

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

FURTHER EDUCATION



Unlike school sixth forms and sixth form colleges there is no statutory entitlement to RE for 16-19 year-olds in general FE colleges. However, this isn't to say colleges 'don't do' RE! The sector is committed to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all learners, whatever the qualification being pursued. Integral to this broad agenda of personal development are programmes and initiatives – formal and informal, national and local – dedicated to raising the level of faith and belief literacy of learners. What follows are some ideas to help promote religious education, and RE related activities, in colleges. They can be used during the month of Celebrating RE and beyond.

Discussion and encounter sessions

Ideal for college tutorial and enrichment programmes)

Where's your ID? Using the All Faiths and None (AFAN) website www.afan.uk.net – and facilitated by a member of the AFAN team if possible – set up some sessions to explore different worldviews and the varieties of personal identity alive in Britain today. The AFAN materials cover all the main UK faiths as well as humanism and paganism. At the heart of the AFAN approach is a stress on active listening, dialogue and taking personal responsibility for what we believe about ourselves and the world.

'We all came here from somewhere.'

Diversity, identities and active citizenship

This 'oven ready' resource from the Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme <http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/citizenship> contains some stimulating activities around themes of multiculturalism, community cohesion and how to help overturn cultural/religious stereotypes. It works very well alongside the AFAN materials. Both projects have been specifically designed for young people in colleges.

Curriculum input

There can be few, if any, vocational subjects taught in FE colleges that float above the realities of contemporary British religious and cultural diversity. Initially, to students and teachers alike, the intersection of skills and culture may seem obscure or simply unimportant. But acquiring a degree of faith and belief literacy matters if learners are to undertake their future roles in a professional and culturally sensitive way. So consider, for instance, introducing floristry students to the diversity of funeral practice or teaching some basic religious concepts and beliefs around care of the body to Health and Social Care students. If the college lacks knowledge or expertise in this area, why not work alongside local faith community experts as visiting speakers?

Foyer exhibitions and Vox Pops

My special book

Colleges invariably have cavernous entrance areas through which thousands pass daily. Make this space more engaging with a topical exhibition and an accompanying Vox Pop. For example, use World Book Day <http://www.worldbookday.com> or World Book Night <http://www.worldbooknight.org> as a focus. Why not consider asking students and staff at college what book matters most to them – and why? Consider involving members of college-based religion and belief societies. They may wish to contribute to an exhibition of special or sacred books and scriptures. Such an event could also provide the opportunity to highlight the resources of the FLC (Flexible Learning Centre).

See also ideas contained in the **Post 16** resource.

