

**DIVERSITY CALENDAR** 2016

The University's Calendar has been developed to celebrate the diverse nature of its community, promoting respect and understanding between different groups.

"In science, all facts, no matter how trivial or banal, enjoy democratic equality" - Mary McCarthy

By understanding and embracing difference we can help to create an environment based on the principles of dignity, fairness, equality and respect.



### INTRODUCTION

The University's award winning diversity calendar is a practical resource that includes details of all the main religious festivals and major national and international days of celebration or memorial.

It can help us to ensure that meetings and events are not planned when key sections of the workforce, student population or customer base may not be able to participate.

We have focused on the six major world faiths currently represented within our community - Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. This does not mean we are do not recognise that there are many more faiths equally as important. We also recognise that a large proportion of our University community may have no religion or belief.

We are continually trying to improve the information we provide, therefore if you have any constructive feedback or suggestions, please don't hesitate to contact us. Thank you.

The Equality and Diversity Team, G.035 John Owens Building Manchester M13 9PL Tel: 0161 306 5857 Text: 07943 600 656 Email: equalityanddiversity@manchester.ac.uk Twitter: @UoMEandD www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/equality-and-diversity

### NOMINATED CHARITY: DEMENTIA FRIENDS

#### What is a Dementia Friend?



A Dementia Friend learns a little bit more about what it's like to live with dementia and then turns that understanding into action. Anyone can be a Dementia Friend. From helping someone to find the right bus to spreading the word about dementia on social media, every action counts.

#### The Equality and Diversity Team

G.035 John Owens Building, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL Tel: +44(0) 161 306 5857 Text: +44 (0) 7943 600 656 Email: equalityanddiversity@manchester.ac.uk Twitter: @UoMEandD www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/equality-and-diversity www.manchester.ac.uk/connect/jobs/equality-diversity



#### Our Diversity Champions' commitment to equality and diversity help us to promote all of the great work taking place across campus..

'Personally, I am deeply committed to the principles of Equality and Diversity and I am proud to be President and Vice-Chancellor of a University that champions these principles as



part of its approach to every aspect of its work. Many areas throughout the University have been doing great work leading us forward in this area and I look forward to us building on this in 2016.'

Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell President & Vice Chancellor

To paraphrase our Chancellor, Lemn Sissay, "diversity is life"! I love that this calendar offers us the opportunity to celebrate and embrace our diversity and, in so doing, life itself.

Dr Dawn Edge - Senior Lecturer & Winston Churchill Fellow I University Academic Lead for Equality & Diversity





'The Diversity Calendar offers wonderful week by week highlights of cultural and religious events important to staff across the institution. It is a great reminder of the diversity of the University and the value we attach to an environment where all colleagues are respected regardless of their values or beliefs. Please use it - and display with pride.

James Thompson - Professor of Applied and Social Theatre I Associate Vice President - Social Responsibility

'Reach for the top of the tree and you may get to the first branch. Reach for the stars and you may get to the top of the tree.'



Lemn Sissay - Chancellor



JANUARY2016

## **RELIGION AND BELIEF (NO BELIEF)**

The Equality Act protects those with religious beliefs and those without from discrimination. We are all familiar with the many different religions and belief in society – some more prominent that others.

Therefore it is important that the University reflects this religious and belief make up. We have excellent prayer and worship facilities on campus and plenty of spaces for quiet contemplation. St Peter's House Chaplaincy offers spaces for all religions and beliefs and this extends to those with no religious belief who may just need a place to think and reflect.

In the 2011 Census 14.1 million people, around a quarter of the population in England and Wales, reported they have no religion.

One of the most well-known groups of people with no religion or belief is the Humanist Movement. Humanism is an approach to life that is found throughout time and across the world in many different cultures. Humanists think for themselves about what is right and wrong based on reason and respect for others.

You can find out more about many different aspects of Religion and Belief (including lack of belief) on our pages here: man.ac.uk/JgUeR0



MANCHESTER 1824 The University of Manchester

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# thinkdifferently equality and diversity

January - Religion & Belief (No Belief)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
				1 New Year's Day	2	3
4	5 \$	6 <b>†</b>	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15 ॐ ⊕	16	17
18 <b>†</b>	19	20	21	22	23	24 🛞
25 ⊕ ☆	26	27 International Day o Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaus		29	30	31

CHRISTIANITY

JANUARY2016

6th - Epiphany 18th - 25th - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity BUDDHISM 🛞 15th - Shinran Memorial Day HINDUISM 🕉

SIKHISM 煥 👘

JUDAISM 🅸

- Student Vacation



15th - Shinran Memorial Day 24th - 27th - Mahayana New Year 25th - Honen Memorial Day 15th - Makar Sankranti

5th - Guru Gobind Singh Birthday

25th - Tu BiShvat

NEXT MONTH: LGBT HISTORY MONTH



LESBIAN GAY BISEXUAL TRANS HISTORY MONTH

2016

## LGBT HISTORY MONTH

The 2016 theme for LGBT History Month is Religion, Belief and Philosophy. We are fortunate to live in a multi- cultural and multi- religioned society where people are largely free to express their sexual preferences. All religions have views and stand points on same sex couples and marriage, with some being more liberal than others.

Still, there are some religions which outlaw homosexuality and in some countries this is even punishable by death.

There have been many high profile cases in the press and media where these two protected characteristics have clashed and the issue of practising a religion and being Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Trans is still a thorny issue and one that many people struggle to acknowledge.

During February we hope to raise awareness of some of the issues faced by people with the multiple identities of being religious and LGBT through open discussion, shared experiences and university support.

Find out more about the work of ALLOUT – The University LGBT Staff Network Group by visiting: www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/equality-and-diversity/staff-network-groups/lgbt-staff-network-group/ (or man.ac.uk/wd6aDI)

MANCHESTER 1824



# thinkdifferently equality and diversity

February - LGBT History Month

EBRUARY2016

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
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15 ⊕	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29						

### CHRISTIANITY

2nd - Candlemas

9th - Shrove Tuesday

10th - Ash Wednesday 10th - Lent Begins

14th - St Valentines Day

### BUDDHISM 🛞

9th - Losar (Tibetan) 15th - Parivarinirvana Day SIKHISM 👾 1st - Birthday of Guru

Har Rai

HINDUISM 🕉

12th - Vasant Panchami - Saraswati Puja 13th - Kumbha Sankranti 25th - Guided Training Session

International Women's Day

NEXT MONTH: INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



### INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY (IWD) MARCH 8

All around the world, International Women's Day represents an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of women while calling for greater equality. Our University encourages positive action for advancing and recognising women; through our mentoring schemes, personal encouragement for promotion and our leadership and career development workshops. This year Manchester City Council's IWD Theme is Women's Voices – Changing Manchester. In line with this theme the University will be hosting events across our Schools and Institutes for our inspirational women to share their stories and to be heard.



The Athena SWAN Gender Equality Charter Mark is one of the ways the University monitors its progress towards equality of opportunity. Athena SWAN recognises and celebrates good practice towards the advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success for all. We are extremely proud that all of our 15 STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics

and Medicine) Schools hold Athena SWAN Awards (currently\* six Silver & nine Bronze Awards). The Charter expanded on 1 May 2015 to include non-STEMM Schools, professional and support staff, technical staff, and trans staff and students. Our Faculty of Humanities is now eligible to apply for accreditation and is working towards submitting School applications in 2016.

You can find out more about the Athena SWAN Charter, read the applications and find out how you can get involved in your local teams by visiting www.manchester.ac.uk/athenaswan

\* As of November 2015.



International Women's Day





#### March - International Women's Day

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	International Women's Day					
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### CHRISTIANITY

**MARCH2016** 

BUDDHISM 🛞

HINDUISM 3

SIKHISM 🖤

JUDAISM 🅸

24th - Hola Mohalla

23rd - Fast of Esther 24th - Purim



1st - St. David's Day 20th - Palm Sunday

24th - Maundy Thursday 25th - Good Friday 27th - Easter Day

23rd - Magha Puja

7th - Shivaratri 23rd - Gaura Purnima

Student Vacation



### EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Equality Act places a duty on Higher Education Institutions to tackle discrimination, victimisation and harassment, advance equality and foster good relations between groups.

There are 9 protected characteristics which cover age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership (in employment), pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

You can find out more from the Equality and Human Rights Commission www.equalityhumanrights.com

The University must demonstrate how it meets its duty, in relation to each of the protected characteristics, in all its functions, including employment, education and the provision of facilities, goods and services.

One way in which we demonstrate this is by identifying and monitoring a set of over arching equality objectives. These objectives allow us to prioritise our work so that we can make the best use of resources we have available.



This year we have carried out a review of our objectives and have identified how best to progress the agenda over the next 4 years.

You can find out more about how we have developed these objectives and plans for the future at www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/equality-and-diversity/equalityobjectives





April - Equality Act 2010

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25	26	27	28	29 Athena SW, Submission Deadli	AN	

CHRISTIANITY

**APRIL2016** 

🕇 BUDDHISM 🛞

HINDUISM 🕉

SIKHISM 🥋

14th - Baisakhi (Vaisakhi)

JUDAISM 🗱

23rd - 30th - Passover

- Student Vacation

23rd - St. George's Day

22nd - 23rd - Theravadin New Year

8th - Hindu New Year 8th - 15th - Ramayana 15th - Ramanavami 19th - Mahavir Jayanti 22nd - Hanuman Jayanti

NEXT MONTH: INTERNATIONAL DAY OF DIVERSITY



### INTERNATIONAL DAY OF DIVERSITY

May 21 is International Day of Diversity and gives everyone the chance to think about their own diversity in the context of living, working or studying in Manchester.

Many people believe that equality and diversity issues do not impact on them, but we should all keep in mind that everyone will fall into at least one of the 'protected characteristic' groups covered under equality legislation.

We are fortunate to live in a diverse city like Manchester and our University community should reflect this. Our city celebrates its diverse makeup every year on Manchester Day where you can witness a colourful and vibrant parade of various groups in Manchester. We can bring much of this back to campus by engaging in different activities, learning from new experiences and being open to fresh ideas and opinions.

On May 21 take time to think about how you can be more diverse, pay attention to the people around you and talk to someone who leads a different lifestyle to you. You can also assist the Equality and Diversity Unit by ensuring your equality data is up to date via the MyView portal.



MAY2016





May - International Day of Diversity

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
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<b>2</b> Early May Bank Holiday	3	4 ☆	5 <b>†</b> (*	6	7	8
9 3*3	10	11 ✿	12 \$	13	14	15 ⊛ <b>†</b>
16 <b>†</b>	17 International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT)	18	19	20 ⊕	21 International Day of Diversity	22 <b>†</b>
23	24	25	26 ☆ ★	27	28	29
<b>30</b> Spring Bank Holiday	31					

MAY2016

CHRISTIANITY

#### 5th - Ascension Day 15th - Pentecost 16th - Whit Monday 22nd - Trinity Sunday

22nd - Trinity Sunday 26th - Corpus Christi

### BUDDHISM 🛞

15th - Visakha Puja 20th - Vesak/Buddha Day HINDUISM 🕉

### 9th - Aksaya Tritiya

n - Aksaya Tritiya

4th - Yom HaShoah 11th - Yom Hazikaron 12th - Yom HaAtzmaut 26th - Lag O'Omer

JUDAISM 🅸

5th - Isa and Mi'raj 21st - Lailat al Bara'ah

ISLAM (\*

23rd - Guided Training Session



### NEXT MONTH: CARERS





### **CARING & CARERS**

What is caring?

When people need help with their day-to-day living they often turn to their family and friends. Looking after each other is something that we do.

Up and down the UK there are six million people caring unpaid for an ill, frail or disabled family member or friend. These people are called carers but they would probably say "I'm just being a husband, a wife, a mum, a dad, a son, a daughter, a friend or a good neighbour."

Carers help with many personal things that we take for granted on an everyday basis. The reasons people might need help can vary. But what doesn't vary is that they need help, and if you look after someone - for whatever reason - caring is part of life.

Caring can be a rich source of satisfaction in people's lives. It can be lifeaffirming. It can help deepen and strengthen relationships. It can teach you a multitude of skills and help you realise potential you never thought you had.

But without the right support caring can have a devastating impact. Evidence shows that caring can cause ill health, poverty and social isolation.

We are lucky to work for an institution that recognises the role of those with caring responsibilities through robust family friendly policies and procedures. You can learn more about them here:

www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/personalsupport/ You can join the staff with caring responsibilities peer support group to share experiences and learn from each other. For more info go to

www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/equality-and-diversity/staffnetwork-groups/staffwithcaringresponsibilitiespeersupportgroup/









June - Caring & Carers

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
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13	14	15	16 \$	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	Father's D
Summer Solstic	e 28	29	30			

JUNE2016

SIKHISM 👾 16th - Guru Arian Martyrdom JUDAISM 🕸 12th - 13th - Shavuot ISLAM 🕑

6th - Ramadan begins

- Student Vacation



NEXT MONTH: THE STUDENTS' UNION'



### SU EXEC

The Student's Union at The University of Manchester is the largest in the country. It is a democratically run company and charity with over 40,000 members.



The Exec Team are eight students that are elected by students to work full time for all our students.

Elected in March, and working summer to summer, the Exec Team are either taking time out from their studies or are just finishing their degrees, and lead on implementing student ideas, running Union campaigns, supporting student led activities and raising the student voice with the University at every level.

The roles covered ensure a fair and diverse representation for students – these roles are: General Secretary, Activities and Development Officer, Campaigns and Citizenship Officer, Community Officer, Diversity Officer, Education Officer, Wellbeing Officer and Women's Officer.

All of these officers work closely with the Equality and Diversity Unit to ensure all activities and awareness raising campaigns are undertaken in the most inclusive manner possible.

Find out more about the Student's Union and Exec Team by visiting: http://manchesterstudentsunion.com/execteam





The University of Manchester

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
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18	19 ॐ �	20	21	22	23	24 \$
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

### BUDDHISM 🛞

JULY2016

13th - 15th - Obon (Ulambana) 19th - Asala Dharma Day HINDUISM 🕉

JUDAISM 🔯

### ISLAM (\*

- Student Vacation

27th - Guided Training Session



19th - Guru Purnir

24th - Fast of Tammuz

1st - Lailat al Kadr 7th - 9th - Eid al Fit

NEXT MONTH: DATA COLLECTION



## DATA COLLECTION / MY VIEW

Every year the Equality and Diversity Team contribute to the University's Annual Performance Review (APR) by collating and analysing data from around the University. By analysing the anonymous data from applications, shortlisting, appointments and promotions we are able to identify areas that might require particular action.

It is important that we hold the most current and complete data to facilitate analysis, ensuring equality of opportunity and a workforce which benefits from a diverse population.

Once at the University, everyone can complete their equality data through the MyView portal – this provides valuable anonymous data to ensure resources and campaigns are directed appropriately.

More information can be found at:

www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/equality-and-diversity/equalityinformation/equalityreports





#### August - Data Collection/MyView

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Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
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23	24	25 3 <sup>3</sup>	26 3*	27	28
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### CHRISTIANITY

6th - Transfiguration of the Lord

15th - Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

### JUDAISM 🕸

### HINDUISM 🕉

14th - Radha Govinda Jhulana Yatra begins

18th - Jhulana Yatra ends

18th - Sri Balarama (Appearance)

18th - Raksha Bandhan

Student Vacation

25th - Krishna Janmashtami

26th - Nandotsava





SEPTEMBER2016

# thinkdifferently equality and diversity

### AGE

A mature student is defined as any student who is over the age of 21 when they commence their studies. They make up 20% of the undergraduate population in universities and colleges in the UK. At the University of Manchester, this is 9.3%.

Mature students or adult learners who are returning to study can bring skills and attributes gained from work, family and other life experiences. They come from a diverse range of backgrounds and study every kind of course. There is no such thing as a typical mature student at Manchester.

The University aims to offer an inclusive environment. This includes considering how activities may impact of particular groups. For example, considering when activities are held as they could impact on mature students balancing childcare responsibilities, family commitments and a demanding academic workload.

Many join networks to meet other adult learners, gaining advice and support from people who share their educational experience. The Burlington Society is Manchester's society for adult learners and postgraduate students.

www.burlington.manchester.ac.uk







September - Age

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
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5 %	6	7	8	9 3	10 (*	11 (*
12	13 3*	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	September Equinox 29	Bisexual Visibility Day <b>30</b>		

CHRISTIANITY

S

EPTEMBER2016

HINDUISM 🕉

9th - Radhastami

13th - Sri Vamana Dvadasi



10th - Wagf al Arafa - Hajj Day

11th - 14th - Eid al Adha

- Student Vacation



- Orientation

NEXT MONTH: BLACK HISTORY MONTH

8th - Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary



## **BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

Black History Month is a nationally celebrated platform to trumpet the achievements and successes of black and ethnic minority communities across the country. The aims are to:



- Promote knowledge and awareness of black and ethnic minorities; history, culture and heritage;
- Disseminate information on the many positive contributions of black and ethnic minority communities to British society;
- Promote cross-cultural engagement and learning.



The Race Equality Charter aims to improve the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students within higher education. The University of Manchester was one of the 21 higher education institutions (HEI's) that took part in the pilot of the Race Equality Charter in 2014/15 and we were among the eight

who were successful in receiving a Bronze award. This achievement is recognition of the University's commitment to our diverse community and the value it attaches to creating an environment where everyone is respected. We have pledged to take action at all levels (students and staff) and there is a three-year action plan in place to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

To find out more and to read our application please visit:

www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/equality-and-diversity/race-charter-mark/

OCTOBER2016





October - Black History Month

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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$oldsymbol{O}$	3 ☆	4	5 \$	6	7	8
ER2	10 World Mental Health Day	11 vy	12 ℃ 萃	13	14	15
B	17 \$	18	19	20	21	22
	24 \$	25 \$	26	27	28	29
0	31					
	Halloween					

HINDUISM 3 1st - 10th - Navaratri

11th - Dasara

30th - Diwali

SIKHISM 🗶

30th - Bandi Chhor Divas (Diwali)

JUDAISM 🅸

12th - Ashura

ISLAM (\*

3rd - 4th - Rosh Hashanah 5th - Fast of Gedalliah 12th - Yom Kippur

17th - 23rd - Sukkot 24th - Shemini Atzeret 25th - Simchat Torah

27th - Guided Training Session



Sunday

2

9

16

23

30 35  $\mathbf{\Phi}$ 

### NEXT MONTH: ANTI-BULLYING



## ANTI-BULLYING

We believe that bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination are never OK.

The 'We Get It' campaign has sent a clear message to staff, students and the wider community that we do not tolerate this behaviour in any form.

The campaign has been supported by strong policies, improved services for staff and students and numerous awareness raising activities. The campaign was recognised at the 2015 HEIST awards and won Gold Award in the Best Corporate Campaign or Initiative category.

We ask all members of the University to think, talk, report and get support!

### THINK



People can experience behaviours in different ways, one person's "harmless banter" could be deeply offensive to another and have a negative impact on their work and life. No one should have to feel uncomfortable for the sake of a joke.

Where we as individuals 'draw the line' on what we believe to be bullying behaviours or harassment may vary considerably. We ask that you consider and respect other people's views and feelings so that we can all work, study, and live in an inclusive and supportive environment.

### TALK

Talk about bullying, harassment and discrimination, what does it mean to you, where do you draw the line? If you think you or someone you know is being treated badly, talk to someone about it and, if you feel safe to do so, challenge it. Sometimes just explaining to someone how it makes you feel and asking them to stop is enough.

### **REPORT AND SUPPORT**

Report bullying, harassment, sexual harassment or discrimination online. If you want, your report can be passed to a trained advisor, who can get you the right advice and support. You can also report something anonymously.

To find out more about the campaign and the resources available visit www.manchester.ac.uk/we-get-it





November - Anti-Bullying

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14 \$	15	16	17	18	19	Sunda
21	22	23	24 \$	25	26	27
28	29	30 Athena SWAI Submission Deadlin	N			

### CHRISTIANITY

SIKHISM 🕸

1st - All Saints Day 2nd - All Souls Day 27th - Advent begins 30th - St. Andrews Day 14th - Birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib 24th - Martyrom of Guru Tegh Bahdur



NEXT MONTH: IDPD



**DECEMBER2016** 



# thinkdifferently equality and diversity

## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

### **IDPD/Time to Change**

International Day of People with Disability (December 3) is a worldwide observance day promoted by the United Nations since 1992. The aim of the day is to involve groups of people from all sections of society in upholding the rights of persons with disabilities and to celebrate their contribution to society.

In 2014 & 2015 The University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University 'collaborated' to celebrate the day with showcase events highlighting the ability of disabled staff and students. We are fortunate to work for an organisation that can provide support to many audiences – current staff and students, potential staff and students and visitors – through the Disability Advisory and Support Service (DASS).

We should also recognise that disability extends beyond a physical or mobility related impairment. Mental Illness will impact on a quarter of us all and therefore it's important for the university to be an active member of Time to Change – the charter that aims to end mental health discrimination.

You can find out more about all services available here:

www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/equality-and-diversity/equalitygroups/disability/







The University of Manchester

let's end mental health discrimination

December - International Day of People With Disability

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26 Boxing Day	27	28 Bank Holiday	29	30	31 New Year's Eve	
	Universit Closure Do		University Closure Day	University Closure Day	//	

CHRISTIANITY

JUDAISM 🅸

- Student Vacation

24th - Christmas Eve 25th - Christmas Day 25th - First Day of Hanukkah

ukkah



### TRAINING

We have a bespoke on-line training resource for both staff and students which can be completed at any time. This online module intends to support you to become familiar with equalities legislation; gain an understanding of the broader issues of equality and diversity; to know your responsibilities and rights as a member of staff or a student of the University.

The training will take approximately one hour. Full details can be found using the links below:

Staff: www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/equality-and-diversity/training

Students: email equalityanddiversity@manchester.ac.uk

In 2016 there are a number of dedicated training days where you can complete the session in one sitting. These are indicated on the calendar by the ', symbol. Please contact equalityanddiversity@manchester.ac.uk to reserve your space. Training Dates: Thurs 25th Feb, Mon 23rd May, Wed 27th July, Thurs 27th Oct There are other training resources available including an online module on Unconscious Bias, DVD's, books and case studies. Please contact equalityanddiversity@manchester.ac.uk to discuss other training requirements.

### STAFF NETWORKING

The Equality and Diversity Team facilitates a number of staff network groups. As a member of staff you can participate in any of the network group activities – ranging from meetings, to social events, to awareness raising on campus.





### **RELIGION & BELIEF**

## CHRISTIANITY **†**

Christianity is the largest religion in the UK. There are many Christian denominations, such as the Church of England, Roman Catholic, Evangelical and Pentecostal churches. The three main Christian festivals are Christmas (Jesus' birth), Easter (Jesus' death and resurrection), and Pentecost (descent of the Holy Spirit).

# BUDDHISM

Buddhism is the fourth largest religion in the world. At the last census there were around 152,000 Buddhists in the UK. It is an atheistic religion and its extensive collection of ethical and spiritual teaching and practices are known as the Dharma. For the majority of Buddhists the most important festival is Wesak or Buddha Day – this will be celebrated on May 20th in 2016.

## HINDU 🕉

Hinduism is most widely practised in India and it is the third largest religion in the UK with over half a million followers and close to 900 million worldwide. It is a 'pluralistic' religion and emphasises that as we are all different, the way we think and approach reality will be ultimately different. Hindus believe in the law of 'karma', which is the law of actions and consequences. The most individual festival of the year is Holi (23rd March) where coloured powder or water is thrown to mark the arrival of spring.

## ISLAM (\*

With 1.4 billion followers worldwide and over 1.6m in the UK, Islam is the second largest religion. Followers of this religion are 'Muslim's and this translates as 'one who submits himself to, and enters into peace with God'. Muslims live a responsible Islamic life by following Five Pillars which are interwoven into their daily lives. One of the most important months for Muslims is Ramadan – this 30 day period of fasting and prayers takes place in the 9th month (June 2016) of the Islamic calendar.



### **RELIGION & BELIEF**

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There are over a quarter of a million practicing Jews in the UK making it the 5th largest religion. Jews believe they have a covenant with God and these laws and commandments are revealed in their Holy Book – the Torah. Much like other beliefs, there are different branches of Judaism all with different interpretations of the faith. Their day of rest (Shabbat) begins at sunset on each Friday.



With just over 350,000 practising Sikhs in the UK, this is considered the fourth largest religion in the country. Sikhs believe in one God and they respect the equality of all people regardless of colour, creed or gender. All initiated Sikhs vow to wear five items of dress all beginning with the letter 'K' – they are commonly referred to as 'the Five K's'. The most important festival in the calendar is Vaisaki which falls on 14th April.

### NO RELIGIOUS BELIEF

Approximately 15% of the UK population state they have 'no belief or religion'. This makes it the second largest group in the country. Not having a religion or belief can come in many formats – agnosticism, anticlericalism, anti religion antitheism, apatheism, atheism, freethought, ignosticism, nontheism secular humanism, and religious skepticism. Just because someone chooses not to follow a religion does not mean that their beliefs and ideals should not be taken into account. We have listed the major festivals for the six largest religions - a list of other important festivals can be found on our intranet pages.