

# Evangelical church banned from Swansea University, after “cult” recruitment fears

Posted: Mon, 12 Jan 2015

The Freedom Church, an affiliate of Evangelical Alliance, has been banned from the campus of Swansea University after allegations that it was using "aggressive" recruitment strategies which targeted first year students.

According to Swansea student newspaper [Waterfront](#), one parent feared that their child, a student at Swansea University, had been "inducted into a cult."

A campus spokesman said that "concerns have been raised by various organisations and individuals in Wales and elsewhere about the operational methods used by the Freedom Church to recruit members by targeting vulnerable members of society and their cultic style of operation.

"When information came to light that the Freedom Church was holding religious services on campus, permission for the use of any of its premises was immediately withdrawn.

"Only affiliated faith organisations are permitted to hold services on the campus."

The group is allegedly banned at Cardiff University, over similar fears about its activities. The group denies the accusations, and the Evangelical Alliance said that: "Freedom Church has demonstrated exemplary commitment to serving in areas of social concern and throughout its history has also exhibited an enduring commitment to mainstream evangelical Christian beliefs and practices as is required of members of the Evangelical Alliance."

The Director of Swansea University's Student Services, Kevin Child, said that "students that have been associated with The Freedom Church, bright young individuals who have been taken in, have been damaged when they realise how they've been indoctrinated."

Mr Child added that students felt deceived and disappointed when they realised that they had been "indoctrinated" by the church. Child said that a "big part" of the Freedom Church involves "campaigning to convert others", and that believers who leave the church feel "bereft having lost what felt like their family and friends."

One former member of the church said that the organisations was "desperately trying to dictate" members' personal lives. Concerns were also raised about the exorbitant prices charged by the church for members to gain promotion in the church leadership.

The church is currently offering two days of "Academy teaching" for students, "at a cost of £1,200 per student" and also offers a "worship stream and a Zeal stream (for training to lead young people), each costing £750 for the year."

Mr Child added that "the fact that they seem to target young and reasonably wealthy people rather than just anyone causes concern."

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