



Ramaḍān On-Campus



ROYAL
HOLLOWAY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

In aspiring to attain a heightened sense of spirituality, the month of Ramadān brings a change to the normal routine for many of us. While it is established as an immensely rewarding experience (both spiritually and in how it changes one's lifestyle), some worshippers may experience some difficulty or hesitation when managing their academic life in tandem with the increased faith-based obligations.

Royal Holloway's success in *The Times* and *Sunday Times Good University Guide* has been mirrored across key league tables in 2023, including the *Guardian University Guide*, and the *Complete University Guide*. That's testimony to the global impact of our research, as well as the diversity of our staff and students on campus. People from over 130 countries live and study here, so it is our ambition to ensure that cultural diversity is respected and understood in order to heighten the student experience.

“O ye who believe [have faith]! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may (attain) self-restraint [God-consciousness]”

The Holy Qur'ān 2:183

This guide is both for and about those who fast; to surround those who keep the fast (of Ramadān) with wider information so that they are able to adequately prepare for their examinations and/or revision whilst fasting, as well as to provide guidance for others who interact with those who fast. This guide aims to provide information covering the following areas:

- Key dates
- On-campus policy and provisions
- General information about Ramadān
- Nutrition advice

People from all beliefs find a place with the Multifaith Chaplaincy, which offers support to people of all faiths and none. The Chaplaincy team (part of Wellbeing) includes an Anglican, Roman Catholic and Muslim Chaplain, all of whom are happy to talk to you regardless of your belief or area of introspection; please contact chaplaincy@rhul.ac.uk to make an appointment. This guide has been updated from a previous edition, with the aim of providing students and others who intend to observe Ramadān with a basic overview of important dates, times and guidelines during this blessed month.

We pray that you enter Ramadān in the best of faith and health and that you leave it with greater focus and heightened aspirations. And we pray that you and your peers be blessed with success in your pursuits at Royal Holloway and well into the future; āmīn.

Nisar Shaikh – Muslim Chaplain

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Ramaḍān Key Dates

The main examination period at Royal Holloway usually takes place from late April to late May. Therefore, as can be seen in the table below, this will not overlap with Ramaḍān for the coming years 2023–27. However, Ramaḍān will overlap with the period before examinations begin, which is a time of revision, and for some courses the culmination of submission deadlines. Therefore, these dates are shown as a lot of the same advice around balancing important academic commitments applies over this period.

Year	Ramaḍān start	Ramaḍān end
2023	22 March	21 April
2024	10 March	9 April
2025	28 February	30 March
2026	17 February	18 March
2027	7 February	8 March

* dates are approximate (depending on initial sighting of the new moon, for which we follow London Central Mosque ICC)



Preparation Advice

The above information should aid those preparing for their examinations and submission deadlines to plan their schedule in advance. This period will require your careful planning when balancing lifestyle restrictions with revision and work. The timings of the fasts (sunrise to sunset) are shorter as each year progresses (e.g. 2023 circa 6am - 7pm, 2027 circa 7am - 5:30pm).

Proactive measures to consider:

- as you plan your revision and work schedule, also plan your food intake

- complete coursework in advance of deadlines (particularly during overlap periods)
- ensure your sleep-cycle is in a healthy pattern
- keep active to increase blood flow around the body and to the brain
- attend an on-campus stress-buster session.

Further reading on preparation and nutrition can be found on page 9-10.

About Ramaḍān

“The month of Ramaḍān in which was revealed the Qur’ān, a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs of the guidance, and the Criterion (of right and wrong). And whosoever of you is present, let them fast the month, and whosoever of you is sick or on a journey, (let them fast the same) number of other days. God desireth for you ease; not hardship for you; and (God desireth) that ye should complete the period, and that ye should magnify God for having guided you, and that ye may be thankful.”

The Holy Qur’ān 2:185

The ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, Ramaḍān is a time in which Muslims are obligated and encouraged to improve themselves and strive to practice their faith as best as they can. It is the holiest month of the year in which the Qur’ān was first revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (may God bless him and grant him peace), and one that many Muslims look forward to again, almost as soon as it has ended. One of the five pillars of Islām, Muslims (who are able to) should fast between dawn and sunset throughout the month and increase in acts of devotion such as giving in charity, worship, and striving to improve one’s character.

To the faithful, the fasting can be understood and implemented on two fronts; physically and spiritually. Physically, abstinence from food and drink and other normally permissible actions (such as sexual relations) is not perceived as a restraint but rather as a way to discipline one’s self. Spiritually, one must work on avoiding unpleasant behaviour such as sinful speech (lying, cheating, back-biting) whilst improving virtuous acts such as caring for others.

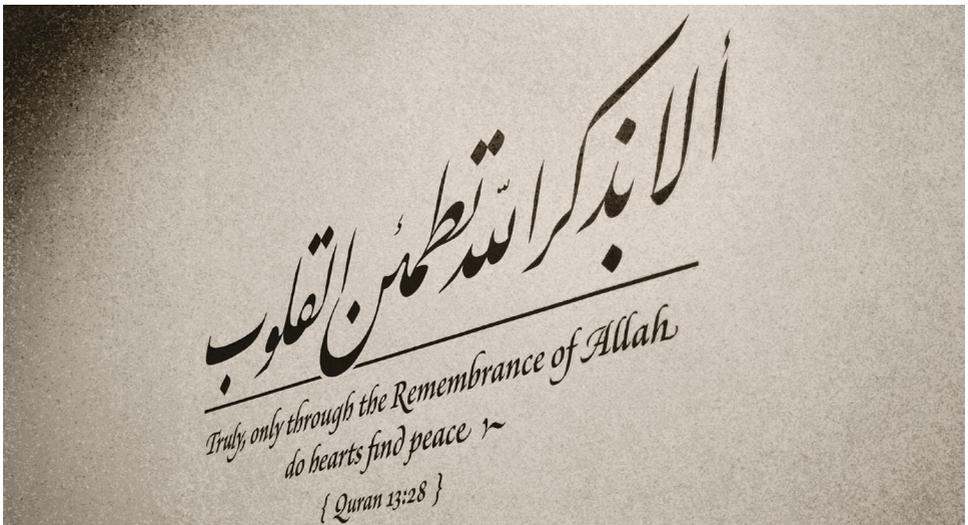


“If one is not willing to give up bad behaviour during his fast, God has no need (for them) to give up their food and drink.” ~ Prophet Muhammad

صَلَّى اللهُ
عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلَّمَ

Glossary of Terms

Suhūr	An early morning (pre-dawn) meal taken before fasting begins; referred to as sehri in South-Asia
Fajr	The morning prayer, following the suhūr meal and performed before sunrise
Maghrib	The prayer performed during sunset, and the point at which a fast is broken
Iftār	A fast-breaking meal
Ishā’	The final obligatory prayer of the day, performed in the night
Tarāwīh	Supererogatory evening prayers, encouraged as a Prophetic tradition inside Ramadān
Laylat ul-Qadr	The ‘Night of Power’ which occurs on one of the last nights of Ramadān; on which falls abundant mercy from the Heavens and righteous actions are magnified in their reward
I’tikāf	Spiritual retreat practiced by some to devote themselves solely to worship; though more common in Ramadān, this can be practiced at any time of the year
Qur’ān	The holy book of Muslims, the word of God revealed to the Prophet Muhammad via the Angel Gabriel
‘Eid	‘Eid al-Fitr is the celebration following Ramadān; there are two Eids in the Muslim calendar
Wudū	Ritual washing required for prayer
Zakāt	Obligatory charity. The Zakāt that is owed in Ramadān (Zakāt al-Fitr) by any adult who has excess food for their own needs is to be paid before ‘Eid and is roughly the cost of one meal given to those less-fortunate
Fidya	When a fast is missed through necessity, such as being ill or pregnant, and it cannot be made up after Ramadān, Fidya is payable. The requirement is to provide one person with two meals, for each day that a fast is missed
Kaffāra	When a fast is deliberately broken without a valid reason, and the person cannot fast at a later time, Kaffarā is due. The requirement is to provide one person with two meals a day, for two months



Art-work inside room; supplied by Irada Arts

Frequently Asked Questions

When is Ramadan?

As the Islamic calendar is based on lunar sightings, it does not correlate to a fixed period in the Gregorian or Academic calendars so the dates change annually. The month's duration is approximately 29/30 days, again based on sighting the new moon, and the table on page 3 lists projected dates.

How many hours should one fast each day?

Fasting is from dusk till sunset, so times vary according to the season and part of the world one is in. In the UK, the shortest and longest fasts are in the winter and summer respectively. The Nutrition Advice section of this guide provides useful information when preparing to fast.

Can one fast without having Suhūr (the pre-dawn meal)?

Yes – oversleeping or missing suhūr is not a reason to stop fasting (as long as one intended fasting for Ramadān). This is not encouraged for one's own wellbeing and body functionality (especially in warm seasons whilst one has important commitments during the day such as exams), hence why the meal is a tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Is a fast valid when Iftār (the fast-breaking meal) is missed/delayed?

The Prophetic tradition is to hasten to break the fast. If one cannot have a meal at sunset, one should try to break fast in a simple manner e.g. with a date and water, though there is no fault in missing the iftār as it is not a condition for the validity of a fast.

What do Muslims believe they gain from fasting?

Some of the benefits are an increased compassion for those in need of life's necessities that can often be taken for granted, a sense of self-purification and a chance to spiritually re-focus. A sense of togetherness is increased amongst family, friends and community members. This annual lesson in discipline and self-restraint can carry forward to other aspects of life such as education and work.

Should all Muslims fast?

Fasting is mandatory on every Muslim who is mentally healthy, an adult, able to do so, and in residence (of their area). The following exemptions apply: children before adolescence; the elderly; the chronically or acutely ill for whom fasting would be unreasonably strenuous. People who are pregnant, post-child birth, nursing or menstruating, and those who are sick or travelling, may postpone the fasts.



Are there exemptions for those who are travelling?

The fasts are optional for those who are journeying, based on how far one is travelling and also for what period one will be in residence in a set place. E.g. some jurists believe fasting is optional for those staying less than 15 days in one place. Always consult with a trusted religious advisor as to the particulars of one's arrangement for confidence on these decisions; there are many opinions so one should follow whatever is uniform to other religious actions.

If fasting will harm one's health or wellbeing, should they still fast?

There is religious exemption from fasting where it will put one at risk; in fact it may even be deemed sinful to fast. This is further detailed in the following section on Religious Exemption. Those who have reasons to not fast through necessity (where advised by a doctor and/or religious advisor) can either postpone their fasting days or offer charity in their place (see *fidya* and *kaffāra* in the Glossary of Terms).

Can one drink water whilst fasting?

This is not permitted. In instances of very hot weather which one feels may affect them, it may be possible to break the fast. Please consult with your doctor for any medical concerns you may have.

Is smoking and/or chewing gum allowed?

These are considered to invalidate the fast as they involve taking something into the body through the mouth. A principle reason for the fasts is to purify the body and stop bad habits, thus making *Ramadān* an ideal time to stop smoking. Ample advice on this is available through the NHS.

Are energy levels affected?

Fasting can curb energy for physical work, but some people find it can improve their

mental productivity and ability to digest new information. It is encouraged to work or study as usual, and also to take a short nap during the day to combat exhaustion.

Should one abstain from eating in front of someone who observes the fasts?

Muslims in countries where they are a minority tend to prefer that others continue their routine rather than take measures to avoid offending someone fasting. The body adjusts to the fasts and most are generally unaffected by eating in close proximity. Groups or departments who wish to be inclusive may rethink organising social occasions or meetings centred over a meal, or adjust these timings to after sunset. Muslims may need to eat or drink a little to break the fast at sunset, but should this occur during working hours, this should not affect usual proceedings.

What are night-prayers? Are they compulsory?

Devoting time to (various forms of) prayer over the nights is strongly encouraged in *Ramadān*, although not compulsory. The key is to perform actions with consistency.



Floor seating within the Prayer Room

Religious Exemption

The Qur'ān instructs Muslims to fast during the month of Ramadān, but also gives clear exemptions for those who may become ill as a result of fasting:

“...and whosoever of you is sick or on a journey, (let them fast the same) number of other days. God desireth for you ease; not hardship...” *The Holy Qur'ān 2:185*

Prior to Ramadān, one should always consult with a doctor about the safety of fasting in individual circumstances. Some health conditions may be improved during fasting, while others may deteriorate. If one decides that fasting could be harmful, there are two options:

- For temporary, non-chronic conditions: making up the fast (a day for a day) at a later time, when health improves or a situation changes (e.g. after completing a course of medication)
- For permanent or chronic conditions: making a charitable donation in lieu of fasting. The amount should be sufficient to feed one person twice a day, for each fasting day that is missed.

There is no need to feel guilty about taking care of one's health needs during Ramadān; exemptions exist for a reason. Even if one is not fasting, one can experience spirituality through other areas of worship – such as offering additional prayers, meeting socially for meals, reciting the Qur'ān, or supporting charitable acts.

In the instance of becoming unwell during Ramadān?

Fasting is obligatory for the healthy adult but when it may significantly affect the health of the fasting individual or when one is sick, Islām exempts them from fasting.

Specific health concerns

Pregnancy: Where there is sufficient reason to believe fasting will affect the health of the pregnant person and/or baby, the pregnant person may be excused from fasting.

Asthma: Use of an inhaler invalidates the fast. Where deemed medically necessary a fast can be made up later or the fidya paid. One should always prioritise their health, particularly with chronic suffering.

Oral medication: Where it is medically advised that oral medication must be taken, there is sufficient reason to not fast (and complete fasting days later).

Hay-fever: Where symptoms are inhibiting to the extent that antihistamines or herbal remedies are medically advised to be taken, there is sufficient reason to not fast (and complete fasting days later).

Diabetes: Insulin does not enter the body through recognised entry points, and therefore does not nullify the fast.

Where fasting inhibits functioning in one's career or livelihood

God has not imposed on the worshipper a task more than they can bear. Religious jurists have stated that a person whose occupation makes fasting unreasonably difficult can break that day's fast; e.g. a baker working under hot conditions. Religious advisers will generally assess each case individually, and advise as to whether there is sufficient reason to excuse oneself from fasting.

Difference of opinion exists amongst religious leaders as well as scientists. Sport disciplines would be an instance where obvious exemptions can be made for fasting. In the build-up to the London 2012 Olympic games, a study by Loughborough University (2014)¹ indicated that athletes are not necessarily adversely affected by fasting but much publicity was given to the 3,000+ Muslim athletes many of whom chose to fast. Where concerned, one should consult both a faith leader who is trusted for guidance and a doctor where one suspects fasting would cause a disadvantage, for clarity over exemption.

¹ “Muslims will cope with Ramadan at Commonwealth Games, says Loughborough expert” Loughborough University, News & Events, <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/news-events/news/2014/july/muslims-ramadan-commonwealth-games.html> (accessed: 10.08.2015)

Nutrition Advice

Ramadān provides an opportunity to focus on establishing a balanced and healthy lifestyle; fasting improves awareness of the self and teaches self-discipline in many ways.

Preparation

The Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace) showed his physical preparation by fasting regularly in the month preceding Ramadān which can be likened to preparation for rigorous exercise by warming up beforehand. During the warm and long days of summer, the duration of the fasts can be as long as 17 hours.

“The future belongs to those who prepare for it today.”
Malcolm X

Follow these steps to ensure you are prepared prior to Ramadān:

1. For any individual health concerns, consult with a doctor
2. Plan your schedule (e.g. revision or work timetable) and meals
3. Reduce caffeine intake (to prevent withdrawal symptoms such as headaches) if you consume this regularly
4. Perform optional fasts (e.g. Mondays and Thursdays) in order to adjust your body to the routine, or start eating less during the day
5. Work to fully give up a bad habit e.g. smoking – there is no better time



A Healthy Diet

Since the fasting hours of Ramadān extend from dawn until dusk, it is useful to understand the different stages that the body goes through in order to utilise the pre-dawn and dusk meals (suhūr/iftār) to replace energy stores.

- The body enters into a fasting state once the gut has absorbed nutrients from food (approximately 8 hours after consuming the last meal).
- The main source of energy consists of glucose which is initially used up to provide energy. Once these glucose stores run out, the body uses fat for energy.
- Note: The body does not use protein for energy during a daily fast; it is only with prolonged fasting (consisting of days/weeks) that this occurs, and the technical term ‘starvation’ can be applied. Therefore, during fasting there is ample opportunity to replenish energy stores during meal times, allowing the body to make a gentle transition.

Taking these points into consideration, it is important to ensure a balanced food and fluid intake during the suhūr and iftār meals. The kidneys are vital for maintaining the body’s water and salts, whilst carbohydrates and fats are essential for muscle strength. Therefore, it is advisable to have a balanced diet with the right proportion of nutrients including carbs, fat, protein, salts and water throughout the month.

Iftār

The meal that breaks the day’s fast could include dates, following the Prophetic tradition. Dates provide a refreshing burst of much-needed energy. Fruit juices also have a similar, revitalising effect. The meal should remain a meal and not become over indulgent. Once again, be sure to drink plenty of water.

Nutrition Advice continued

Suḥūr

Although sleeping may be far more tempting than waking to eat, avoid skipping breakfast and awaken early for the suḥūr meal. It is generally the most important meal of the day, and during Ramadan it will sustain you for the coming hours. In moderation, eat wholesome foods (e.g. fruits and vegetables) and foods high in fibre-content in order to have a steady release of energy throughout the day. It is particularly important to include slowly-digesting foods like complex carbohydrates. More importantly, be sure to drink water to keep you hydrated and assist with digestion.

Some further tips to follow:

- **Keep well hydrated.** Drink water with every meal and keep sipping on it through the evening.
- **Resist caffeine.** Even where you are not affected by its sleep-depriving properties, coffee, tea and energy drinks are diuretic

meaning that they can contribute to dehydration.

- **Snack on dates.** They contain a unique blend of glucose and have a nutrient (beta-D-glucan) which has health benefits and can increase the feeling of fullness.
- **Avoid certain food-types.** Foods that are fried & spicy, high in sugar, heavily processed, fatty and ones that are disagreeable with you in general.
- **Resist the urge to over-eat.** Psychologically, it can be very appealing to over-eat after long periods with no intake. But an empty stomach during the day followed by excessive eating can cause lethargy and other bodily discomforts.
- **Taking multi-vitamin supplements.** If you take these, continue to do so at times advised by a nutritionist.

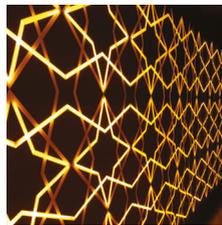
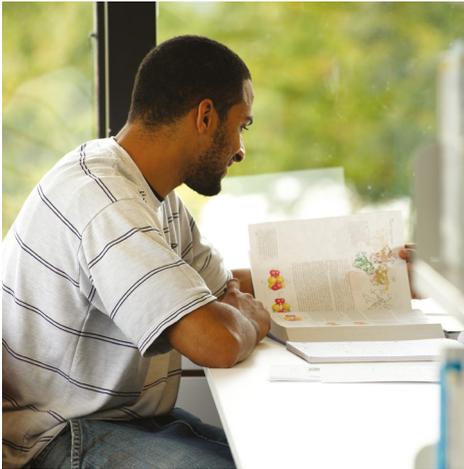
Foods to avoid	Healthy alternatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deep-fried foods, e.g. pakoras, samosas, fried dumplings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whole grains, e.g. chickpeas, baked samosas (not fried), boiled dumplings, homemade pastries
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High-sugar and high-fat foods, e.g. chips (fries), soft drinks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Milk-based sweets and puddings, e.g. rice pudding
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High-fat cooked foods, e.g. fast foods, curries	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Baked and grilled meat, chicken, fish or tofu

Cooking methods to avoid	Alternative methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deep frying	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shallow frying (usually there is very little difference in taste)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frying	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grilling or baking is healthier and helps retain the taste and original flavour of the food, especially with chicken and fish
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Excessive use of oil, e.g. in some curry dishes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Try to gradually reduce the oil used in cooking to a healthier level, or use more vegetables in the ingredients of curries

For more detailed information, please follow this link to the [Muslim Council of Britain's Ramadan health guide](#)

Practical Considerations

- During hot hours, try to remain indoors and in well-ventilated spaces. If possible, rest and reduce physical activities. The evening is the best time to exercise, and it is best to consider less rigorous exercises such as Tai-Chi.
- Go grocery shopping outside of fasting hours; an empty stomach could lead you to make unnecessary purchases that you may have no use for.
- Simple advice: keep 3 dates in a small sandwich bag in your pocket/backpack. If a third of people in a study group remember this, everyone can break fast immediately.
- Brush your teeth and floss several times a day to avoid displeasing breath.
- Organise your schedule to get enough sleep throughout revision, examination and work periods. Be well-rested in general – this may mean not attending *tarāwīh*.
- Mix with and meet new people. The social aspect of Ramadān is not to be missed, particularly in an international university environment where you can find others to keep you motivated. Share recipes and cultural solutions to meals to keep you going throughout the month.
- If you feel lethargic or irritated, refresh your *wudū*.



University Policy

Examination Periods

The university is aware that certain religious festivals in different faiths coincide with key events in the academic timetable. However given this wide diversity it is regrettable that it is not possible for the university to change the dates of the examination periods as these are fixed in advance in accordance with the Academic calendar.

Although the university recognises that obligatory fasting is an important event within many religious observances – in this case Ramadān – **it does not deem religious fasting to be a legitimate extenuating circumstance for examinations** unless fasting significantly affects your health and/or you have a medical condition which may impair your performance or prevent you from attending an examination. In such cases you will need to provide an appropriate medical note to support your claim.

Concise information on examinations can be found by searching for “examinations” on **the student intranet**. Students who have extenuating circumstances should read the guidance for the **Extenuating Circumstances form** (available online), and complete and submit it in line with the guidance.

Royal Holloway refrains from dictating to students who choose to fast how they should address this situation. This booklet has been prepared in order to assist students to make wise decisions according to their particular circumstances and the following options have been identified:

- Some may decide to continue with their fast as usual, and follow advice herein to prepare for examinations and deadlines.
- Some, after consultation with their religious advisor and/or doctor, may believe that their examinations are sufficient

justification to permit them not to fast, with a view to fast afterwards.

Key Religious Celebrations and Written Deadlines & In-Class Tests

Royal Holloway recognises the widely-celebrated festivals of all mainstream faiths and acknowledges that their day may fall on key points within a programme’s calendar. Ramadān is not deemed a celebration, but it is followed by ‘Eid Al-Fitr (the festival of fast-breaking which lasts 3 days). Additionally, ‘Eid Al-Adha (the festival of sacrifices) is celebrated by Muslims who are not attending Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah). **As with Ramadān, the university encourages submitting in advance of a deadline, and to not expect a department to agree an extension.**

Where assignments are due or in-class tests are scheduled on celebration dates, extenuating circumstances could be agreed intra-departmentally (in line with the department’s capability to afford alternative options), within reason* and with advance notice of at least 2 full weeks. This may allow for an extension or the rescheduling of an in-class assessment. This is similarly an acceptable reason to be absent from lessons without penalisation, so long as this has been communicated in advance and doesn’t significantly overlap important parts of a programme’s proceedings, such as a key field trip. Again, these may be acceptable as extenuating circumstances over celebration dates, but not over Ramadān.

The pilgrimage of Hajj and other religious observances that are outside of normative regular practice are deemed excusable at

* For example, this would apply to solely the first day of ‘Eid Al-Fitr

the point of committing to a programme of study. The university's view is therefore that these are insufficient for extenuating circumstances. This would similarly be true for other cultural practices. For individual health circumstances, students should always consult with a doctor about the safety of fasting prior to Ramadān.

Equality & Diversity

The university's Equality and Diversity Committee is responsible for steering the strategic development of equal opportunity matters within the institution and have supported the publication of this document. In advising those observing religious fasts, students are directed to the Nutrition Advice information on page 9 & 10. Students planning on fasting and who may have health concerns are encouraged to contact their doctor in good time.

Faith Policy

“The College is a secular institution committed to the pursuit of learning. It does not ally itself with any particular faith. It does however commit itself to an active support for the study and celebration of mainstream religious faiths within its community, recognising that such celebration is a source of individual strength, communal resource and intellectual and artistic excellence. The College will however actively discourage the activities of groups that could reasonably be judged to be harmful either to individual members or to the aims of the College as a whole.”



Ramaḍān at Royal Holloway

Observing the religious activities of Ramaḍān can be very different away from your home, particularly for international students who may come from regions where the whole country changes its activities over the month. It is ultimately what you make of it and for many, an independent environment will spark unique experiences. In its recent history, Royal Holloway has been host for a mixed and interlinked community who have gathered to enjoy the Ramaḍān experience together. The Ramaḍān programme* is as follows:

- **Iftār:** Annually, local community group Runnymede Muslim Society (RMS) have generously provided free fast-breaking meals for students; please check their website (opposite) for updates. There are numerous outlets on campus supplying Halāl (permissible) hot and ready meals – just look-out for the ‘H’ symbol.
- **Tarawīh:** Also coordinated by RMS, ‘Ishā prayers are normally 70 minutes after sunset, and followed by eight units of night prayer (in which the whole Qur’an is read over the month). The venue is advised on their website.
- **‘Eid:** The ‘Eid prayer is held within Wetton’s Annexe and starts at 8.30am. People usually gather to recite the takbīr (litany of praise) well in advance. There are no formal celebrations, though from time-to-time the university’s Islamic Society and various community groups will organise social events.
- **Daily prayers:** Informal congregation times displayed inside the Prayer Room can be followed for those who wish to pray together.
Please note that under no circumstances can food be eaten within the Prayer Room.

- **Friday prayers:** These continue at the regular time of 1.15pm throughout terms one and two only. Outside of term, alternative locations are signposted and noted in the Prayer Room.

* all details (e.g. times, venues) are subject to changes; please follow our social media channels (see page 16) for updates

Surrounding Areas

The Ashford & Staines Community Centre (ASCC), the first established mosque in the local area, hold daily prayers, Jummah prayers, regular educational and recreational programmes and hold iftār, tarawīh & i’tikāf during Ramaḍān. It is a bustling and diverse centre, with qualified scholars easily accessible and facilities for everyone. Visit www.ascc.uk.com for details.

RMS are local to Royal Holloway, and have worked closely with the university for over two decades. Whilst RMS work on securing their own premises, they periodically organise events in and around the local area as well as on-campus (such as their coordination of Friday prayers).

www.runnymedemuslims.uk

Neighbouring towns such as **Slough** and **Hounslow** have a multitude of Mosques and Islamic Centres with full programmes over Ramaḍān (including iftār, tarawīh & i’tikāf). They are ethnically diverse and so one will also be able to find an abundance of grocers, halāl butchers and restaurants. The #8 bus can be taken directly to Slough, and the journey is approximately 40 minutes outside of rush hour. To get to Hounslow, one will need to take a train from Egham station, which takes approximately 35 minutes.

Other local towns such as Staines, Feltham, Addlestone, Camberley and Windsor also have Muslim organisations that host activities over Ramaḍān.

Student Experience

Nafeesah Hussain, masters student

“The prayer room has been the perfect place for whenever I felt stressed and needed a break from revision, exams and deadlines, somewhere calm and quiet where I could sit and pray. It is always open and accessible to students any time to suit different schedules.

A helpful tip during the exam period would be to make sure to plan studying around praying, fasting and other important commitments.

Also, the Islamic society holds iftars on campus, which are a great chance to socialise and meet new people.”

Sammy Aburunnat, undergraduate student

“Subhanallah.. Ramadan can be a beautiful thing in Egham, and especially campus. The scenery and nature of the whole area can really make you appreciate and ponder on Allah’s creation, especially since the majority of us come from big industrial cities. Ramadan for me in my first year of University was great.. It was a chance for the Muslims to unite in an area where we haven’t got a big network, and we had iftar on campus every night at a differing brothers house.”

Tauseef Ahmed, undergraduate student

“Subhanallah.. At Royal Holloway we are lucky to have a very warm community at the Islamic Society, iftar meals are provided for our members in the student Prayer Room. Fasting during exams may seem daunting, however, it is possible with a diet tailored to you. Between the hours of Iftar and Suhoor, it is important to drink plenty of water and eat meals regularly in controlled amounts. It is also crucial to consume foods that will keep your energy levels up during the day, such as watermelon, banana, avocado, oats, grilled chicken etc. As well as this, ensuring you are getting enough sleep during exams and Ramadan will help you perform to the best of your abilities. In terms of this community, I think Muslims at Royal Holloway have a special experience of Ramadan.”

Faith Provisions on Campus

Multifaith Chaplaincy

Royal Holloway is a multi-faith community, with many different beliefs represented on campus and excellent co-operation between faiths. Chaplaincy gives a warm welcome and a listening ear to everybody, regardless of belief. Through Multifaith Chaplaincy, we offer support and inclusion to students and staff of all mainstream faiths and those of no faith; whilst also maintaining links to local community faith groups.

People from all beliefs have found a place with our Chaplaincy; the team (part of Wellbeing) includes an Anglican, Roman Catholic and Muslim Chaplain, all of whom can offer emotional and spiritual direction (or signposting) in a safe and non-judgemental way.

Please contact us to arrange an appointment.

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Nisar Shaikh Muslim Chaplain

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p/t role – please contact to arrange a meeting
+44 (0) 7949 623837

Rev. Dr. Orion Edgar Anglican Chaplain

orion.edgar@rhul.ac.uk
+44 (0) 1784 443 070

Fr. John Dickson Roman Catholic Chaplain

john.dickson@rhul.ac.uk
+44 (0) 7709 938 568

Worship & Reflection Spaces

Muslim Prayer Room: This purpose-build room is located inside **Wetton's Annexe** (North A30 area) – a minute's walk from Founder's Building across the footbridge. In order to gain access to Wetton's Annexe to utilise the Muslim Prayer Room, staff and students are required to email the Muslim Chaplain from their Royal Holloway email address – after which Access Control will initialise the associated ID Card. Salāt al-Jum'ah (Friday Prayers) is held in Wetton's Annexe A (just next to the Prayer Room) and commences at 1.15pm.

The Chapel: Located in the North side of the main Founder's Building, the Chapel is fully ecumenical and welcomes all members of Royal Holloway. It is used for daily worship, and services are open to everyone. Services run throughout term time in which Christians of all denominations participate.

Breathe (FE114): This multi-faith contemplation and meeting room can be booked for your society through Chaplaincy. Look out for open events that we hold via the Chaplaincy social media channels.

Other Useful Contacts

GP Surgery +44 (0) 1784 819131

Term-time: Mon – Fri: 9am–5pm
Vacation: Mon – Fri: 9am–1pm & 2–5pm

Student Services Centre +44 (0) 1784 276 641

studentservices@rhul.ac.uk

Royal Holloway Multifaith Chaplaincy
wishes you a blessed, joyous and
illuminated Ramadān

royalholloway.ac.uk/chaplaincy



RHULChaplaincy



RHUL Prayer Room



@RHULChaplaincy

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