



Ramadan Guidelines

Why produce this guidance?

These notes are intended for managers and teaching staff that supervise staff or teach students who are Muslim and will be fasting during the month of Ramadan. It is intended to increase understanding about the month of Ramadan and offers advice on how to be supportive of colleagues/students who are fasting.

We note that it may be appropriate to promote understanding of other faiths and we will issue other notes and guidelines if we receive requests that illustrate this need.

What and when is Ramadan?

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic Calendar. In the month of Ramadan observant adult Muslims will give up food or drink during the hours of daylight.

Fasting is the fourth pillar of Islam. The fast is an act of worship and Muslims believe there are many other spiritual benefits associated with the month. Individuals will endeavor to increase acts of charity, good deeds and community engagement.

They will awake before dawn for a meal called Suhur. At sunset most Muslims will open the fast with a meal called Iftar. It is customary to open the fast with dates and water followed by a normal meal.

Key dates:

Ramadan: Starts around 15th/16th May 2018
End date approximately 14th/15th June 2018





General advice for supporting staff and students who are fasting

The fasting combined with disturbances in normal sleep patterns can leave individuals feeling a little bit more tired than normal, particularly towards the end of the day. Also towards the latter part of the day some individuals that are fasting might feel a little light headed.

Ramadan this year coincides with the summer examinations period. The university has developed a [Religious observance and examinations arrangements](#) policy to help support students wishing to observe Ramadan or other religious festivals. Guidance for staff on accommodating students' religious observance during examinations can also be found on [StaffCentral](#).

Agreement to requests for slight adjustments to the working day during Ramadan will be appreciated by Muslim staff members if it is possible to accommodate requests. For example, changes to working hours, coming in earlier and leaving early or vice versa.

If you are holding events, such as staff meals, student welcome receptions, away days and social gatherings during Ramadan, Muslim staff/student members will be able to participate in such events but will refrain from refreshments.

It is not necessary for individuals that are not fasting to abstain from eating or drinking in the presence of Muslims who are fasting. The NHS has provided a [useful guide](#) to a healthy Ramadan with guidance for individuals on best practice throughout this month.

Muslim staff and students might wish to offer prayers during the day. This will normally be 2/3 times a day for a few minutes each for which the staff members and students can use the Islamic Prayer facilities on the Moulsecoomb site at Mithras House G4 (for females) and Mithras Annexe 101 (for males). There are also multi-faith prayer rooms in Dallington House (D211 and D212) on the Falmer site, and the Quiet Room (room 4.14, Havelock Road Building) on the Hastings site.

Schools and Departments, especially those at sites without prayer facilities, could consider making a quiet space available for these short prayers for the duration of Ramadan. Managers should speak with their HR Advisors for further advice and guidance on this matter.

What happens when Ramadan ends?

The end of Ramadan is marked by the festival of **Eid-al-Fitr** (think of it as being a religious festival which is important to Muslims in the same way as Easter Sunday might be to practicing Christians, or Passover might be to those of the Jewish faith).

Muslim staff members may wish to take a day's annual leave from work, particularly as some schools close for Eid and so staff may have their children at home on that day.

The Islamic calendar is a lunar calendar so the actual day that Eid falls on will depend on when the new moon is sighted. For this reason it might not be possible for the staff member to be very specific about the day they would like to be away from work. This year Eid is anticipated as falling around **14th/15th June 2018**.



Further Information

For more information on practicing religious faith at the university please see:

University of Brighton Chaplaincy: <https://www.brighton.ac.uk/current-students/my-student-life/chaplaincy/opportunities-for-worship.aspx>

University of Brighton Race and Faith Staff Network Group:
https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/hr/equality/race_faith/Pages/race_faith.aspx

University of Brighton Islamic Society:
<https://www.brightonsu.com/organisation/societies/islamicsociety/>

The links below provide useful guidance for Muslim staff and students who would like some tips for how to manage the working day or their studies during this month.

<http://productivemuslim.com/exams-and-ramadan/>

<https://www.student.com/articles/exams-during-ramadan-how-to-prepare/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/HealthyRamadan/Pages/healthyramadanhome.aspx>

https://warwick.ac.uk/services/equalops/resources/a_guide_to_healthy_fasting.pdf

http://www.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Employer_Guide_Ramadan.pdf

Equality and Diversity at the University of Brighton

<https://www.brighton.ac.uk/about-us/your-university/equality/index.aspx>

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