

## **Ramadan and Other Periods of Religious Fasting: Assessment Guidance during the May/June Examination Period**

Liverpool Hope values all members of our community, of all faiths or none. We are aware that religious observance is important to many, and the University recognises religion and belief as a protected equality characteristic.

On occasion, the University examination periods coincide with Ramadan and other periods of religious fasting. Unfortunately, it is not possible to amend the University academic calendar to avoid such periods. However, we understand that such religious observances may impact upon students' performance in examinations or other formal assessments and therefore we offer specific advice to students to help and guide them through this period.

As you are aware the University has a 'fit to sit policy' which means that, except in exceptional circumstances, if you sit an exam you cannot subsequently claim for mitigating circumstances. By sitting the exam you have declared yourself fit to do so. It is particularly important therefore that staff and students understand the implications of religious fasting during the examination periods. We understand that students may not wish to sit examinations/other formal assessments in the afternoons during a period of religious fasting, because of the effects of low blood sugar on cognitive processes. Examinations/formal assessments in the morning may be unaffected because students have been able to eat breakfast before dawn. However, in the afternoon you may find that your concentration and memory are affected.

Fasting may also be associated with tiredness, lower energy, dehydration, reduced focus, memory and concentration. As a result the University therefore advises that students discuss religious observance at the time of examinations/formal assessments with their religious leader. If you reach the decision that you will not be able to perform to the best of your ability in a particular examination/formal assessment as a result of fasting, the University requires you to notify Student Administration of the situation by emailing [exams@hope.ac.uk](mailto:exams@hope.ac.uk) as soon as the examination timetable is confirmed to you. You should include in your email a statement of support from your religious leader. If your assessment is not an examination but is another form of assessment you should contact your Faculty for advice.

On receipt of your notification, and evidence, the University will apply the appropriate policy [click here to see this information](#) and offer either a deferral of the examination or an alternative assessment depending upon the circumstances. Non-final year students granted deferrals will

normally be required to sit the examinations at the next scheduled examination period, for example in August for examinations deferred in May.

The NHS Healthy Ramadan guidance is very useful and can be found [here](#). If you decide to proceed with your assessments it is advisable to rest, avoid prolonged physical activity and take care to gain adequate nutrition when breaking fast.

One final note, should you decide to attend an examination/formal assessment despite fasting and as a result begin to feel unwell during the examination, such that you are unable to continue, it is important that you make yourself known to the invigilator/assessor who will make a record of this. You will then be required to submit a medical certificate to the University, usually within two weeks of the examination/assessment, so that the Examiners can make a judgement on how to proceed.