

Dear Parents/Carers,

RE: Ramadan and Examinations

The Langley Academy prides itself on its diverse community which includes people from many different religious groups. This letter is to inform our Islamic parents/carers that this year, part of the examination period overlaps with Ramadan. Regrettably, it is not possible for the Academy to change the dates of the examination period as these are fixed externally and in advance.

As a result, from fasting, changes in blood sugar may produce hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar) as an inadequate supply of glucose to the brain can affect brain function including concentration, memory, attention and other cognitive processes plus potential indirect effects on overall mood, anxiety and fatigue levels which can affect studying, revision and the examinations themselves. Those people who have a diagnosed medical condition, such as diabetes, and in certain other circumstances, are usually excused from the religious requirement to fast. Individuals will inevitably differ in the extent to which they do, or do not, experience such changes, depending on their individual metabolisms. The cognitive difficulties will naturally tend to be greater later on in the day.

The Academy would not wish to dictate to students how they should address this situation. However, in order to assist our students, advice has been sought and the following options have been identified:

- Some students may decide not to take any particular steps and to continue with their fast as usual
- Some students, in consultation with their religious advisor, may consider that their examinations are sufficient justification to permit them not to Fast, either just on examination days or perhaps for the whole examination period. The period of fasting can often be undertaken at a later time or some other arrangement could be considered

The National Health Service provides a guide on healthy living and Ramadan which may be found at <http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/healthylamadan/Pages/healthylamadhanhome.aspx>

For students who decide to continue with their fast as usual, the following practical guidance has been ascertained through research and meeting local Imams:

- Prepare the night before by mentally rehearsing the day ahead and note areas which may present difficulties
- Work out how to overcome those difficulties but try to imagine it as an ordinary day
- Ensure you are well rested - this may mean not attending 'tarawih' (night prayers in congregation)
- Ensure you have 'suhur' (a pre-dawn meal) that has slow-release energy food
- If the exam is in the afternoon, take a short rest of 45 minutes around midday
- If you feel lethargic or irritated, refresh your 'wudu' (ritual ablution)

We would like to reiterate that The Langley Academy is not dictating what students should do. We hope this information is helpful through a very important stage in their lives.

We wish all of our students the best of luck in their upcoming examinations.

Yours faithfully,



Chirag Patel
Academy Director