



Memorandum Regarding the Observance of Ramadan

Ramadan, one of the holiest months in the Islamic Calendar, will begin on March 22. This memo provides information and guidance to assist students and instructors in arranging and providing academic accommodations for Ramadan-related needs in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code and the University's Faculty Handbook.

Duty to Accommodate

Brock University has a duty to accommodate the creed-related needs of students and employees under the Ontario Human Rights Code. Creed is broadly understood as a continuum of religious beliefs and practices that govern an individual's way of life. In the context of Ramadan, this means that the University has an obligation to adjust practices or requirements so that Muslim students are not disadvantaged.

What is a Religious Accommodation?

Religion, spirituality and faith are unique to everyone. Some practices and traditions require its participants to follow guidelines that may conflict with tasks and expectations in the workplace or academic environment. A religious accommodation requires the University, its students, and its staff to work together in providing accommodations when an individual's religious observances or practices create a conflict with their work or learning environment, or their schedule. Instead of providing special privileges or advantages, accommodations provide equitable resources for all individuals to ensure they are included, respected, and able to engage in full participation in their community. Examples of religious accommodations for students in the context of Ramadan could include extending deadlines, adjusting the scheduling of academic commitments, or offering flexibility in attendance requirements. Faculty members have discretion in determining appropriate academic accommodations.

Ramadan 2023

Ramadan is scheduled according to the lunar calendar. This year, it will be March 22 to the evening of April 20, 2023. Eid is the celebration that follows Ramadan. This is one of the two biggest holidays of the Islamic calendar. Eid runs from the evening of Thursday, April 20, 2023 to the evening of Friday, April 21, 2023.

Muslims who observe Ramadan will fast from dawn until dusk (approximately 6:30AM to 8:30PM in the Niagara Region). Fasting means no food and no water. During Ramadan, gatherings and prayers often last late into the night; people may be up past midnight for prayers and then awake at 4:30AM to eat before dawn.



This year, Ramadan is observed during the exam period. During this time, individuals may be hungry, tired, and dehydrated, particularly during the late afternoon and evening. Academic accommodations on religious grounds are made in collaboration between the student and individual instructors.

If you are a student in need of religious accommodations during Ramadan, please feel free to use the email template below, as the request for accommodation must be sent directly to your course instructor.

EMAIL TEMPLATE:

Greetings (Dr./Prof Insert Instructor Name),

I am sending this email as a formal request for an accommodation in (insert course title and code). As per the Faculty Handbook (FHB), section 3(c), 13.2.3: Accommodation of Students on Religious Grounds, I am informing you of this request in writing at my earliest notice, and no later than the second-last week of classes.

I am requesting academic accommodations during Ramadan from Wednesday, March 22, 2023 to Friday, April 21, 2023. During this time, I may need a variety of accommodations. Recognizing that individual accommodations must be worked out between the instructor and student, I have provided my preferred accommodations below:

In-Class Accommodations (Prior to April 11)

Example Request #1:

Course Item: Written Case Study Due April 2nd

Accommodation Requested: Additional time requested - extension of deadline to April 5th

Example Request #2:

Course Item: BIOL 1P91 Labs between March 22 and April 11

Accommodation Requested: Flexibility to leave labs to pray for approximately _____minutes as needed

Exam Accommodations (April 11-22)



Example Request #3:

Exam information: KINE 1P90 Exam Scheduled for April 15 at 19:00

Accommodation Requested: To break fast during my scheduled exam for (insert number of minutes) to pray. I will be breaking my fast at my exam writing station, and I have no problem being proctored during the breaking of my fast. To avoid any misunderstanding on exam day, I would appreciate it if you could inform the proctors of this.

If you agree with these accommodations, please send me an email to confirm. If you have alternatives to these accommodations or would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to let me know. Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Best,

(Your name)

Want to learn more?

Please visit the links below to learn more about Ramadan and about how to accommodate Islamic religious practices in the workplace:

[What is Ramadan? – Live Science](#)

[An Employers Guide to Islamic Religious Practices- National Council of Canadian Muslims](#)

[Brock University on Academic Accommodation for Religious Obligations](#)

If you have questions about this resource or are looking for support connected to religious accommodations in general, please contact Human Rights and Equity (humanrights@brocku.ca).

This resource was created in partnership between Human Rights & Equity, the Brock Muslim Students Association, and the Brock Faith and Life Centre.