

Religious literacy training in the East of England

Local authority perspectives

A report by Malcolm James
for the East of England
Faiths Council

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Foreword

This study was commissioned by the East of England Faiths Council as part of its continuing construction of an evidence base for aspects of faith activity in the region; and to assist the Council in planning its future activities.

We also hope that this document may provide useful information for other English Regional Faith Forums, and for those in the public sector who are engaged with faith, diversity, equality and human resources issues.

It is clear that there is a widespread desire to learn more about the faith traditions and communities of our region, but also that there are some constraints on both provision and uptake.

At this stage there are various options and actions for the Faiths Council to explore, but these should be developed in conjunction with bodies already experienced in the application of the Equality Standard and associated legislation; and set within the existing frameworks. 'Best practice' training that goes beyond the frameworks should be designed to open up space for dialogue by respecting the complexity of human identity; challenge prejudice; and be relevant to everyday life. Possible ways for the Faiths Council to take this study forward are noted at Appendix C.

Finally, we would like to express our sincere thanks to all who have given their time to participate in this study, and to share their experience.

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About the author

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Introduction

Religious literacy was recently described as, “the skills and knowledge required to engage in an informed and confident way with faith communities” (CLG 2008, p.33). Training in religious literacy is the learning process that provides people and organisations with these skills and knowledge.

This report addresses one aspect of religious literacy training. It explores the training on religion and belief provided within, and procured by, local authorities based in the East of England. In so doing it highlights the scope, strengths and weaknesses of training in religion or belief; looks at gaps or constraints in uptake; makes strategic recommendations for regional coordination of training and considers how learning from the East of England might be applied more widely.

This report is based on data collected from 15 semi-structured interviews with local authority representatives and regional training providers. These are supported anecdotally by initial findings from a survey on religious literacy sent to all local authorities in the East of England.

The report states that basic training on religion and belief is being provided to the majority of local authority staff as part generic equalities and diversity training. In response to the Equality Standard for local government, local authorities are also providing training orientated towards specific services and job roles. Although there is some evidence that wider awareness training is being provided, this has not met the demand from staff or from managers who emphasise the need for additional high-quality awareness training accompanied by training resources. The report argues that awareness training should be situated with the context of wider equalities, should be relevant to the professional and private lives of participants, and should not close down the everyday formations of diverse and hybrid identities.

The report develops over five chapters. The first chapter sets the scene by outlining recent literature on training in religious literacy. This literature highlights the increased importance of local government in providing and procuring training in religious literacy. It also acknowledges the lack of detail available on the quality of training provision and its relevance to the East of England. The second chapter presents the legislative and local government frameworks used to orientate training in religion and belief. The third chapter outlines the methodology. The fourth chapter presents the analysis of the data: - it looks at the drivers and outcomes of training in religion and belief and at how training is being used within local authorities in response to employment and service provision demands. Finally, this chapter looks at training offered by external providers. The conclusion critically draws the analysis together and develops the arguments that lead to the

recommendations in section six. The conclusion also suggests ways forward for future research.

1 Literature

In policy and applied research there has been an increasing interest in training in religion and belief and the role of local authorities in its provision and procurement. Faith based organisations and faith based communities have been recognised for the important role they play in forming local partnerships that can access the 'hard to reach' and promote cohesive society (Home Office 2005). It is increasingly felt that without religious literacy these relationships would not flourish and historic suspicions would be allowed to linger (Fentener 2008, p. 4; James 2007, p.59).

The importance of religious literacy in building local partnerships has been recognised by both the government and faiths sector (CLG 2008; Fentener 2008). Both recognise its importance in overcoming easily avoided misunderstandings and in improving local relationships (James 2007, p. 58).

To meet the demands for religious literacy, increasing attention has been paid to training. 2005 research published by the Employers' Organisation for local government showed that of the 85% of the local authorities providing training in equality and diversity in England and Wales, 67% provided dedicated training in religion/belief (Employers' Organisation 2005, p.16). Commentary on forthcoming research by Local Government Association and Inter Faith Network shows that just over a third of authorities surveyed reported providing specific training for staff working with faith groups and local inter faith structures. Of this group, 86% offered general religious literacy training (CLG 2008, p.89). Research has also shown that faith based organisations are involved in providing religious literacy training to local authorities around the country (CLG 2008, p.46; Fentener 2008, p. 28) and that faith based organisations want to see an increase in direct faith training in local government (Fentener et al 2008, p.xiv).

Despite this increasing body of information, the question is very much left open as to the quality and impact of this training. Knowledge that levels of training differ substantially across the country (Fentener 2008, p. 42) also leaves unanswered the applicability of these findings to the East of England.

2 Legislation and local authority frameworks

Before this report moves on to analyse the drivers, outcomes and design of training, it is important to situate training in local government frameworks.

Local authority frameworks for training on religion and belief are based on statutory obligations and on best-value guidance. Under these headings local authorities have obligations as employers and service providers.

2.1 Employment Regulations

Unlike race, sex and gender there are no statutory codes in force covering religion or belief. However, ACAS has published guidance on the legislative impacts of 2003 Employment Equality Regulations (Religion and Belief) (ACAS 2005).

From 2003, it became unlawful to discriminate against workers because of religion or similar belief¹ (ACAS 2005, p.2). This largely brought religion and belief into line with guidelines on race, sex and disability and required that religion and belief be included in local authorities' Equality Policy (ACAS 2005, p.26).

The 2003 regulations focus on discrimination, harassment and victimisation. All of these have training implications so that hurtful, unlawful and unacceptable behaviour can be avoided. Through training, staff need to be made aware of the requirements of different religions and beliefs so that people are not disadvantaged by making arrangements that may be difficult for them to meet because of religious observance, dietary requirements, dress, physical contact, exchanging personal information and choice of venue for social activities (ACAS 2005, p.15).

Staff also need to be made aware through training and other means that it is not acceptable to discriminate, harass or victimise someone on the grounds of religion or belief, and that it is also unlawful (ACAS 2005, p.26). This is not to preclude discussion about religion or belief in the workplace, as this can be a useful form of awareness building, rather to prevent discrimination. Training should highlight the difference between the two.

Under the 2003 regulations, local authorities are under no obligation to monitor the religion or belief of employees (councils must do racial monitoring). However, it is considered good practice in order that local authorities can meet the demands of their workforce (ACAS 2005, p.23).

¹ For the purpose of the regulations, religion or belief is loosely defined as "being any religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief" (ACAS 2005, p.3).

2.2 Equalities Bill

The Equalities Bill proposes a new Equality Duty for the public sector that will bring together existing duties on race, disability and gender and extend them to gender reassignment, sexual orientation and religion or belief (Government Equalities Office 2008, p.9).² However, the Bill is vague on the legislative impact of these extensions and simply states that the Duty will “require public bodies to consider how their policies, programmes and services affect different disadvantaged groups in the community. We will be discussing with relevant organisations how the new duty will work in practice, especially in relation to religion or belief” (Government Equalities Office 2008, p.13).

2.3 Equality Standard

Local authorities work to best-value frameworks for service delivery. The most important of these, in terms of training in religion and belief, is the Equality Standard for local government.

The Equality Standard for local government was launched in 2001 and was revised in 2006 to cover religion and belief. It has now been adopted by 90% of all local authorities. It has also been adopted by the Audit Commission as a voluntary Best Value Performance Indicator.

The Standard has been developed to enable local authorities to mainstream equalities, including religions or belief, into practice at all levels. The Equalities Standard is oriented both towards service provision and employment. That is, it is orientated towards the local authority as a provider of services and as an employer. Once in place the Standard aims to provide a continuous framework for reviewing policies and services and working against the barriers that cause disadvantage.

The five levels of the Equality Standard allow local authorities to set targets and active outcomes appropriate to local need (IDEA 2007, p.4). These levels are:

- Level 1: Commitment to a Comprehensive Equality Policy
- Level 2: Assessment and community engagement
- Level 3: Setting equality objectives and targets
- Level 4: Information systems and monitoring against targets
- Level 5: Achieving and reviewing outcomes

(IDEA 2007, p.12)

² Sikhs and Jews are already covered as ethnic groups under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000) (OPSI 2000).

With regards religion or belief, key criteria contained within the Standard are:

- Level 1:
 - Formulate and adopt a comprehensive equality policy for the authority, covering race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age and religion/belief
 - Make a commitment to extend equality impact assessments to sexual orientation, age, religion and belief by March 2008
- Level 2:
 - Publish an action plan for the extension of equality impact assessment to sexual orientation, religion or belief and age by March 2008
- Level 3:
 - Equality objectives and targets for sexual orientation, age, religion and belief to be set by March 2009
 - Appraise competency/behaviours to ensure that managers and staff are capable of implementing the Equality Standard, including the new strands of sexual orientation, religion or belief and age

The Equality Standard makes specific training recommendations in addition to the training implications that all aspects of service delivery and employment entail:

- Level 1:
 - Commitment to develop a programme of staff training in equality issues
- Level 2:
 - Develop a programme of equality training to support the Corporate Equality Scheme and departmental service objectives
- Level 3:
 - Provide training for managers on the implementation of the Standard with contractors and partners

3 Methods

To collect data on the scope and strengths and weaknesses of training, and to look at gaps or constraints in uptake, two methods were employed: semi-structured interviewing; and a telephone / written survey of all local authorities in the East of England.

3.1 Semi-structured interviews

3.1.1 Sampling

Local authorities were sampled using a criterion sampling technique. The criteria for the sample were: level of religious diversity and, geographical distribution. That is to say, it was important to include local authorities with high levels of religious diversity whilst ensuring that the geographical spread of the region was represented.

Local authority areas with high levels of diversity were considered important as local government for these areas would have an obligation to respond to the diversity of their circumscription and consequently the diversity of their workforce. Measures for religious diversity were taken from 2001 census data presented in *Focus on Ethnicity and Religion* (2006).

The local authorities in the region with highest religious diversity were: Luton Unitary Authority and Hertsmere Local Authority (0.26-0.49).³ This was followed by Bedford, Cambridge, Epping Forest, Peterborough, St Albans and Three Rivers local authorities (0.12 to 0.25). The rest of the region had religious diversity below 0.11. In terms of geographical coverage, with the exception of Cambridge, all of the authorities with medium to high regional diversity were in the south and west of the region. Three bordered London.

Ensuring the participation of Luton and Hertsmere, an additional three local authorities were selected with religious diversity above 0.12. Additional authorities were then added to the list to provide better geographic coverage. This resulted in the following list of local authorities which participated in the research:

- Bedford Borough Council
- Epping Forest District Council
- Harlow District Council
- Hertsmere Borough Council

³ The religious diversity score used by National Statistics is based on the chance that two people, chosen at random, are from the same religion. A score of 0.10 would mean that there was a 10% chance that two people selected at random belonged to different religions (National Statistics 2006, p.76).

- Ipswich Borough Council
- Luton Borough Council
- Norfolk County Council
- Rochford District Council
- Three Rivers District Council

Respondents within the local authorities were established using either data held at East of England Faiths Council or enquiries to the switchboards.

Key training providers in the East of England were also contacted. This was to get a wider appreciation for local authority procurement of training. The following training providers participated in the research:

- ACAS
- Diversiton
- Garnett Foundation
- RG Enterprises
- Suffolk Inter-Faith Resource/East of England Faiths Agency

3.1.2 Interviews

To maximise time and resources, one-on-one telephone interviews were conducted with respondents from local authorities and training providers. The exploratory nature of the research demanded that interviews were semi-structured. This allowed space for the interviewee to elaborate and provide information that may not have been considered beforehand by the interviewer.

The interviews were guided by questionnaires which listed a set of main questions and flow-ups. These were designed on the basis of the research objectives, three preliminary interviews and on a review of current literature.⁴

3.1.3 Confidentiality and ethics

The nature of the research meant that confidentiality and anonymity could not be guaranteed as it may be necessary to highlight specific cases of good (or bad) practice in local authorities or training organisations. All interviewees were informed that the interviews were neither confidential nor anonymous. That is, that the information that they gave was attributable. They were however offered to the opportunity to talk 'off the record'.

In terms of reciprocity, all respondents were offered the opportunity to see the findings from the research.

All interview transcripts were stored electronically in an encrypted folder (British Sociological Association 2002, p. 2).

⁴ An example of the questionnaire can be found in appendix 2

3.2 Survey of all local authorities in the East of England

A survey was sent out to all local authorities in the East of England. The purpose of the survey was to establish the extent and quality of training in religion and belief being provided by all local authorities in the region; to establish to what extent local authorities were accessing the services of external providers and, to offer respondents the opportunity to state what additional training resources they would find helpful.

It should be noted that unlike the semi-structured interviews, the survey of local authorities was an in-house process with a different time frame. Much of the survey data is not yet available for this report. Returned responses have been considered anecdotally.

4 Analysis

This section provides an analysis of the research data. The analysis includes a discussion of the drivers behind training in religion or belief and the desired outcomes of the training. The analysis then goes on to discuss the design of training and additional support required to improve the quality of training. Finally, the analysis turns to the role of external providers.

4.1 Drivers

The research identified several factors that motivated local authorities to provide training on religion or belief.

Training on religion or belief was generally delivered within the equalities and equal opportunities framework, as one of the six strands. As such, training was driven by employment legislation on harassment, victimisation and discrimination.

In addition, the Equality Standard for local government was a central motivator, both in terms of employment and service provision. Local authority respondents recognised the importance of addressing equalities issues and the Standard was seen to provide a clear framework in which to meet these demands. Local authorities' progress on the Standard was reflected in the type of training that was provided. Only one local authority interviewed was not working towards the Equalities Standard.

A further driver for training in religion and belief was the increased religious diversity of the local population. Increased religious diversity was seen to present new challenges for accessible services and a demand for greater cultural awareness.

Training in religion and belief was also driven by staff. Some local authorities, through consultation processes, had identified that staff were keen to increase their awareness of religion and belief beyond the framework established by the Equality Standard and legislation.

Funding was highlighted as one of the key barriers to making wider training in religion and belief a reality. Some respondents were also apathetic with regards training on religion and belief. These staff perceived their authorities to be low in religious diversity and therefore felt that employment issues around religion or belief would not arise among the staff.

4.2 Desired outcomes

The desired outcomes of the training were aligned with the drivers.

Authorities stated the desired outcomes were: good workplace relations; accessible service provision and, increased awareness of religion and belief. With regards the first two outcomes, knowledge of the appropriate legislation was a central component.

At its most basic, the desired outcome of employment training was to make staff aware of equal opportunities and their basic legal duties as employees of the local authority. This was further elaborated to take into account the different roles that managers had in complying with employment legislation.

Training on religion and belief was also designed to make services more 'culturally competent'. Respondents felt that a general level of competency was required in order to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings in service provision and to ensure equality of access. Respondents pointed out that frontline staff should be made aware of what was expected from them and focus their minds on their own behaviour.

Overarching the remit of the local authority as an employer and service provider was a concern for general awareness on religion and belief. It was acknowledged that improved awareness would create better relationships between staff and would enable people to talk about issues they may previously have felt uncomfortable about. Training sessions themselves were identified as spaces where participants had opportunities to discuss perceived differences in a supportive environment and raise questions and concerns. Breaking down these barriers was also seen to improve service delivery.

4.3 Training design

All local authority respondents affirmed that staff were provided with equalities training on induction. Others stated that they were providing ongoing training either annually or on a more ad hoc basis. Some authorities were also providing tailored training to meet the employment and service provision demands of various levels of staff within the authority's structure.

On the whole, local authorities did not provide specific training on religion and belief outside of general equalities training. However, some authorities had delivered specific training in the past. This training had been curtailed for financial reasons. Some two-tier district councils did not provide training on equalities and diversity at all as this was delivered at a county level.

Local authorities' training on religion and belief was largely orientated around the 2003 employment legislation and Equality Standard service provision guidelines. Service orientated training was welcomed by some respondents as being more applicable to their professional lives both with regards to their area of expertise (e.g. drugs and alcohol, catering) and their roles within the corporate structure (e.g. managing staff, democratic representation).

Training sessions used numerous methods to engage with religion and belief. These included role plays, group discussion, case studies, PowerPoint

presentations, handouts and videos. Some local authorities had also developed sessions that included information on migration, dress codes, food, family relationships, social structures, religious calendars, music and poetry. Some has invited speakers from different faith communities and visited local places of worship.

4.4 Additional support

Respondents were asked about the additional support they needed to develop more effective training programmes on religion or belief.

Many respondents stated that they would like to see a database of trainers in the region. One respondent pointed out that this resource would be particularly useful if the trainers were approved and evaluated. The desire for a resource of (approved) trainers in the region was in response to a lack of knowledge of trainers that specialised in religion and belief in the East of England.

Local authorities were also interested in support materials to improve their in-house training. Respondents noted that the debate on religion and belief moved quickly and thought it would be useful to have resources that kept them up to date. Respondents were also interested in models for training that could go beyond the Equality Standard.

Most respondents said they would welcome support to develop bespoke training on religion or belief that would be applicable to particular localities and service provision areas.

4.5 External providers⁵

Some local authorities procured training services from external providers. Providers came from a range of generic and specialist training organisations and from local inter faith groups. Data shows that there was limited knowledge of providers who could offer specialist training in religion and belief.

External providers were used by local authorities to cover a range of training needs that arose from employment legislation and from the Equality Standard. However, external providers were also used to provide awareness building training that went beyond these frameworks.

External providers that ran training on awareness generally situated religion and belief in the wider context of 'cultural awareness'. This was in

⁵ A list of organisations and consultants identified by this study that provide training on religion and belief in the East of England are included in appendix 1. This list was collated from information provided in the semi-structured interview and in the returned surveys. The list is not exhaustive and is part of ongoing mapping of training on religion and belief in the East of England.

acknowledgment of the diversity and hybridity of everyday human identity and the danger of over-determining people as belonging to certain 'types'.

External providers were careful to ground awareness training by making it relevant to the everyday private and professional lives of participants. This ensured that the process of learning was not simply about 'others' but about the participants' own experiences.

Two popular forms of awareness training procured by local authorities were the Diversity Game from Suffolk Interfaith Resource and the training from the Garnett Foundation which uses role play and actors. Both examples are designed to increase general awareness through play, rather than specifically addressing legislation. External providers, such as Diversiton also offered 'off-the-shelf' products, in addition to bespoke training. Other organisations, such as ACAS, specialised in training in employment legislation. External providers such as RG Enterprises and Luton Council of Faiths were able to use their knowledge and experience in local faith groups to arrange speakers from religious communities and visits to places of worship.

5 Conclusion

Religion and belief is an integral part of equalities and diversity training. This is cemented through the adoption of the Equalities Standard and the continued development of equalities legislation. New duties arising from the Equalities Bill are likely to bring the equalities strands further together under a wider human rights framework. The challenge then is to ensure that training on religion and belief is of high quality and is complementary to other strands.

Within the framework set by the Equality Standard, respondents were keen that training should fit the requirements for each level of the Standard. However, respondents also thought that training should go beyond the confines of the Standard. Respondents were interested in training that was relevant to their everyday professional experiences – resources that would help them to deliver higher and more culturally competent services. Others were interested in general awareness training on religion and belief to improve service delivery and employment relations.

Techniques for building awareness included visits, speakers, role plays, board games and dialogue. The key to awareness training, whichever approach was used, was to open up discussion and increase dialogue while not cementing stereotypes and prejudices about religious 'groups'. To this extent, many external providers preferred to address awareness in the context of wider human identity rather than solely focusing on religion.

A barrier to developing training provision was a lack of information on organisations or consultants that provided these services in the region. Many respondents struggled to point to organisations that could provide training on religion and belief and welcomed a resource that would overcome this hurdle. Similarly, respondents highlighted the need for access to training resources.

A final common barrier to implementing more in-depth and targeted training was financial constraint. Respondents commented that in-depth courses were put in jeopardy or had been cancelled for this reason.

5.1 Markers for future research

Data should be collected and analysed on best practice models for training - what approaches have been successful and what lessons can be learnt. The course run on religious diversity and anti-discrimination in connection with the Multi-Faith Centre at the University of Derby is an excellent starting point.

To build further data on coverage and support at a regional level it would be useful to conduct research on other public sector providers including the

police, fire service, health services and education. There is anecdotal evidence that some of these bodies provide valuable in-house resources.

For a statistical impression of religious literacy in the East of England it may be advisable to conduct a survey that can build on current work by the Local Government Association and Inter faith Network.

Mapping of provision of religious literacy training in the region should be ongoing to maintain knowledge of training available in the region.

Finally, research should be drawn together from other regions to form a detailed national picture of the extent and impact of religious literacy training.

6 Recommendations

- Consider how training in religion and belief dove-tails with wider equality training.
- Any training and resources targeted at local government should be clearly situated within the existing frameworks (legislation and Equality Standard) or, if it goes beyond these remits, should be identified as 'best practice'.
- Develop job specific training within the Equality Standard framework.
- Develop 'best practice' awareness-building training that goes beyond the frameworks outlined by the Equality Standard and employment legislation.
- Consider how training would contribute to programmes of continued learning and development in local authorities.
- Maintain a database of approved trainers and resources on religion or belief for the East of England.
- Maintain a database of approved resources on religion or belief for the East of England.
- Explore the possibilities for sharing best practice between local authorities and other public sector bodies on a commercial basis. This could be facilitated by EEFC.

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8 Appendices

Appendix A – list of organisations identified by this research that provide training on religion or belief in the East of England

Trainers	Contact	Details	Generic diversity training/ specific faith and belief training
Aksaa	Web: www.educationislam.org Tel: 01924 466117 Email: info@educationislam.org	Introduction to Islam and the Muslim culture specifically designed for non-Muslim professionals who work in the private or public sector	Muslim
Dr Atul Shah	Chief Executive, Diverse Ethics Ltd Consultants on Diversity, Media and Corporate Social Responsibility 9 Redmill, Colchester, C03 4RT Web: www.diverseethics.com Tel: 07804294903 Email: atul@diverseethics.com	Training, research and consultancy advice in diversity, business ethics, public relations and media, corporate social responsibility and sustainability	Cultural awareness, faith and belief, diversity
Baikie Wood Consultancy	Miranda Smythe 44 (0)1525 404058 Tel: 07976 941335 Email: enquiries@baikiewood.co.uk	General training and consultancy in management development, customer focus, equal opportunities, equality and diversity, communication and interpersonal skills	Generic
Bhagwant Sagoo	Training and Development Manager Community Development Service Luton Borough Council Tel: 01582 556690 Email: sagoob@luton.gov.uk	Working with Luton Council of Faiths and Grassroots to produce a series of training days on 'cultural awareness' – incorporating faith diversity training and focussing on 9 different cultures or communities.	Cultural Awareness and Faith and Belief
Blue Sky Solutions	Training and development consultancy (national)	General Training and development	Generic

	Tel: 0800 298 2611 Tel: 07903 425 779 Email: yasmin@blueskiesforyou.com Web: www.blueskiesforyou.com	including equality & diversity	
Cylix e learning	Tel: 01225 472 940 Email: enquiries@cylix.co.uk	Equality & Diversity in Practice courses 'interactive e-learning solutions' (national)	Generic
Diversiton	Tel: 028 417 54777 Fax: 028 417 54539 email Email: celine@diversiton.com Web: www.diversiton.com	Half-day training sessions providing a range of insights and practical support for those wishing to develop greater awareness of religion and belief – particularly in the context of the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations (2003).	Faith and Belief
Eastern Region Training Partnership	Web: www.ertp.org.uk/ongoingcourses	The ERTTP is a partnership between Christian denominations. Its aim is to present a holistic vision of Christian education across the region with the intention of promoting individual and corporate discipleship various courses	Specifically Christian, with some courses on engaging in a multifaith society
Garnett Foundation	Tel: 01494 794264 Fax: 01494 773059 Email: info@thegarnettfoundation.com Web: www.thegarnettfoundation.com	Interactive sessions on diversity and change management based on theatre and facilitated workshops	Generic diversity
Rajwant Bains Consultancy	Tel: 07801 357002 Email: rajwantbains@hotmail.com	Training on equality and diversity related issues	Generic Equalities & Diversity
RG Enterprises	Bharti Tailor Tel: 01234 294826 Email: bhartiben.tailor@gmail.com	Training in faith diversity	Faith and Belief
SIFRE	Tel: 01379 678615 Email: office@sifre.org.uk Web: www.sifre.org.uk	The 'Diversity Game' game of inter-faith & multi-cultural life.	Faith and Belief

		A training course based around the 'Diversity Game' involving tutors from different faiths.	
Skillboosters	Tel: 020 7357 6444 Email: skillboosters@bdpmedia.com Web: www.skillboosters.com/6-100	Religion and Belief Training Day and/or DVD. One-day, trainer-led programme and DVD.	Faith and Belief
The Woolf Institute	Email: enquiries@woolfinstitute.cam.ac.uk Tel: (44) (1223) 741 048 Web: www.woolfinstitute.cam.ac.uk	Various interfaith dialogue programmes often led by the centres for Jewish-Christian and Muslim-Jewish studies.	Faith and Belief

Appendix B – sample questionnaire for local authorities

1. Can we start by outlining the religious diversity training that you provide?

- Is it happening?
- If no, why not?
- Is it something on the horizon?
- How often is it happening?
- Is it only happening in the probationary period?
- Is called 'training' or 'learning and development'?
- Are you working in partnership with other providers and sharing best practice?
- Who does the training?
 - Do you do your faiths training in house? If so who leads that training?
 - Do you contract trainers in? If so who?
 - Do you send officers and staff 'out' for training? If so where?

2. What is the impetus behind religious diversity training?

- Your initiative
- Diversity of employees
- Diversity of clients
- Statutory obligation
 - RRAA
- Equality standard
- Because the world is becoming more fraught along religious lines – greater inter-religious tensions

3. What are the intended outcomes?

- Staff development
 - Faith or culture or both
 - Who is the training aimed at
 - Knowledge of legislation
 - Ability to interact
 - Anti-discrimination
 - Better dialogue
 - Develop individual skills
 - Accreditation
- Corporate standards
 - Beacon
 - Equality standards
 - Etc
 - BVPIs

4. Can you give me an example of a typical training day?

- What training are they doing
- What are the processes?
- What methods are being used?
 - Participatory
 - Standard
 - Lecture
 - Representatives from faith groups
- Who is providing the training?
 - What is their faith?
 - What are they bringing to the course?
- Input from participants
 - What questions do people ask?
- How long is training?

- coming in
 - Materials
 - What materials are provided with the trainings – handbooks, websites, info on further courses, contacts?
 - What sort of literature is available to you/ do you use to assist your faiths training?
 - Do people feel that it is too little or too much?
 - What is the payoff between the satisfying the needs of the employer and the needs of the employee for training?
5. Do you evaluate and develop the training?
- Is the training evaluated –
 - How do you evaluate the training?
 - How does this feed back?
 - How is the training developed?
 - What materials are used to develop the course?
 - Using inter-faith materials out there
6. Are there any resources of support that you would like EEFC to consider providing?
- Training materials
 - Networking opportunities
 - Sharing best practice
 - Providing training
7. Are there any additional challenges or successes that you would like to mention?
- Budget
8. Is there anything that we haven't covered that you would like to mention?
- Future training

Appendix C – Potential actions arising for EEFC

This study has highlighted the interest in principle, in religious literacy training; the need for wider provision in the region; and the constraints on uptake. The following actions are among the options for EEFC.

1. Establish EEFC as a regional training provider

This would provide a source of income, but EEFC is not necessarily the best positioned body to take this role, and becoming so could divert it from the key areas of its remit.

2. Assist other providers to increase or share their provision

This would build on existing good work and meet a need; EEFC will:

- Seek resource to extend this study to cover other public service sector providers e.g. police
- Make further recommendations on this basis

3. Set up a regional list of 'approved suppliers' and examples of good practice, and act as an adviser to those seeking training/resources

This role could provide EEFC with a sustainable source of income, and would definitely meet a need; however, it would be important that EEFC did not become a 'gatekeeper'. There would almost certainly need to be a national agreement on standards either in place, or pioneered in this region. EEFC will:

- Approach LGA, ACPO and others as partners and Inter Faith Network UK as an adviser
- Approach CLG to fund a pilot study
- Explore establishing commercial relationships between Local Authorities
- If the option appears viable, draw up a business plan

