

Policy, Guidelines and Procedures on Academic Accommodation for Students' Religious Observances

Preamble

York University is a secular institution, committed to sustaining an inclusive, equitable community in which all members are treated with respect and dignity.

I. Policy

- a. The University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community, and making reasonable and appropriate accommodations to adherents for observances of days of religious significance.
- b. No student should be materially disadvantaged / penalized because of religious observance.
- c. Efforts are made by the University to avoid scheduling formal or in-class examinations on days of religious significance which require an absence from the University or prohibit or require certain activities that would make participation in course activities unfeasible.
- d. Students seeking accommodations have an obligation to inform instructors in a timely fashion of a conflict between a date of religious significance and a course examination, test or deadline.
- e. The terms of this policy and the related guidelines and procedures for requesting and arranging accommodations shall be publicized and accessible.
- f. All members of the University community bear responsibility for implementing this policy, and should make themselves familiar with it and the resources available to them. Accommodations are collaborative in nature and shall be based on mutual understanding.

II. Guidelines / Principles

- a. All students are expected to satisfy the essential learning outcomes of courses. Accommodations shall be consistent with, support and preserve the academic integrity of the curriculum and the academic standards of courses and programs.
- b. The University provides reasonable and appropriate accommodation for students whose religion requires them to be absent from the University for observance of recognized religious days of significance.
- c. A list of *Commonly Observed Dates of Religious Significance* shall be compiled concurrently with the establishment of the Sessional Dates for the following academic year, and disseminated to assist instructors in course planning.
- d. Normally the form of accommodation will be alternative dates for final examinations, and adjustment of dates for term work, mid-term examinations or other course components.
- e. The Registrar's Office takes into consideration the dates of religious significance in its establishment of the final examination schedule.
- f. Documentation from faith leaders is not required to support requests for accommodation.

III. Procedures

a. Annual Dissemination of Dates of Religious Significance

The Office of the Vice-Provost Students shall compile the list of *Commonly Observed Dates of Religious Significance* annually. There are many holy days associated with various faiths, and the absence of such dates on this list should not be interpreted to mean that accommodation will not be provided to students who observe those days. The *Commonly Observed Dates of Religious Significance*¹ shall be transmitted to the Office of the University Registrar by September each year for reference in its scheduling of the December and April examination periods for that academic year, and in the establishment of the *Sessional Dates* for the following academic year. Upon confirmation of the *Sessional Dates* by the Senate Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy Committee and Senate in the autumn, the *Commonly Observed Dates of Religious Significance* shall be posted on the Registrar's Office site and disseminated by the Office of the Vice-Provost Academic to assist instructors in planning their courses for the following academic year.

b. Final Examinations

Students who have a conflict between a religious commitment and the scheduled date of an examination in either of the December or April formal examination periods must request an alternative date to write the final exam. Using the [Religious Accommodation Agreement](#) students contact the course director **no later than 21 days prior to the start of the examination period** to arrange an alternate examination date. Failure to meet the deadline may result in a denial of the request. The instructor will process requests expeditiously to avoid an academic disadvantage to the student. Completed Agreement forms are submitted to the department offering the course.

In cases where an arrangement between the student and course instructor cannot be made, or if the student is uncomfortable approaching the instructor to request a religious accommodation, the student should contact the Associate Dean of the Faculty in which the course is offered. Students are required to contact the Associate Dean **not less than 14 days prior to the start of the examination period**. Failure to meet the deadline may result in a denial of the request.

Guided by the student's particular circumstance, the forms of accommodations provided by the Associate Dean may include:

- i. Treating the request as a conflict and accommodating it within the examination period, or
- ii. Scheduling a deferred examination as close to the original examination date as possible.

c. Term Work / Course Components other than Final Examinations

Students seeking accommodations under the terms of this policy may do so in order to reschedule the date of:

¹ Does not include days of religious observance that are also statutory holidays.

- a test
- submission of an assignment
- any other other required form of course evaluation (such as labs or presentations)

Students are responsible for making a formal request (in person or in writing) to their instructor(s) for accommodation **within 14 days of the date** for which accommodation is sought. If the day of religious significance occurs within 14 days of the start of a term, the student shall contact the course director at the earliest opportunity to request accommodation.

Normally the forms of accommodation provided by the course instructor will be to:

- i. re-schedule the evaluation to an alternative date
- ii. provide an alternative evaluation for satisfying the course requirement (including a common date for the class for all deferred tests / mid-term examinations)
- iii. provide an alternative assignment for satisfying the course requirement

In exceptional circumstances, re-calculating the evaluation scheme in a course to eliminate the component that has been missed may be determined to be the most appropriate accommodation for individual students. Consistent with the Guideline that the essential learning outcomes of a course must be satisfied (Section II a), no component worth more than 20% may be re-weighted within the grading scheme.

If a course instructor and a student are unable to agree on the form of accommodation, the request will be referred to the Associate Dean to determine the form of accommodation consistent with these Guidelines / Principles and Procedures.

Commonly Observed Dates of Religious Significance: 2018-2019

	May 2018 to June 2019
Ramadan*	Begins at sunset May 15, 2018 and ends at nightfall on June 14, 2018. Muslims may fast from dawn to dusk, abstaining from food and drink. Examinations scheduled in the evening may pose a special burden.
Eid-al-Fitr*	Begins at sunset on June 14, 2018 and ends June 17, 2018
Eid-al-Adha*	Begins at sunset on August 21, 2018 and ends August 25, 2018
Rosh Hashanah	Begins at sunset on September 9, 2018 and ends on September 11, 2018
Yom Kippur	Begins at sunset on September 18, 2018 and ends on September 19, 2018
First Two Days of Sukkot	Begins at sunset on September 23, 2018 and the second day ends at nightfall on September 25, 2018
Shemini Atzeret	Begins at sunset on September 30, 2018 and ends at nightfall on October 1, 2018
Simchat Torah	Begins at sunset on 1 October 2018 and ends at nightfall on 2 October 2018
Diwali (Deepavali)	November 7, 2018
Hanukkah	Begins at sunset on December 2, 2018 and ends at nightfall on December 10, 2018.
Epiphany	January 6, 2019
Feast of the Nativity(Orthodox)	January 7, 2019
Lunar New Year	February 5, 2019
Ash Wednesday	March 6, 2019
Purim	Begins at sunset on March 20, 2019 and ends at nightfall on March 21, 2019

Norooz	March 21, 2019
Maundy Thursday	April 18, 2019
First two days of Passover	Begins at sunset on April 19, 2019 and ends at nightfall on April 21, 2019
Last two days of Passover	Begins at sunset on April 25, 2019 and ends at nightfall on April 27, 2019
Holy Friday (Orthodox)	April 26, 2019
Easter (Orthodox)	April 28, 2019
Ramadan*	Begins at sunset on May 5, 2019 and ends on June 4, 2019. Muslims may fast from dawn to dusk, abstaining from food and drink. Examinations scheduled in the evening may pose a special burden.
Eid-al-Fitr*	Begins at sunset on June 4, 2019 and ends on June 7, 2019
Shavuot	Begins at sunset on June 8, 2019 and ends at nightfall on June 10, 2019
National Aboriginal Day	June 21, 2019
* Some observances are based on the lunar calendar, and thus may vary by one or two days.	

Religious Accommodation Agreement – Final Examinations

STUDENT DEADLINE

Students who, because of religious commitment cannot write a formally scheduled examination on the date scheduled, should contact the course director **no later than 21 days prior to the** start of the official examination period to arrange an alternative examination date. For further information on the Religious Accommodation Guidelines, please see registrar.yorku.ca/exams/accommodation

Please Print

Student Information				
Student's Name			Student Number	
Street Address			Home Faculty	
City	Province	Postal Code	Telephone	E-mail

Based on the guidelines listed above, I require examination accommodation for the following:

Term	Faculty	Subject	Course Number	Section	Original Date/Time of Exam

Course Director Information
<p>Complete this section and sign.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I have approved the request for examination accommodation to be written by the following date _____</p> <p>I understand that grades must be submitted by the deadlines listed on page 2 of this form.</p> <p>Course Director's Name _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____ (or designate)</p> <p><i>In the rare occurrence where arrangements between the student and instructor cannot be made, or if the student does not feel comfortable about approaching the instructor to request a religious accommodation, then the student should contact the Associate Dean of the Faculty in which the course is offered within 14 days prior to the start of the examination period.</i></p>

Student: I understand that it is my responsibility to contact the course instructor prior to the start of the official examination period. **I also understand that this information will be treated in a confidential manner, except to the extent that the information is false, fraudulent, is required to be used in an allegation of a breach of academic honesty against me, or is required to be disclosed to defend York University.**

Student's Signature	Date
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Students: This agreement is valid when you return the completed original form to the home office offering the course with all appropriate signatures prior to the start of the official examination period.

Departments: Please forward original form to the Registrar's Office.

**Revised Final Grades Due in Registrar's Office by the
Date Specified for Faculties**

FACULTY	FALL COURSES	WINTER AND FULL YEAR COURSES	SUMMER COURSES
LIBERAL ARTS & PROFESSIONAL STUDIES	April 1	August 1	1 st Term - September 1 2 nd Term - October 1
ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES	April 1	August 1	1 st Term - September 1 2 nd Term- October 1
EDUCATION (Non-practicum courses)	April 1	August 1	1 st Term - September 1 2 nd Term- October 1
Practicum Courses	At the discretion of the course director.	At the discretion of the course director.	At the discretion of the course director.
GLENDON	Middle of March	Middle of July	N/A
GRADUATE STUDIES	Consult with the Graduate program office or Office of the Dean.	Consult with the Graduate program office or Office of the Dean.	Consult with the Graduate program office or Office of the Dean.
HEALTH	April 1	August 1	1 st Term - September 1 2 nd Term- October 1
LASSONDE SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING	April 1	August 1	October 30
OSGOODE HALL LAW SCHOOL	Assistant Dean, JD Program	Assistant Dean, JD Program	N/A
SCIENCE	April 1	August 1	October 30
SCHOOL OF THE ARTS, MEDIA, PERFORMANCE, & DESIGN (FORMERLY FINE ARTS)	April 1	August 1	1 st Term - September 1 2 nd Term- October 1
SCHULICH SCHOOL OF BUSINESS	Within one month of receiving examination accommodation or, if endorsed by the instructor, by the end of the next academic term.	Within one month of receiving examination accommodation or, if endorsed by the instructor, by the end of the next academic term.	Within one month of receiving examination accommodation or, if endorsed by the instructor, by the end of the next academic term.

Protection of Privacy: Personal information in connection with this form is collected under the authority of *The York University Act, 1965* for educational, administrative and statistical purposes. The information will be used to process your enrolment and registration in academic programs; to record and track your academic progress; and for related record-keeping purposes. If you have any questions about the collection, use or disclosure of this information by York University, please contact the Manager, Student Client Services, W120 Bennett Centre for Student Services, York University, 4700 Keele Street, Toronto ON, M3J 1P3, 416-872-9675.