**EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY**

**Guidance on Examinations and Religious Observance**

Edinburgh Napier University recognises religion and belief as a protected equality characteristic. The University and our students have a mutual responsibility for accommodating religious observance within the University environment and the University works with students and their representatives to ensure that during the course of their studies, students can access appropriate environments, such as designated Quiet Rooms, to allow religious fulfilment.

In terms of formal Examinations and religious observance, the University follows practice from across the Higher Education sector, and aims to ensure a proportionate response for all involved in the Exam process, recognising that the needs of the University must be balanced with the beliefs of the individual students.

The progression requirements of our degree programmes are linked to the University Key Dates Calendar, incorporating Programme Assessment Boards which allow academic decisions to be made to enable students to be awarded or to progress to further years of study. The expectations of all of our students in terms of progression, and the impact on staff, means moving the formal Examination dates to avoid clashes with significant dates in any world religion is not a reasonable option and would not constitute a proportionate response. The Examination Diets contribute to achieving the legitimate aim of managing University business effectively to meet the expectations of all our students.

The University does however **continue to look after the wellbeing of all our students** and if required can provide practical advice and support to students who are observing religious festivals (such as Diwali, Easter, Hanukkah or Ramadan). **The University will ensure that student counsellors and support workers are equipped to cope with a potential increase in demand during periods of religious observance. In addition, s**tudent societies and local faith groups may have access to further resources that can be utilised to support students.

In the specific instance of Ramadan, taking the views from faith and diversity advisers that fasting is intended to be integrated into daily life, the University will provide appropriate support to students, for example, to assist them to stay healthy and cope with the physical and mental demands of fasting, religious observance and Exams. Students can also postpone a day of fasting if necessary, as this is permissible under the rules that govern fasting.

All students who attend Examinations must declare themselves ‘Fit to Sit’ (i.e. students are declaring themselves to be well enough to sit an Exam, in other words ‘Fit to Sit’). In cases where students have been impacted by circumstances, such as Ramadan coinciding with Exams, and feel unable to sit Examinations, then the University Extenuating Circumstances process should be considered by students.

**Approved by:** LTASEC

**Date:** Feb 2020

**Review Date:** by Feb 2024