# Religion and Belief Guidance relating to Education and Student Experience at UCL

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UCL historBT/E1E110BT/ Mauidance	

on the principle that it was open to students of any faith, and none. This was an alternative to the social exclusivity and religious restrictions of its predecessors, Oxford, and Cambridge.

UCL does not have any religious affiliation or endorse any faith. The secular values that UCL

The wearing of religious and cultural dress, including derical collars, headscarves, turbans, and yarmulkes is allowed and must not be discouraged.

However, there are situations where some students may

It may be the case at a local level, especially if departments are aware of previous incidents or calls from students, that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is necessary to determine any disproportionate impact to a particular group, for example to Jewish and Muslim students, with the timetabling of mandatory teaching sessions on Fridays.

However, there may be logistical reasons why a timetable may not be able to accommodate all forms of religious observance requirement on campus. The normal teaching day runs from 9 am to 6 pm from Monday to Friday.

UCL understands that there may be certain occasions when a student may be absent due to religious observance. Staff are expected to seek to accommodate these observances, as much as is practicable and reasonable, within the scope of the current Student Attendance Policy.

#### Field classes

Certain programmes may schedule field classes on weekends, during vacation periods and public holidays. Students requiring academic adjustments from these activities on religious grounds should discuss this and request permission from their department, within the scope of the current UCL Student Support Framework (2022-23).

#### **Deadlines**

Deans, Heads of Department, Faculty and Admissions Tutors, Directors of Services, Registry and Examination Officers, and all responsible officers should consider the main religious festivals and needs relating to Friday prayers (for Muslims) and Sabbath (Friday afternoons and Saturdays) (for Jews) when drawing up assessment, examination, or interview dates for student admissions. UCL provides guidance on the occurrence of <a href="major religious and cultural festivals">major religious and cultural festivals</a>.

### Assessment deadlines

Programme directors are encouraged to consult the <u>UCL diversity calendar</u> in advance of setting assessment deadlines.

Assessment deadlines are given in advance to students. Students who are observing religious festivals around the time of the deadline will need to plan their work, so that it is completed in good time.

#### **Examination schedules**

UCL refers to the UCL diversity calendar in advance of scheduling the centrally managed assessment timetables and will note religious observances where work is prohibited, and where there is a clash of dates. As far as is practicable, examinations will be scheduled to avoid religious festivals and Sabbath, where work is prohibited. This consideration also falls to academic departments when scheduling departmentally managed exams.

Extenuating circumstances

UCL Extenuating Orcumstances Procedure

### Harassment

Harassment and discrimination of students on the grounds of religion, belief or non-belief will not be tolerated and will be dealt with under UCL <u>Prevention of Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy</u>, as a disciplinary matter.

either violating the daimant's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading,

Harassment on the grounds of religion or belief may occur for a variety of reasons, for example:

- Due to , or non-belief
- on the grounds of the belief, or non-belief of someone with whom they associate
- in joining or leaving, a particular faith
- with expressing or not expressing, their faith
- because they have changed, or renounced their religious/ belief allegiance

## Complaints

#### Working Group on Racism and Prejudice

complaints procedures are not clear to students and need to be made more accessible.

Any complaints of discrimination, based on the provisions outlined in this document, should be made in the first instance to the Director of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion by emailing equalities@ucl.ac.uk

If you wish to report bullying or harassment related to religion or belief, please do so via the Report + Support online tool. This can be done anonymously, if preferred, but is also a route to making a formal complaint.

Lastly, if you wish to raise a formal complaint, you may do so by emailing the Student Casework Team via casework@ud.ac.uk.

# **Implementation**

This guidance applies to all UCL students and responsibility for it is held with staff, contractors, security staff, service providers and any other individual associated with the functions of the University.

Deans, Vice-Deans (EDI), Heads of Departments and Heads of Service have a responsibility to raise the profile of this guidance document and to ensure that all their staff or students are aware of its contents and requirements.

### **Useful contacts**

Student Support & Wellbeing

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion team: equalities@ucl.ac.uk

Interim Chaplain and Interfaith Advisor to UCL

Students Union Sabbatical Officer: tbc

UCL UMC Religion and Belief Champion: tbc

### Faith at UCL

All major faiths are represented by a student union society at UCL. Some of their pages on the Students' Union UCL website are listed below; many of them may also be found on Facebook and Twitter.

- Ahlul-Bayt Society
- Buddhist Society
- Catholic Society
- Christian Union

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