

Proposer: Shamim Ahmed (Interfaith Officer)

Seconders: Christopher Kaye - Deputy President (Welfare), Alex Savell – Deputy President (Finance & Services)

Preservation of Religious Observance

The Union Notes:

1. Lunch-hour/s across campus range from 12-2pm; some departments/faculties only accommodate lunch from 1-2pm
2. No specific time for Lunch stipulated by college which is applicable to all departments and faculties
3. Imperial College is committed to religious tolerance, understanding and co-operation and every effort is made to meet the practical needs of staff and students whatever their faith background.
4. Ensure that students are not disadvantaged due to religious commitments
5. Many religious practices are taking place during lunch-times
 - *Thursday lunchtime - Roman Catholic Mass - 1-2 pm*
 - *Friday lunchtime - Muslim Prayer Time - 1-2 pm¹*
 - *Friday afternoons (Autumn and Winter) - Jewish Sabbath²*
6. It is an obligation upon Muslims to perform the congregational Friday prayers during Friday lunchtime
7. It is an obligation upon Jews to begin preparations on Friday afternoon for the Sabbath holiday
8. Many observant Jews have been unable to attend lectures/laboratories on Friday evenings due to faith commitments.

The Union Believes:

1. Improve the provision of information to the College community in respect of the academic timetable.
2. It is important for students to be free to fulfill their religious obligations without being at any disadvantage in their academic studies.
3. That according to the Clubs & Societies policy*, the Union has a duty to ensure that resources are provided for welfare needs
4. That students should have the right and access to provisions to practise their religion.

The Union Resolves:

1. To lobby the College to stipulates a definite Lunch period from 1-2pm for both Staff and Student timetables.
2. To lobby the College and other relevant bodies on behalf of Muslim and Jewish students to protect periods for religious observance, including Friday lunchtime (1-2pm) for Muslim Friday service and Friday afternoons (Autumn and Winter)

¹ Appendix 1A and 1B

² Appendix 2A

Passed by Union Council
10 February 2014

for the Jewish Sabbath by providing suitable alternatives such as lecture recordings etc.

3. To lobby the College to take steps to ensure students who are unable to attend due to religious obligations are not disadvantaged. These alternatives may include: the provision of repeat sessions; making electronic recordings available on the relevant virtual learning environment; making available alternative learning materials, ensuring Labs sessions are avoided on Friday evenings in the Winter³.

* **Clubs & Societies Policy**, point 10 of section B (DUTIES OF THE UNION AND CLUBS & SOCIETIES)

10. The Union shall provide a safe environment, free from harassment and discrimination for all Union activity (according to the Health & Safety and Equal Opportunities Policies). The above point refers to the Health and Safety policy; point 4 is of particular interest:

4. Imperial College Union acknowledges its duty to ensure that all relevant legislation regarding health, safety and **welfare is adhered to and that resources are made available to ensure health, safety and welfare.**
