

University of Central Lancashire

Briefing on Observance of Ramadan 2019



Our students and staff from a Muslim faith will be observing the month of Ramadan (a period of fasting).

Ramadan in 2019 will start on Sunday, the **5th of May** and will continue for 30 days until Tuesday, the **4th of June** (depending on the moon sighting). Note that in the Muslim calendar, a day begins on the sunset of the previous day, so observing Muslims will celebrate Ramadan on the sunset of Sunday, the **5th of May**.

This briefing aims to raise awareness of this important event to our observing communities of students and staff and aims to provide practical information to everyone, including:

1. Key points
2. The purpose and significance
3. The arrangements in place on Preston Campus
4. Practical guidelines for students who are observing the fasts during examinations
5. Further sources of useful advice and information

1. Key points

- ❖ The dates of Ramadan are 5th/6th May to 4th/5th June.
- ❖ Muslims abstain from taking any food or drinks from dawn to sunset on each individual day over this month. The times of the fast for each day are approximately **3.00am** (when the fast commences) to **9.15pm** (when the fast ends/fast is opened). These change every day throughout the month. In practice, this means that Muslims fast over this period for up to 18 hours a day. A timetable for the 30 days will be available in the Oasis Centre.
- ❖ During this time, Muslims try to follow a normal work/study routine as far as possible but have responsibilities for devotion to extra prayers and readings to their otherwise daily religious commitments.
- ❖ Students and staff take responsibility for managing their commitment to Ramadan themselves.

2. Purpose and Significance

- ❖ To attain nearness and closeness to God through devotion and commitment to fasting and prayers.

- ❖ To experience and appreciate those who are less fortunate than them.
- ❖ To give particular emphasis to charity and generosity - this is especially encouraged during this month.

Ramadan is also a time for significant community and family spirit and providing support. Many individuals and families will pray and eat together and support each other in many ways, throughout the month.

3. The arrangements in place on Preston Campus

What provision is the University making?

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

The arrangements we have in place this year are:

- ❖ The Oasis Centre (Kirkham Street) will be accessible to students and staff every day (Monday - Sunday) over this period. The centre will be available through open access from 7.30am to 6.30pm on weekdays (Monday - Friday) and access will be controlled by swipe access using student and staff cards between 6.30pm to 1.00am including weekends.
- ❖ Students and staff are welcome to use the prayer and social spaces within the Oasis Centre over this period.
- ❖ Traditionally, Muslims open their fast in the evening with dates and water. The University will provide these and they will be available to students and staff in the Oasis Centre.
- ❖ Students and staff will be expected to bring their own meals if they wish to open the fast with others in the Oasis.
- ❖ Meals are not able to be prepared at the Oasis Centre, but full existing kitchen facilities will otherwise be available at the Oasis.
- ❖ Cleaning – students and staff using the Oasis Centre are responsible for making sure the whole Centre is clean and tidy at the end of each day.
- ❖ Prayer timetables for Ramadan will be displayed in the prayer rooms. These are also available from the Grand Mosque of Preston. To download, visit www.jameemasjid.co.uk
- ❖ Taraweeh (late night prayer) over this period will also be planned for students and staff in the Oasis prayer room. Details will be available on www.uclanisoc.com

All students and staff of all religious backgrounds, beliefs or none are welcome to attend the Oasis Centre over this period to explore, observe or simply come and ask questions.

At the end of Ramadan, all Muslims observe the festival of Eid ul Fitr with their families and communities. Eid prayer times will be sent out closer to the day.

4. Practical guidelines for students who are observing the fasts during examinations

- ❖ Ensure you are well rested the day before.
- ❖ Prepare the night before and plan times in the day when you can rest.
- ❖ Check the examination timetable carefully and avoid rushing around in the morning.
- ❖ Have suhoor (a pre-dawn meal) which is wholesome and filling in order to sustain energy for many hours. It is important to include slowly digested foods.
- ❖ If the examination is in the morning, take a long rest in the afternoon so you are ready for the Taraweeh (late night prayer).
- ❖ If the examination is in the afternoon, take a short rest during the morning hours.
- ❖ If you feel tired and sluggish, refresh yourself with wudhu (ritual ablution). Eat healthy when you break your fast (Iftaar) at the end of the day.
- ❖ Drink lots of water between sunset and sunrise. It is good to sip small amounts whilst praying, doing revision, reading and other activities. This will keep you strong for the long fasting hours and will help prevent dehydration and headaches.
- ❖ Abstain from doing too much physical activity. Take the opportunity to rest when you can and avoid the dehydrating effects of sitting in hot sunshine.
- ❖ If your health is put at risk due to the fast, through possible dehydration or injury, you can break your fast, as your health is more important. You can make up the broken fast at a later date when your health is better.
- ❖ If you are travelling, diabetic or have any serious illnesses, you are exempted from fasting. As an alternative, if you cannot make up the fasts later, you may need to give Fidyah (giving charity when one is unable to fast). Please consult any of the Muslim Chaplains who will be happy to advise you.

The National Health Service provides a guide on healthy living and Ramadan. Please click on the link below for more information:

<https://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/healthyRamadan/Pages/Healthynamadanhome.aspx>

5. Further information, advice or support

Students and staff are welcome to contact any of the following student/staff members for any further information or enquiries:

Imam Vasiyullah Bhayat Muslim Chaplain	01772 892602 VBhayat@uclan.ac.uk
Imam Uzair Hansrot Supporting Muslim Chaplain	01772 892615 UHansrot@uclan.ac.uk
Almas Shaikh Chair of Islamic Society	AShaikh1@uclan.ac.uk Info@uclanisoc.com