisation are messages that the universities and authorities should be keen to avoid promoting, if community cohesion is to be taken seriously.

– The university needs to put a statement out there saying we acknowledge our Muslim students; we are not going to spy on them; and we want Muslims students to take part in university life and not be marginalised. If they don't do that, then certain people at the university are going to think that they are in on it and 'spying' on us. It creates paranoia on campus. If the university just come

out and say look we want your university life to be as good as possible, that would be reasonable. (Collegiate university)

– It kind of inhibited students I think. It's a stupid thing to come out and say in the first place. People should feel as comfortable as possible when they are in university; especially they don't like the idea [of being spied on]. Even if 'spying' is too harsh a word, that people are especially looking out for what Muslims are doing, makes doing Islamic things, like even normal Islamic day to day things a little bit difficult.(Civic university)

– Any notion that students are being watched and inhibited just because they are from one group is a very unhealthy thing and should be stopped as soon as possible. It's a form of racism. Like black people say we are watched when we go into shops etc. It's like that; it's crazy. We are being picked out, but why? Because I am trying to get a degree so happen to be here and because I like to pray? Is that right? Its quite scary when you think about it because you don't know what they think about you.(Civic university)

– I know some students said they didn't want to go to the mosque as much in case they got put on the 'list'. Me personally I don't care; it will affect me but let them spy on me. Of course we used to live in [a] multicultural society, I stress the words 'used to' cos its not any more. I came to Britain ten years ago, it was different [then]. It used to be a completely different place. 'Spying' on Asian looking students is incredible; actually by doing that they are actually making it more difficult, because if there are extremists out there they would just go underground, whereas we would have confronted them and said 'you're an extremist, this is why you are wrong, you shouldn't be doing that according to these theological aspects', but they are going to be afraid that they are going to be spied on so they are just going to shut up, they are going to go underground with their little sections of society and their little groups and there isn't going to be any debate. When they go underground that's it, you can't engage with them, you can't talk with them and you can't convince them any way.(Civic university)

– Also there is the issue of terrorism. Maybe this is the motivation behind studies like this research you are doing but they are looking in the wrong places, universities aren't a breeding ground for any type of terrorist. What you have to do if there is an Islamic society is support it because they follow mainstream Islam, if they don't or someone who comes along who doesn't, trust me the rest of the committee are going to know about it and there will always be open dialogue. (Post-1992 university)

– Also a lesser point but unfortunately it may become more difficult in the future I think its last term we had the scare, professors and lecturers being asked to spy on students…if you have an official university chaplain then I think the students should, hopefully, feel a lot more at ease because they have someone to go back to and, in matters like this, they can let that chaplain, that spokesperson, represent them to the university and to defend their views and it would reduce a lot of the suspicion that may start increasing. I mean I think our prayer room could be bugged! (Collegiate university)

None of the students who took part in the study were asked directly about the issue of 'spying' or whether they felt marginalised either within society or at university,

yet these topics were raised in some of the focus groups despite not being issues that the researcher set out to investigate. There were some examples of how the students felt their concerns regarding faith issues were not fully appreciated by members of staff. There were also examples of where students had been picked out by staff because of their faith;

– Let me give you an example. A couple of weeks ago a student came up to me and said I am a bit stuck I need to answer a question. I said show me your assignment brief, he said, No I need to answer the question to the lecturer and she is a homosexual. She has asked me 'What is your opinion on homosexuality'. I asked him if that question had been asked to the whole group, and he said no, only me. I said you know if you give the wrong answer you're in trouble, you'll be branded as homophobic, you might yet penalised in your grades, even chucked off the course. He said no, she has guaranteed anonymity. I said, Look, there's something called professionalism. Why is she asking you as her student. And he said she just wanted to get an understanding of Muslims' views. Now if that isn't victimisation what is? It's not like he's ever mentioned it or he's got any real views on it or anything. He approached me as a friend and said 'by the way what are the Islamic views on homosexuality?' You tell me, here we're dealing with intelligent people, they aren't going to come out and make Islamophobic remarks. They do it in a discrete manner, like this example by criminalising someone or labeling his views as homophobic. Now, she's an intelligent woman, she could have found out herself, why pick out the only student with a Muslim name in the class, who didn't even know what Islam says about the subject any way. She's looking for confrontation.

Community involvement

Links between students and the local community were generally not described by students as being strong. However this differed from university to university for varying reasons. Some universities had a mosque located close to their campus which meant students attended the mosque regularly and made strong links with locals as a result. One university in the study is located in a city with a very small Muslim population, therefore potential for links were not there. There were two examples of how links between students and local communities had benefited students;

– One thing the mosque in X does which is a good thing is during Ramadan. It holds *iftar* for everyone including the students, so it opens up to the whole community including us. Same for Eid where you can go and everybody is welcome even if you are not Muslim. But it's a good thing that should be done by mosques or community centres for their local students who live away from home. (Civic university)

– Before there was the mosque here on campus the local community in A, the B community, some people from C, they all got together and they done loads of petitions, they went to the council, they done quite a bit just to get this mosque. (Post-1992 university)

Other students felt that in theory it would be good to have links between universities and local communities but believed this raised difficulties.

– Muslim communities aren't sufficiently developed to absorb the needs of student communities within the[ir] respective cities, to be honest if we take the example of Bradford, cos I know the city, I know York has less Muslims, but Bradford has a huge amount compared to York, and I would be surprised if students went around to someone's house for a cup of tea in Bradford, that just wouldn't happen. It would be ideal but we don't live in a society where community, where there is strong communal bonds to that extent. (Civic university)

– The only time I think about that aspect of community is when all the home students leave for Eid, that's the only time, because we international students are here on our own. But I don't think it should be expected when I came here – I don't expect that from the community, they have got their own lifestyle, they have got their own daily routine, I think it should essentially come from within the university. Then first thing I wouldn't do when I first got to England is go to a community centre and go sit in a mosque, you just feel so intimidated you want to stay within the university, this responsibility shouldn't be shifted to the community. I think the community is too big and large and sometimes marginalised with their own issues. Muslims might be unemployed for example and not have the luxury to help organise things for us. It needs to come from within the university – that is where it needs to start. (Civic university)

– In this city we have a large community. Students work for students; but in this city a lot of community people, to be honest I might be wrong in saying this, we give them a lot more than they give us. It should be the other way round in reality. There will be certain events like we have free food and some local businesses do sponsor our events. There are a few brothers in the community who get involved. X has a substantial community and students are a community within the community, but I don't think we're seen like that. (Civic university)

This was seen as a potential role for a Muslim chaplain/advisor to have. Links with the community were seen as an area which had potential to be developed. When discussing Muslim disadvantage and underachievement, students at over half the universities felt there was potential for current university students to make links with children in their surrounding Muslim communities and assist in mentoring or encouraging young Muslims to go to university. Although this was an area which required more attention than this study is able to provide, there were many possibilities for students working within communities and helping to inform policy development for targeting young Muslims and their communities, to encourage greater educational attainment and participation in post compulsory education. Students in the study, because they were speaking from experience, had valuable insight into the barriers to education within Muslim communities.

Independence and accountability
It was the overwhelming preference of students that the chaplain/advisor should be an independent person and not attached to a community organisation.
– He shouldn't come from the community. Communities have their own agendas. To a certain extent so do universities or maybe they want to see results and so there would be pressure to get numbers, sort [of], to look good on paper for

university purposes. But this is a good thing because the advisor would have to take students seriously if they are university staff.

– The problem is if the community is paying him he is going to say what they want him to. For example, if he is Pakistani he would be paid by the local Pakistani community and they have to basically tell him what to say. So I think the university should hire someone and that person should be about student needs and student support.

DISCUSSION

Information about Islam at universities in England

Courses currently offered within universities in England were perceived and described by students as essentially 'Muslim studies' courses rather than the study of Islam as a religion. The courses were seen as worthwhile for the study of sociopolitical aspects of Muslim communities, such as the history of Muslim societies and current political activity within Muslim countries, rather than the study of Islamic doctrine. Where theology was intended to be the primary focus, students perceived the content of courses as rudmentary and lacking aspects of doctrine applicable to the practical implementation of Islam for worship and daily practice. As a result students stated a preference to study at Muslim-led institutions or Islamic centres of learning, under Muslim scholars. Most students agreed that Islamic studies courses would be more attractive to them if Islamic theology was offered and Muslim scholars taught such courses.

– Children who leave school early, if it is because they are trying to practise their religion better maybe, they think maybe 'if I go to a *madrasa* it would be better'. But if you can provide the same facilities at university they might consider going to a university as well. I think that's why the numbers of Muslims opting for these courses is low. They probably think I'm not going to get the same thing at universities; it's not that environment to learn the type of Islam I'm interested in.

Students expressed curiosity to learn about how Muslims and Islam were viewed and portrayed in Islamic studies and lslam-related modules, yet many did not actively attend such courses. The main reason given was due to time constraints and apprehension of how they would be perceived by the non-Muslim students in the class when discussion became heated.

Many universities provide literature in the university library on Islam or related subjects; however the vast majority of students in the study did not seek out such books or material offered at their university. These were generally seen as not applicable to the type of information they were looking for. This reflects views about courses and modules offered at the university. Instead all students in the study saw the Islamic society as a reliable source of information and in many instances it was acknowledged that Islamic societies provided an extremely informal source of Islamic information, in terms of students asking committee 106 members or other Muslim students about Islam. The Islamic societies do however provide books and organise seminars with external speakers who are able to provide more informed answers to questions about Islam.

Chaplaincy and other care provisions

Where students were able to give examples of experiences of having a Muslim advisor or chaplain, it was evident that this had made a significant contribution to lobbying universities and assisting students with making a case for their needs. All the students welcomed the idea of a Muslim advisor and saw the advisors' role to be that of providing students with personal support and a source of Islamic knowledge, which would be relevant to Muslim students at English universities.

It was clear that at present Islamic societies were largely providing this kind of support to their fellow students. All of the students did so voluntarily without begrudging the hours that they spent working on events and helping other students. However, for students who were less better catered for, namely those at two of the Post-1992 universities in the study, this was a concern and it was evident that although like all other student societies the Islamic society should be allowed to organise itself, as the only organisation catering for Muslim specific needs this often meant placing a burden on the shoulders of a select number of students which should be carried by someone brought in to deal with such needs.

It is recognised that as many of the students and committees did not have first hand experience of working with a Muslim chaplain/advisor, there was little potential to explore possible tensions that could arise. One student at a Post-1992 university raised concerns regarding a chaplain at another Post-1992 university, who had been rumored to have clashed with the Islamic society. It is therefore essential that the chaplain/advisor work with the Islamic society and Muslim students. During discussion on qualities that a chaplain/advisor should possess, many students raised the point that the person should not be someone employed or sent in by the local community, but rather a member of university staff. Many of the universities who do have some form of Muslim chaplain/advisor have approached local mosques or community organisations which provide the support on a voluntary basis. As many community organisations are already stretched and there are fractions within communities, bringing someone in on an ad hoc basis will not satisfactorily meet the needs of Muslim students, particularly where the Muslim student body is significant, as was the case in all three Post-1992 universities in the study.

Other care issues raised demonstrate the general lack of understanding that can still exist within universities despite well established equal opportunities policies and charters. In the current climate where Muslim students are particularly vulnerable to institutional discrimination and marginalisation, it is imperative that this section of the student population is supported and dealt with in a sympathetic manner.

Appendix H

LIST OF DEPARTMENTS/CENTRES OFFERING TEACHING AND RESEARCH RELATED TO ISLAM

1. Birkbeck, University of London *(www.bbk.ac.uk)*
    - The Faculty of Continuing Education

2. The University of Birmingham *(www.bham.ac.uk)*
    - The Department of Theology and Religion (incorporating the Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations)

3. The University of Bristol *(www.bris.ac.uk)*
    - The Department of Theology and Religious Studies
    - Global Islam Research Group

4. The University of Cambridge *(www.cam.ac.uk)*
    - The Faculty of Oriental Studies
    - The Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies
    - The Faculty of Divinity

5. The University of Central Lancashire *(www.uclan.ac.uk)*
    - The Department of Education and Social Science

6. The University of Chester (*www.chester.ac.uk)*
    - The Department of Theology and Religious Studies

7. Durham University *(www.dur.ac.uk)*
    - The Institute for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (School of Government and International Affairs)
    - The School of Modern Languages and Cultures

8. The University of Exeter *(www.exeter.ac.uk)*
    - The Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies (School of Humanities and Social Sciences)
    - The Department of Politics (School of Humanities and Social Sciences)

9. The University of Gloucestershire (*www.glos.ac.uk)*
    - The Department of Humanities (Faculty of Education, Humanities and Sciences

10. King's College, London *(www.lcl.ac.uk)*
    - The Department of Theology and Religious Studies

11. Lancaster University *(www.lancs.ac.uk)*
    - The Department of Religious Studies

12. The University of Leeds (*www.leeds.ac.uk*)
- The Department of Theology and Religious Studies (School of Humanities)
- The Department of Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies(School of Modern Languages and Cultures)
- The School of Politics and International Studies

13. The University of Manchester *(www.manchester.ac.uk)*
- The Department of Middle Eastern Studies (School of Languages, Linguistics and Cultures)

14. Manchester Metropolitan University *(www.mmu.ac.uk)*
- The Department of Politics and Philosophy

15. The University of Nottingham (*www.nottingham.ac.uk*)
- The Department of Theology and Religious Studies
- The Institute for Middle Eastern Studies

16. The Open University (*www.open.ac.uk*)
- The Department of Religious Studies

17. The School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London *(www.soas.ac.uk)*
- The Department of the Study of Religions (The Faculty of Arts and Humanities)
- The Department of the Languages and Cultures of the Near and Middle East (The Faculty of Languages and Cultures)
- The Centre of Islamic Studies
- The London Middle East Institute
- The Centre of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law

18. The University of Oxford *(www.ox.ac.uk)*
- Near and Middle Eastern Studies (within the Faculty of Oriental Studies)
- The Middle East Centre(St Antony's College)
- The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies

19. Oxford Brookes University *(www.brookes.ac.uk)*
- The Wesley Centre, Oxford (within the Westminster Institute of Education)

[This is only an indicative list]

Appendix I

LIST OF PEOPLE CONSULTED

1. Professor Abdel- Haleem (School of Oriental and African Studies, London)
2. Mawlana Musa Admani (Muslim Advisor, London Metropolitan University)
3. Sughra Ahmed (Secretary, Association of Muslim Chaplains)
4. Dr Manazir Ahsan (Director, Islamic Foundation, Vice –Rector Markfield Institute of Higher Education, Leicester)
5. Professor Muhammad Anwar (University of Warwick)
6. Dr. Mehmet Asuty (Durham Univerity)
7. Professor Saleem Al Hasni (University of Manchester)
8. Yusuf Al Khoei (Director, Al-Khoei Foundation, London)
9. Dr Chris Allen (University of Birmingham)
10. Dr Anas Al Sheikh Ali (Chairman of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists)
11. Dr Fatma Amer (Markfield Institute of Higher Education)
12. Professor M.A. Bidmos (University of Lagos, Nigeria)
13. Professor Humayun Ansari (Royal Holloway, University of London)
14. Azmery Anwar (Student of Medicine)
15. Imam Rashad Ahmad Azmi (Muslim Advisor, University of Bath)
16. Dr Abdul Bari (Secretary General, Muslim Council of Britain, London)
17. Marlene Bertrand (HR Manager Equality & Diversity, University of Bath)
18. Yahya Birt (Director, City Circle London)
19. Dr Roger Abdul Wahhab Boase (Queen Mary, University of London)
20. Raana Bokhari (Executive member, Association of Muslim Chaplains)
21. Daud Bone (PhD Student and former President of Islamic Society at University of Warwick)
22. Dr Adrian Brockett (York St John University)
23. Dr Jabal M. Buaben (University of Birmingham)
24. Dr Gary R. Bunt (University of Wales, Lampeter)
25. Professor Robert Burgess (Vice Chancellor, University of Leicester)
26. Dr Mahmood Chandia (Lancashire Council of Mosques & Univerity of Central Lancashire)
27. Mohammad Akram Khan-Cheema (Educationist and Advisor to several Muslim Educational Institutions in the UK)
28. Dr Akil Choudary(Muslim Advisor, University of Birmingham)
29. Imran Chowdhury (Managing Director, Sunni Path Academy)
30. Reverend Jeremy Clines (Higher Education Chaplaincy Development Officer, Education Division of Church of England)
31. Maurice Irfan Coles (Schools Development Support Agency, Leicester)
32. Dr Amanullah DeSondy (Research Fellow, University of Glasgow)
33. Dr Mateeen Durrani (Muslim Advisor, University of Essex)
34. Professor Les Ebdon (Vice Chancellor, University of Luton and Bedfordshire)

35.   Professor Anoush Ehteshami (Durham University)
36.   Dr Abdelwahab El-Affendi (University of Westminster)
37.   Mohammad Ellis (Muslim Youth Helpline)
38.   Dr Farid El-Shayyal (Markfield Institute of Higher Education)
39.   Dr Stephen Fagbemi (Full time University Chaplain & Anglican Chaplain University of Sunderland)
40.   Mawlana Qari Farooq Ali (Muslim Advisor, University of Bolton)
41.   Professor David Ford (University of Cambridge)
42.   Masoud Gadir (Muslim Chaplain, University of East Anglia)
43.   Professor Brian Gates(St Martin's College, Lancaster)
44.   Sufyan Gent (Muslim Advisor University of Bradford)
45.   Bahiyah Gent (Muslim Advisor, University of Bradford)
46.   Professor Robert Gleave (University of Exeter)
47.   Omar Ali Grant (Al Khoei Foundation, London)
48.   Professor Hugh Goddard (University of Nottingham)
49.   Professor Mohamed El-Gomati (University of York, and also the Muslim Advisor)
50.   Omar El- Hamdoon (Muslim Advisor, University of Sheffield)
51.   Mawlana Abdul Hameed (Muslim Advisor, University of Wolverhampton)
52.   Abul Ali A. Hamid (Principal, Muslim College London)
53.   Dr Usama Hassan (Middlesex University and also the Muslim Advisor)
54.   Professor John F. Healey (University of Manchester)
55.   Dr David Herbert (Open University)
56.   Professor Carole Hillenbrand (University of Edinburgh)
57.   Dr Andrew Holden (Lancaster University)
58.   Dr Maria Holt (Research Fellow, University of Westminster)
59.   Shazim Hussein (Al-Mahdi Institute, Birmingham)
60.   Dilwar Hussain (Commission for Racial Equality)
61.   Dr Mawil Izzi Dien (University of Wales, Lampeter)
62.   Sheridan James (Muslim Advisor, University of Cambridge)
63.   Dr Haifaa Jawad (University of Birmingham)
64.   Huda Jawad (Director, Forward Thinking, London)
65.   Mike Jefferies (University of Exeter, Distance Learning)
66.   Ali Joudi (President of Ahl-Bait Islamic Society)
67.   Dr Bustami Khir (University of Birmingham)
68.   Waqqas Khan (President, Federation of Students' Islamic Societies Uk and Eire [FOSIS])
69.   Muhammad Afzal Khan (Counsellor & former Mayor of Manchester)
70.   Dr. Pauline Kollantai (Co-ordinator for Research & Staff Development, York St John University)
71.   Dr Phillip Lewis (University of Bradford)
72.   Dr Ashraf Makadam (Leicester Islamic Academy)
73.   Professor Iftekhar Malik (Bath Spa University)
74.   Maleiha Malik (King's College, London)
75.   Dr. Iftekhar Malik (Forward Thinking, London)

76.   Dr Toby Mayer (Institute of Ismaili Studies, London)
77.   Dr Basil Mustafa (Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies)
78.   Dr Nuruddin Miladi (University of Westminster)
79.   Dr Muhammad Mukadam (Principal, Leicester Islamic Academy)
80.   Dr Musharraf Hussain al-Azhari (Director, Karimia Institute, Nottingham)
81.   Professor Tariq Modood (University of Bristol)
82.   Dr Yahya Michot (Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies)
83.   Tasmia Mesbahuddin (Post doctoral Research Fellow at University of Bath)
84.   Dr.   Shaikh Abdul Mabud (Director General the Islamic Academy, Cambridge)
85.   Caroline Marston (Policy Adviser, Universities UK)
86.   Ehsan Masood (Writer for *Prospect* and 'Open Democracy' , London)
87.   Dr Christopher Melchert (University of Oxford)
88.   Professor Werner F.   Menski (School of Oriental and African Studies, London)
89.   Dr Sean McLoughlin (University of Leeds)
90.   Yasir Mirza (Equalities Policy Officer, Higher Education Funding Council for England)
91.   Mawlana Ibrahim Mogra (MCB Chair of Interfaith relations and Imam and teacher in Leicester)
92.   Mawlana Imran Mogra (University of Central England)
93.   Dr Abdul Fatah S.   Mohamed (Director, al Muntada al-Islami Trust, London)
94.   Uthman Moqbil (Muslim Advisor, University of Nottingham)
95.   Nasrullah Khan Mughal (Chief Executive Manchester Council for Community Relations and Muslim Advisor for University of Manchester)
96.   Shahida Nabi (Phd Student, University of Manchester)
97.   Professor S. Salman Nadvi (Formerly University of Durban, South Africa)
98.   Dr.   Mohammad Akram Nadwi (Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies)
99.   Fuad Nahdi (Visiting Fellow, Inter-Faith Relations Mulsim College London)
100.   Professor Azim Nanji (Director, The Institute of Ismaili Studies, London)
101.   Adamo Ndong (Muslim Advisor, University of Westminster)
102.   Professor Ian Netton(University of Leeds)
103.   Dr Andrew J.   Newman (University of Edinburgh)
104.   Professor Jorgen Nielsen (University of Birmingham)
105.   Dr Farhan Nizami (Director, Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies)
106.   Professor Malory Nye (Al- Maktoum Institute, Dundee)
107.   Jalaluddin Patel (Executive member of *Hizb ut-Tahrir*)
108.   Hassan Patel (Former Executive member of FOSIS & NUS)
109.   Professor James Piscatori (Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies)
110.   Asgar Halim Rajput (Muslim Advisor, University of Brunel)
111.   Professor Tariq Ramadan (St Antony's College, Oxford)
112.   Saheema Rawat (Policy Adviser Race, Religion and Belief, Equality Challenge Unit)

113. Dr Sajjad Rizvi (University of Exeter)
114. Imam Dr Abduljalil Sajid (Chairman, Religious and Racial Harmony UK)
115. Abdus Salam (International Support Co-ordinator, Liverpool Hope University)
116. Professor Ziauddin Sardar (Writer, Broadcaster and Commentator)London
117. Dr Salman Sayyid (University of Leeds)
118. Professor Perry Schmidt-Leukel (University of Glasgow)
119. Dr Bassam Saeh (Oxford)
120. Massoud Shadjareh (Chairman, Islamic Human Rights Commission London)
121. Dr Elliot Shaw (St Martin's College, Lancaster)
122. Ustadh Mustapha Sheikh (Arabic Course Teacher, *Al Sirat*)
123. Dr Ayman Shihadeh (University of Edinburgh)
124. Aslam Siddiqui (Muslim Advisor, University of Derby)
125. Abdur Rashid Siddiqui (Muslim Advisor, University of Leicester)
126. Dr Ghayasuddin Siddiqui (Leader of the Muslim Parliament)
127. Professor Mona Siddiqui (Unviersity of Glasgow)
128. Nejatullah Siddiqi (Former Head of Department of Islmaic Studies, Aligarh Muslim University, India)
129. Ken Sloan (Director, Campus Affairs University of Warwick)
130. Dr Simon G.   Smith (University of Leeds)
131. Rashid Sohawan (Muslim Advisor, University of Canterbury)
132. Dr Ibrahim Surty (University of Birmingham)
133. Dr Azzam Tamimi (Director, Insitute of Islamic Political Thought London)
134. Dr David Thomas (University of Birmingham)
135. Dr Colin Turner (Durham University)
136. Dr David Tyrer (Liverpool John Moores University)
137. Professor Werner Ustorf (University of Birmingham)
138. Ahmed Versi (Editor, *The Muslim News*)
139. Professor Paul Weller (University of Derby)
140. Professor Ian Williams (University of Central England)
141. Professor Rodney Wilson (Durham University)
142. Tim J. Winter (University of Cambridge and also Muslim Chaplain)
143. Dr Kate Zeberi (School of Oriental and African Studies, London)
144. Dr Mahjoob Zweiri (Durham University)
145. Dr Barbara Zollner (Birkbeck College, London)

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