

# Ramadan

## Staff and student guidance

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### Introduction

King's College London is committed to creating an inclusive environment that promotes equality of opportunity for everyone in our community. King's values the diversity of our staff and student body and recognises that this is both a strength and a defining feature of King's as a London university in a global context. You can find out more about equality, diversity & inclusion at King's on the [EDI webpages](#).

The University has many Muslim students and staff. We are very keen to provide a safe and inclusive environment with facilities and arrangements to ensure that they are able to observe Ramadan alongside their studying, working and whilst living on campus.

Many Muslim students and staff will be fasting during Ramadan. See advice and guidance here on staying well during this time, where to get support if you need it and how best to support students and your colleagues.

Muslim staff and students will manage their own observance of Ramadan and observance may vary between individuals due to health, travel, and other personal circumstances.

### What is Ramadan?

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and the month when the Holy Qur'an was revealed to the Islamic prophet Muhammad.

The month traditionally begins and ends based on the sighting of the new moon. In 2023, the month-long fast of Ramadan begins around March 22nd and ends around April 20th.

Ramadan is a holy month of religious reflection and fasting during Ramadan is one of the Five Pillars of Islam. During this month Muslims are encouraged to increase their good deeds, from acts of charity and community engagement to increasing good values such as generosity, solidarity, kindness, patience, and forgiveness. Fasting means not eating or drinking between the hours of sunrise and sunset.

## How is it observed?

Ramadan is considered one of the holiest months of the year for Muslims. In Ramadan, Muslims commemorate the revelation of the Qur'an, and fast from food and drink during the sunlit hours as a means of drawing closer to God and cultivating self-control, gratitude, and compassion for those less fortunate.

Ramadan is a month of intense spiritual rejuvenation with a heightened focus on devotion, during which Muslims spend extra time reading the Qur'an and performing special prayers.

## Eid ul-Fitr

At the end of Ramadan, Muslims celebrate one of their major holidays called Eid ul-Fitr or the "Festival of the Breaking of the Fast." In 2023 the holiday will be on April 21st. A special prayer and sermon are held the morning of Eid day, followed by a community celebration usually in a park or large hall. Food, games and presents for children are important parts of the festivities, as friends and family spend the day socializing, eating and reuniting with old acquaintances.

The greeting **Eid Mubarak** means "blessed holiday!"

## Health and nutrition

The dates of Ramadan vary from year to year, currently it falls within Semester Two. You may find that managing your academic and personal commitments alongside your health and nutrition while observing Ramadan can be a challenge.

The University recognises religion and belief as a protected characteristic and is aware that fasting may have an impact upon students' preparation for coursework and revision. Students observing fast alongside academic studies may find the following information from [NHS Trust](#) helpful.

## Nutrition and exercise

Kings Sports & Wellness team have prepared a practical guide around nutrition and exercise to help those observing Ramadan stay healthy. The guide can be found here on [Kings Sports & Wellness page](#).

## Guidance around observing Ramadan for those with health conditions

People for whom fasting would be a hardship are exempted from fasting. This includes anyone who is sick or traveling; women who are pregnant, nursing, or on their menses; or older people who are too weak or ill to fast. They can make up the fast later, except for those who cannot fast due to age or chronic illness.

Please do always seek professional medical advice from your GP.

## What to do if you become unwell while fasting

KCL and the [British Islamic Medical Association](#) advises that if you become unwell during Ramadan, you should stop fasting and seek medical advice. You can do this by visiting [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk) or your GP practice's website or if you don't have access to the internet, by calling 111 or your practice directly.

# How does the university support Muslim staff and students?

## Imams

If students would like to discuss their thoughts and approach to Ramadan and fasting during their studies, they can contact:

Imam Abdul Mumin Choudhury [abdul.choudhury@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:abdul.choudhury@kcl.ac.uk)

Romana Kazmi [rashida.kazmi@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:rashida.kazmi@kcl.ac.uk)

## Meet the Chaplains

Our Chaplains are available to talk one-to-one with anyone at King's. They are here to provide pastoral support to anyone who needs it.

For general support, advice & guidance please contact [chaplaincy@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:chaplaincy@kcl.ac.uk)

## Muslim community

Students can connect with the Muslim community through our Students' Union. Our Students' Union webpage [KCLSU](#), continues to provide opportunities for students to get involved with societies and meet new people. With over 300 student groups and sports clubs, there is something for everyone.

## KCL Islamic Society (ISOC)

Links: <https://linktr.ee/kclisoc>

Instagram: @kclisoc

Email: [contact@kclisoc.org](mailto:contact@kclisoc.org)

## Student Services

Please use this link to explore all the specialist support services for our students.

[What student support services are available at King's?](#)

## Prayers & praying facilities

Prayers fall into timeslots and according to some schools of thought, if there are extenuating circumstances for some Muslims it may be permissible for prayers to be combined.

**For example:** *Duhr (Midday) and Asr (late afternoon) prayers can be combined and offered at either Duhr or Asr time.*

*Maghreb (Sunset) and Isha (Night) prayers can be combined and offered at either Maghreb or Isha time.*

### Approximate Prayer Timings during Ramadan

1. **FAJR** (Dawn) 04.47 hrs – (Fast begins)
2. **DUHR** (Midday) - 13.03 hrs
3. **ASR** (Late Afternoon) – 16.40hrs
4. **MAGHREB** (Sunset) – 19.42 hrs – (Break Fast)
5. **ISHA** (Night) – 21.20 hrs

6. During Ramadan students may also wish to observe **TARAWEEH** prayers. These are special optional prayers that are offered after the Isha prayer.

## Prayer Facilities

We have prayer facilities for the use of all staff and students to use enabling everyone to fulfil the requirements of their faith. The prayer rooms are open during King's Campus' opening hours as well as for Friday prayers [Muslim Prayer Rooms](#)

## MCF & exam guidance for students

This year Ramadan falls in the revision and assessment preparation period. Students should familiarise themselves with the University's guidance on preparing for exams [How can I prepare for assessments at King's](#) and the [Mitigating Circumstances](#) guidance for students.

Mitigating circumstances are defined in [academic regulation 4.24](#): "The College considers mitigating circumstances to be recognisably disruptive or unexpected events beyond the student's control that might have a significant and adverse impact on their academic performance.

Students declare themselves fit to sit their exam by entering the exam room and the sitting will be counted as an exam attempt. However, students who feel that observance of Ramadan has had a significant adverse impact, along with other specific and individual circumstances, upon their ability to undertake their exam should consider submitting a Mitigating circumstances form.

As students & staff will be managing their own observance of Ramadan and observance may vary between individuals; it will be beneficial for students to have an early dialogue with their department to discuss possible inclusive arrangements regarding exams or assessments.

## Guidance for managers & staff

As part of King's commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, we aim to support all staff of all beliefs and backgrounds to observe their religious practices.

In keeping with [King's Religion & Belief Policy](#), all staff are expected to be respectful of colleagues and students who are fasting and mindful of some of the challenges they may experience. Managers have a responsibility to positively engage with, acknowledge and enable Muslim staff to observe Ramadan.

Muslim staff members are entitled to request flexibility in the arrangement of shifts, break times and working patterns during Ramadan. Requests for flexibility will vary depending on the staff member's circumstances but might include shorter or more frequent breaks or more time than usual to take part in prayer. Managers should sympathetically consider these requests and try to accommodate them wherever it is reasonably practicable to do so, subject to business needs.

Some Muslim staff will wish to take leave from work to participate in Eid-ul-Fitr, the festival that marks the end of Ramadan. The exact date of Eid is dependent on the sighting of the moon. Therefore, managers are asked to be reasonable and flexible where possible with staff members who may not be able to request a specific leave date in advance.

Muslim staff members who wish to make flexible working requests are also asked to be reasonable, flexible, and sympathetic to the demands of their job. When requesting leave, it is

helpful to give managers as much notice as possible, even if only an estimation of dates is possible.

It is considerate to avoid scheduling staff social activities or working lunches during Ramadan. As always, it is good practice to ensure that [meeting times](#) are as inclusive as possible for the majority of attendees and mindful of non-standard working patterns.

For further advice, please contact your local [HR People Partner](#). Staff with questions about any faith, belief or religion are also encouraged to contact the [Dean's Office](#), whose team of Chaplains are available to speak to any member of King's community in confidence.

This guidance has been developed by the Students & Education Directorate with the support of:

- The Dean and Chaplaincy
- Organisational Development (Human Resources)
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (Human Resources)
- King's Sport (Estates & Facilities)
- Summer Programmes (School of Professional & Continuing Education)
- KCL Islamic Society (student society)

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