

Religious Accommodations Requests Policy and Procedures

I. Statement of Policy

A. Johnson & Wales University (JWU) will provide a Religious Accommodation (defined below) for sincerely held religious beliefs of students (but not student employees in their capacity as such), but only if providing such accommodations would not cause JWU an Undue Hardship (defined below).

II. Definitions

A. *Religious Accommodation* means a reasonable change in the educational environment that enables a student to observe or practice a sincerely held religious belief without Undue Hardship to the university.

B. *Undue Hardship* (as applies to students) means the imposition of an unreasonable burden on the university, which may, individually or collectively, include those requests that are unduly costly, compromise campus or workplace safety, fundamentally or significantly alter academic requirements or university policy, decrease workplace efficiency, infringe on the rights of others, or require others to do more than their fair share of work.

III. Procedures

A. Except for requests to miss class for religious reasons, a student seeking a religious accommodation should submit a Religious Accommodation Request Form (pdf) (131 KB) to the following:

1. The faculty or staff member from whom the student is seeking a religious accommodation.

B. In assessing requests for religious accommodations, those receiving the requests should make the decision whether to grant or deny a particular request in consultation with the following, defined as "Appropriate Persons":

1. In the case of faculty members receiving requests from students, with the faculty's chair and dean or, if needed, the Provost.
2. In the case of staff members receiving requests for students, with the designees of the Providence Campus President (for all students other than those at the Charlotte Campus) or the Charlotte Campus President (for students at the Charlotte Campus).

C. JWU may request additional documentation or information to support the request, including inquiring into the sincerity of the religious belief if reasonably needed, the reasons behind the request, and the nexus behind the religious belief and the request. Such inquiries will only be made with prior approval from the applicable Campus President or such person's designee.

D. A student seeking to miss class for religious reasons should first direct the request to miss class to the relevant faculty/staff member. A student should only file a Religious Accommodation Request Form (pdf) (131 KB) in connection with a request to miss class if the student does not obtain a satisfactory resolution from the faculty/staff member. Irrespective whether a Religious Accommodation Request Form (pdf) (131 KB) is submitted, the faculty/staff member shall follow the consultation procedure outlined in Section III.B.

E. Requests should be made as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to engage in an interactive process to identify or implement an appropriate accommodation.

F. JWU will evaluate Religious Accommodations on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the following factors, including, but not limited to:

1. the requirements of any applicable activity, course, or program;
2. any applicable technical standards;
3. any and all actual or potential effects on the requester and any other affected persons;
4. the actual or potential effects on the university and its community, including pecuniary and non-pecuniary costs,

advantages, disadvantages, educational objections, liabilities, and policies;

5. the duration of the accommodation; and

6. the availability of alternative approaches.

G. JWU is not required to grant a preferred accommodation if there is more than one alternative that eliminates the religious conflict.

H. JWU shall not grant the Religious Accommodation if the university concludes, in its sole discretion, that the Religious Accommodation may impose an Undue Hardship on the university.

I. JWU reserves the right to modify or revoke the Religious Accommodation as appropriate based on changed circumstances at any time.

J. JWU will use reasonable discretion in addressing Religious Accommodations. However, confidentiality and privacy cannot be guaranteed, and discussions may occur to evaluate the request, implement the accommodation, or for other legitimate reasons as needed in the university's sole discretion.

K. On making a decision in response to a Religious Accommodation Request Form (pdf) (131 KB), the Appropriate Persons shall complete and maintain an Internal Disposition Form in the appropriate departmental files. Such Appropriate Persons shall contact HR in preparing the Internal Disposition Form.

L. The faculty/staff member who received the request (whether through a Religious Accommodation Request Form (pdf) (131 KB) or otherwise) shall work with the Appropriate Persons to craft a response to the person requesting the Religious Accommodation, including advising such person whether the request for the Religious Accommodation was granted and, if so, the nature of the Religious Accommodation to be made and any additional details needed to implement it.

IV. Policy Owner

A. Applicable Campus President

V. Last Revision

A. August 2023