



# A Student's Guide to Accommodations during Ramadan 2026

Ramadan is a holy time for intention-setting, reflection, and community connection. For Muslim students, fasting, prayers, eating meals at varied times, and reflection can exert physical, mental, and emotional energy that is exacerbated when completing activities such as writing exams, attending class, completing assignments, etc.

This guide has been created to help Muslim students access support and accommodations at UBC during Ramadan, and balance academic and faith-based commitments. The guidelines outlined below were initially created to overlap Ramadan and UBC's final exam period. They have been adjusted for 2026 to acknowledge and support the many academic commitments that take place during Ramadan beyond final exams<sup>1</sup>. Every student approaches their commitments in different ways. Observing Ramadan during the academic term adds unique challenges and opportunities. A fully encompassing resource to support students' religious and spiritual accommodations can be found [here](#).

## Duty to Accommodate

UBC values the religious and spiritual diversity of the student community. To support the needs of students' faith-based and spiritual needs, the following policies are in effect:

- [Discrimination Policy \(SC7\)](#)
- Senate [Policy J-136](#) – *Academic Accommodations for all Students' Religious Observances and for the Cultural Observances of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Students*
- Senate Policy [V-103](#) – *Use of the Formal Examination Periods*
- Senate Policy [V-135](#) – *Academic Concession*

Although academic accommodations may vary and are approached on a case-by-case basis, UBC is committed to supporting students in addressing academic commitments that may impact their ability to practice their faith or spirituality. The university commits to exploring accommodation options for any upcoming religious observances and anticipated absences during Ramadan that best meet students' needs without resulting in undue hardship.

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<sup>1</sup> Ramadan is expected to take place from Feb. 17 – Mar. 19 in 2026. Given that the start and end of Ramadan are determined by the shifting lunar calendar, the exact dates will be determined a few days before the estimated start and end dates.



## What is an Academic Accommodation Related to Religion/Spirituality?

The [BC Human Rights Code](#) states that an individual cannot be denied of any accommodation due to religion without a bona fide and reasonable justification. Recognizing the significance of religious and spiritual observance for many students, UBC is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students scheduled to attend class or write examinations on religious holy days. Where a request for an accommodation is based on a protected ground covered by the BC Human Rights Code, the university has a duty to grant an academic concession unless doing so will create undue hardship (as that term has been interpreted under BC law) for the university. See below for examples of religious accommodations.

### Examples of Accommodations:

Each accommodation is unique and decided on a case-by-case basis. Below are examples of accommodations that may spark a conversation with your course instructor or coordinator, graduate advisor, or the Dean's Office of your program to see what is possible. This list is **non-exhaustive**.

#### Exams

- Re-scheduling an exam to a different time of the day of the scheduled exam to allow for a student's ability to accommodate their energy level and prayer schedule;
- Re-scheduling an exam to a different day based on UBC's [standing deferred exam process](#);
- Offering extra time during exams for students to break fast, pray, and/or perform *wudu* (ritual washing of oneself before prayer);
- Alerting exam invigilators that some students may be fasting during exams and empowering invigilators to support accommodations; and
- Permitting prayer mats and means for students to search for *Qibla* (the direction Muslims face to perform prayers).

#### Other Academic Accommodations

- Arranging for access to a private space or area that allows a student to perform wudu and prayer;
- Communicating the location of prayer room(s) and ablution stations to students in advance;
- Extending deadlines for graded work;
- Providing flexible options and alternatives for class or lab attendance to accommodate students' energy levels, prayer schedules, and fasting schedules;
- Offering recordings of course lectures; and
- Offering breaks during class or labs to accommodate prayer times and breaking of fast.



## Steps for Requesting Accommodations

1. **Inform** your course instructor or coordinator, graduate advisor, or the Dean's Office of your program about the requested accommodation in writing with as much notice as possible (usually 14 days) before the date that the accommodation is required. In the request, include:
  - Your full name;
  - Student ID number;
  - Course information (e.g. the course number and section number if applicable);
  - Information about the accommodation, such as why it's needed and any specific days and times for the accommodation; and
  - Any specific suggestions for accommodations that can be provided (e.g. allowing an extra 15 minutes during the exam for prayer) while considering that none of these suggestions are guaranteed.
2. **Wait** for your course instructor or coordinator, graduate advisor or the Dean's Office of your program to reply to the request. This may take a few days since they may respond to other accommodation requests.
3. **Engage** in open and respectful dialogue to agree on the accommodation.
4. **Confirm** the details of the agreed-upon accommodation in writing; if not provided, follow up with a request to receive details about the accommodation in writing.
5. **Notify** the course instructor or coordinator, graduate advisor or the Dean's Office of your program of any changes to the accommodation as soon as possible (e.g. if you no longer need an accommodation, if there are changes in accommodation dates or times, etc.)

## Tips for Navigating Conversations about Accommodations

1. **Plan in advance.** The course instructor or coordinator, graduate advisor, or Dean's Office of your program appreciate as early notice as possible. Once the course schedule is released, double-check to see if there are any dates of conflict between exams, assignments, labs, etc. and holy days of observance. Requests that come in with minimal notice can be more challenging to accommodate.
2. **Provide context to foster understanding.** The course instructor or coordinator, graduate advisor, or Dean's Office of your program may not be familiar with religious or spiritual commitment details and how to best accommodate for the holy day(s) of



observance. Feel free to share specific ideas and suggestions on how to best accommodate you. However, these suggestions may not be guaranteed; they might help inform how your program's course instructor or coordinator, graduate advisor or Dean's Office can support your request.

3. **Ensure everyone is on the same page.** To ensure transparency and avoid miscommunication, it will be helpful to send and receive written requests from the course instructor or coordinator, graduate advisor, or Dean's Office of your program.
4. **Gauge when to follow up.** Sometimes, time is needed to follow up on an accommodations request. Give the course instructor or coordinator, graduate advisor, or the Dean's Office of your program at least five business days to respond, and if you don't hear from them, follow up in writing.
5. **Embrace openness, respectful dialogue, and collaboration.** Successful accommodations are often a result of collaborative efforts. Each party has responsibilities in the accommodation process, and it's important that everyone keeps an open mind as they engage in respectful dialogue and come to a mutual solution.

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What is considered to be religious or spiritual observance?**  
Religious or spiritual observance involves observance by members of a faith-based or spiritual group that can include but is not exclusive to prayer, religious services, ceremonies, and rituals. Suppose the observance overlaps with an academic commitment. In that case, the university has a duty to accommodate without consequence or penalty for those observing as long as this does not cause undue hardship, including jeopardizing the academic integrity of the curriculum, the academic standards of courses, or the safety of the student or others.
2. **Will I be required to provide proof that I observe Ramadan?**  
No, students are not required to provide evidence of their membership in a religious or spiritual group or of their observance when requesting accommodations. Students also do not need to provide letters of support from faith or spiritual leaders.
3. **What does undue hardship mean?**  
As outlined in Senate [Policy J-136](#), *Academic Accommodation for all Students' Religious Observances and for the Cultural Observances of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Students*, accommodations will not be granted that cause undue hardship, which include "jeopardizing the academic integrity of the curriculum, the academic



standards of courses, or the safety of the student or others.”

4. **When will my exam be rescheduled?**

When and how an exam is rescheduled is unique to each case. Some things to consider are the nature of the exam (e.g., length, format, etc.), invigilator or instructor availability, and exam room availability and schedule. The rescheduling of an exam depends on multiple factors and usually isn't determined by the student; however, rescheduling the exam should not subject students to exam hardship, where they are faced with three or more formal exams within a 24-hour period.

5. **What if I can't agree on an accommodation plan with the course instructor or coordinator, graduate advisor, or Dean's Office of my program?**

Students may contact the academic head of the Faculty/unit offering the course or program. If an agreement to an accommodation plan cannot be reached, students can contact the [Human Rights Advising](#) team at the Equity and Inclusion Office for support.

## Resources

- [UBC Vancouver Academic Calendar 2025/2026](#)
- [Chaplains at UBC](#)
- [UBC Multifaith Prayer Rooms](#)
- [Religious Accommodation and Days of Significance](#) (Equity and Inclusion Office)
- [Religion and Spirituality at UBC](#)

## Contact Information

If you are looking for more support, please consider contacting:

- The academic head of the Faculty/unit offering the course or program.
- The Equity and Inclusion [Human Rights Advising](#) team
- [UBC Chaplains](#)
- Your respective Academic Advisor; Associate Dean, Students; or Associate Dean, Academic

In addition to the resources listed above, students can connect with the Office of the Vice-President, Students, at [vpsassist@mail.ubc.ca](mailto:vpsassist@mail.ubc.ca) for further support with navigating religious and spiritual accommodations.