Overview of recognised religious holidays at UAntwerpen

According to article 10.3.6 of the Education and Examination Regulation, students may request not to be examined on legally recognised religious holidays.

> *10.3.6 In no event should exams be taken on Sundays or holidays. Students may invoke respect for all recognized ideological convictions under the Belgian Constitution in order not to be evaluated on particular days (including for instance compulsory laboratory sessions). This goes for all recognized ideological convictions under the Belgian Constitution. The list of days and dates is made available at the start of the academic year. Students should file a one-time application with Team Diversity and Inclusion to obtain a permanent ideological statute by Friday of the third week of the first semester at the latest. Students who file an application during the second semester do so by Friday of the third week of the second semester. Upon being granted the ideological statute students are responsible to inform the faculty within 14 calendar days after the announcement of a compulsory evaluation moment that partaking in the evaluation is not possible on the planned moment*

Students follow the guidelines for religious accommodations to obtain a religious certificate. When planning schedules, deadlines and exams, we recommend that religious holidays are proactively considered (where possible). Below is an overview of the religious holidays for the 2026-2027 academic year.

Religious days of rest

Religious holidays take place once a year, while religious days of rest take place weekly (usually on Friday, Saturday or Sunday for recognised religions). You cannot request religions accommodations for days of rest and moments of prayer. The Christian days of rest on Sunday are already included in the academic calendar. However, we recommend that, where possible, the weekly days of rest for Muslim students (Jummah) and Jewish students (Sabbath)[1] are also considered when planning compulsory courses, practical assessments or other assessment periods[2].

[1] The Sabbath begins approximately two hours before sunset on Friday, according to the practical understanding of the Jewish communities in Antwerp. The exact time varies greatly throughout the year.
In Islam, the day of rest (Jummah) is observed on Friday.
For practicing Muslims, the Friday afternoon prayer is therefore an important time. If possible, we recommend trying to schedule as little as possible on Fridays and Saturdays.

[2] Read the institution-wide recommendation 'How to deal with applications for religious accommodations' for more tips (Dutch version).

Anglican, Catholic and Protestant holidays

Catholic holidays are already included in the academic calendar. The Protestant and Anglican religions do not have differing public holidays.

Islam

Islamic holidays start a week and a half earlier than the previous year[3]. The exact dates vary according to the religious community to which the student belongs but always start within a specific timeframe[4]. Students can select 'their' holiday (1 day within the pre-determined timeframe, not a combination of 2 or more possible days).

Eid al-Fitr **(1 day**) and Eid al-Adha (**1 day**).

- **Eid al-Fitr** (Feast of Breaking the Fast): The timeframe is **Tuesday, March 9, to Thursday, March 11, 2027**. Select one day of your choice based on your religious community. The exact date[5] of Eid al-Fitr (Feast of Breaking the Fast) is usually announced on the eve of the holiday. This date marks the end of the month of Ramadan.
- **Eid al-Adha** (Feast of Sacrifice): The timeframe is **Sunday, May 16, to Tuesday, May 18, 2027**. Select one day of your choice based on your religious community. The exact date[6] of Eid alAdha (Feast of Sacrifice) is usually announced about 10 days before the holiday begins. This date marks the 10th day of the month of Dhu al-Hijjah.

Judaism

Rosh Hashanah **(2 days)**, Yom Kippur **(1 day)**, Sukkot **(2 days)**, Hoshana Rabbah **(1 day)**, Shemini Atseret **(1 day)**, Simchat Torah **(1 day),** Purim **(1 day),** Passover **(4 days)** and Shavuot **(2 days)**. Jewish holidays usually begin moments before sundown[7] on the eve of the holiday, when a new day begins according to the Jewish calendar:

- **Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year):** Saturday **12 September** and Sunday **13 September 2026**.

[3] The Hijra (Islamic lunar calendar) is 10 to 11 days shorter than the Gregorian calendar.

[4] An Islamic holiday is determined by the sighting of the new crescent. The announcement of the exact dates depends on the region and/or country of origin of the student. Some follow the purely scientific, astronomical method of pre-determining when the new moon begins. Others follow the traditional method of observing the new crescent over the western horizon with the bare eye just after sunset. This means that within the Muslim community, it is possible to celebrate holidays on dates other than those announced by the Muslim Council of Belgium.

[5] According to the astronomical calculations of the Umm al-Qura calendar, the probable date of Eid al-Fitr (the Festival of Breaking the Fast) would fall on Tuesday, 9 March 2027.

[6] According to the astronomical calculations of the Umm al-Qura calendar, the probable date of Eid al-Adha (the Festival of Sacrifice) would fall on Sunday, 16 May 2027.

[7] The exact time before sunset can vary according to the interpretation of a Jewish community. Usually the celebrations begin approximately two hours before sunset.

- **Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement):** Monday **21 September 2026**.
- **Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles):** Saturday **26 September** to Friday **2 October 2026**. You may select **2 days** of your choice according to your religious community.
- **Shemini Atzeret (Eighth Day Assembly):** Saturday **3 October 2026**.
- **Simchat Torah (Rejoicing of the Torah):** Sunday **4 October 2026**.
- **Purim (Feast of Lots):** Tuesday **23 March 2027**.
- **Pesach (Passover):** Thursday **22 April** to Thursday **29 April 2027**. You may select **4 days** of your choice according to your religious community.
- **Shavuot (Feast of Weeks):** Friday **11 June** and Saturday **12 June 2027**.

Orthodox religion

Christmas **(1 day)**, Easter **(1 day)**, Easter Monday **(1 day)**, Ascension **(1 day)**, Pentecost **(1 day)** and Whit Monday **(1 day)**. Ascension and Pentecost are celebrated on the same days as Catholic holidays this academic year.

- **Christmas:** Thursday, **January 7**, and Friday, **January 8, 2027**. You may select **1 day** of your choice based on your religious community.
- **Easter Monday:** Monday, **May 3, 2027**.
- **Ascension Day:** Thursday, **June 10, 2027**.
- **Whit Monday (Pentecost Monday):** Monday, **June 21, 2027**.