

Policy Name: Accommodations for Religious and Cultural Observances
Approving Authority: EDIA Committee

Policy # HR-014
Approval Date: 11/30/2023
Date Last Reviewed: 11/30/2023
Next Review Date: 11/2024

Statement

The Accommodations for Religious and Cultural Observances Policy of Beal University Canada (“BUC” or the “University”) supports the commitment to human rights, equity, fairness, diversity, and accessibility. This policy provides access to students with religious and cultural observances, including through reasonable accommodations to facilitate student academic success. The Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (“EDIA”) Committee will review this policy annually.

Purpose

In accordance with the New Brunswick Human Rights Act, the University will promote and protect the rights and dignity of all students and will create a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all members of the University community. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the University’s commitment to provide accommodation measures related to the practice of Religious and Cultural Observances.

Roles and Responsibilities

The appropriate student accommodations entail shared responsibilities and communication among University staff, faculty, and students. The EDIA Committee has oversight of this policy. The Director of Compliance, Health, and Safety, in coordination with the Student Services Department, is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

Policy

The University welcomes and includes students, staff, and faculty from a wide range of backgrounds, cultural traditions, creeds, and religions. It is the University’s policy to arrange reasonable accommodation for the needs of students who observe religious and cultural days other than those already accommodated by ordinary scheduling and statutory holidays. It is important that no student be seriously disadvantaged because of their Religious and Cultural Observances. However, in the scheduling of academic and other activities, it is also important to ensure that the accommodation of one group does not seriously disadvantage other groups within the University communities or cause undue hardship to the University. When a student does not request accommodation within the period of time that corresponds to the initial 20% of the course’s mod or where accommodating the request would cause undue hardship to the University or other students, the request might be denied. However, every reasonable effort will be made to provide accommodations. If compulsory activities are unavoidable, every reasonable opportunity will be given to these students to make up work that they miss. When the scheduling of tests or examinations cannot be avoided, students will be informed of the procedure to be followed to arrange to write at an alternate time. The University also recognizes that religious and spiritual calendars operate on different cycles and that flexibility may be required with respect to holidays that cannot be precisely determined due to their tentative nature (i.e. holidays based on lunar calendars, etc.). The University also recognizes that each individual’s needs are unique and must be considered afresh when an accommodation is requested, as an arrangement that might work for one individual may not work for others.

Those responsible for the design and publication of course syllabi and material in the learning management system are responsible for:

- Including in syllabi and online course sites a notice advising students that they will be given the opportunity to make up work or examinations without penalty that are missed due to Religious and Cultural Observances;
- Advising students in syllabi and online course sites of their obligation to notify the Student Services department that they will be absent or unable to meet a course obligation due to Religious and Cultural Observances within the period of time that corresponds to the initial 20% of the course's mod; and
- Specifying in syllabi, course schedules, and online course sites dates and times for examinations and other major course obligations.

Faculty who have the role of an instructor of a course are responsible for:

- Reminding students of the dates and time for examination and other major course obligations at the beginning of the mod;
- Advising students of their obligation to notify the Student Services department that they will be absent due to a Religious and Cultural Observance; and
- Advising students that they will be given the opportunity to make up work or examinations without penalty if they choose to observe a Religious and Cultural Observance.

Students who will be absent or unable to meet a course obligation because of Religious and Cultural Observances are responsible for:

- Advising the Student Services department of the need for an accommodation within the period of time that corresponds to the initial 20% of the course's mod.

The Student Services department will maintain a yearly Diversity Calendar which is accessible by all faculty, students, and staff. Faculty, students, and staff may refer to it when planning in advance for days of Religious and Cultural Observance and any related absences.

Related Policies and Documents

SA-003 Student Access to Accommodations Policy

HR-009 Workplace Accommodations Policy

HR-004 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

SA-001 Student Code of Conduct

HR-003 Harassment and Discrimination Policy

AA-004 Corrective Action Policy

HR-013 Gender Inclusion Policy

Addendum: Student Request for Accommodation of Religious and Cultural Observance Form

Addendum

Student Request for Accommodation of Religious and Cultural Observance

You are encouraged to proactively plan for and request this accommodation in a timely manner and within the period of time that corresponds to the initial 20% of the course’s mod, advising the Student Services department of the need for an accommodation.

Please note that documentation is not required for religious and cultural accommodation requests, however the Student Services department may check the Diversity Calendar to verify the request. Please submit this form directly to ss@bealuniversity.ca so the Student Services department can prepare an accommodation letter.

Student Information

Student’s Name: _____

Student ID Number: _____

School Email Address: _____

In the space below, please outline the name of the Observance, the date, and the type of accommodation being requested.

Date of Conflict	Name of Observance	Requested Accommodation

Date Submitted: _____

Note: Please allow at least 7 business days for processing.

The confidentiality of your personal information will be safeguarded by the Student Services department in accordance with privacy regulations. In order to implement any accommodations, basic information may need to be shared with the relevant faculty involved in the accommodation only to the extent necessary.