

Appendix 6

Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster in Ireland



6th February 2020

Attn: Ms Linda Murphy
Academic Administration & Student Affairs Manager
Dundalk Institute of Technology
Dublin Road
Dundalk
Co Louth
A91 K584

Re: Request for a Pastafarian Service within the Chaplaincy

Dear Ms Murphy,

I refer to your letter of 3rd February 2020. Thank you for confirming that my application to arrange a service at the Dundalk IT Chaplaincy will be processed by the institute according to the policies *"as outlined at the WRC Adjudication Hearing on 25/06/2019"*.

According to those policies, the Chaplaincy at Dundalk IT has previously arranged services on campus for the votaries of external religious groups, which included content aimed at promoting the teachings of those groups. As just one example, the Chaplaincy arranged a visit to the Dundalk IT campus for Archbishop Eamon Martin, after His Excellency informed the Chaplaincy that he was *"doing a tour of the area"*. The content of Archbishop Martin's service involved promoting ideas associated with *"Pope Francis and The Church in Ireland"*.

As I explained in my letter of 16th December 2019, I am an atheist and the Pastafarian Service that I wish to arrange will promote my non-religious beliefs. I have outlined to you the content of the proposed service, which is directly opposed to the Roman Catholic teachings that have very frequently been promoted by the Dundalk IT Chaplaincy. Given the very large volume of Roman Catholic services that have been facilitated by the Chaplaincy, including those arranged on behalf of outside Roman Catholic bodies from

across the broad catchment area of the institute, it does not seem like an especially onerous request to seek just one non-religious service that would include content opposed to those Roman Catholic teachings.

When Archbishop Martin was in contact with the Dundalk IT Chaplaincy and sought to provide a service on campus that promoted Roman Catholic beliefs, the response of the Chaplaincy was to:

- i) arrange a date for the service that was convenient for Archbishop Martin
- ii) provide a venue on campus for the service, at no cost to Archbishop Martin
- iii) create posters advertising the service, at no cost to Archbishop Martin
- iv) advertise and promote the service through social media and other channels

In contrast, when I propose a non-religious service that would include content opposed to Roman Catholic teachings, it seems that the institute is unwilling to facilitate me in any way, other than to inform me that I may hire a room at my own cost. This appears to represent less favourable treatment of me by the institute, because Archbishop Martin has religious beliefs whereas I have none. There have been literally hundreds of Roman Catholic services arranged by the Dundalk IT Chaplaincy on campus, including those for external Roman Catholic votaries from the broad catchment area of the institute, and at no time has the Roman Catholic Church been charged by the institute for facilitating any of those services. I now understand your policies to require that not even a single non-religious service opposing Roman Catholic teachings can be permitted, without a charge being applied. These policies appear designed to welcome and promote those with religious beliefs, while creating prohibitive barriers to those with non-religious beliefs.

I do not wish to be prescriptive in terms of which room on campus that the Chaplaincy should provide for my service. I mentioned your Quiet Room as I understand it is modest and within the direct control of the Chaplaincy, such that this venue would be easiest for the Chaplaincy to facilitate. However, I am of course willing to provide my service in a different room if the Chaplaincy would prefer to arrange the event elsewhere on campus. My expectation though is that public bodies providing services to a broad catchment area, will ensure equal treatment for those of all faiths and none, rather than treating those with non-religious beliefs less favourably than those with religious beliefs. This expectation comes both from the terms of the Equal Stats Act, and also from the publications of Dundalk IT itself. For example, the current Dundalk IT Chaplaincy web site¹ as of the date on this correspondence, states that:

"The Chaplaincy is a safe and welcoming space for people of all faiths and none."

It would not be consistent with this statement to enforce a policy whereby the Chaplaincy welcomes and promotes services according to Roman Catholic beliefs, while applying prohibitive cost barriers to services promoting non-religious beliefs. The same web site also states that one of the functions of the Dundalk IT Chaplaincy is *"Faith Development"*. Similarly, there is no basis on which Dundalk IT can promote Roman Catholic faith

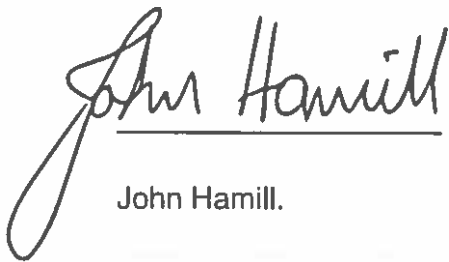
¹ <https://www.dkit.ie/dkit-life/student-supports/chaplaincy.html>

development among the student body, while at the same time enforcing discriminatory policies that inhibit ideas opposed to the Roman Catholic faith.

I'd like to propose that the Chaplaincy should facilitate my one-hour Pastafarian service at lunchtime on Tuesday 3rd March, which should be arranged by the Chaplaincy at no cost to me. In the alternative, I'd be grateful if you could complete the ES2 Form that I sent you on 28th January 2020, along with the associated ES1 Form.

Praise be His noodly appendages.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Hamill". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J". A horizontal line is drawn under the signature.

John Hamill.