



Religious Accommodations

Fall 2022 through Spring 2023

Last updated 4.28.22

Verto Education SOP for Seeking Religious Accommodation

To request a Religious Accommodation, a covered individual should submit the Religious Accommodation request at least 10 days prior to needing the accommodation to Verto's Health, Wellness, and Accommodations Manager (HWA Manager). The HWA Manager may request that covered individuals provide additional documentation or information to support the request. Please allow up to 10 business days for processing.

Verto will endeavor to protect the requesting individual's privacy in evaluating and implementing a Religious Accommodation to the extent possible. However, following receipt of the request, the HWA Manager will discuss the accommodation request as necessary with the requestor and with other appropriate individuals to further evaluate and/or implement the accommodation. For participants requesting an excused absence from class as a Religious Accommodation, the HWA Manager will notify the University Approved Absence Office of any such approved request.

The HWA Manager will evaluate Religious Accommodations on a case by case basis, taking into account relevant factors including, but not limited to, the fundamental requirements of the applicable educational experience and/or related technical standards; the requirements of the course; the requirements of the department or major; the potential effects of the accommodation on the individual, and the Organization; the duration of the accommodation request; and the availability of alternative accommodations.

As led by the Academic Provider, reasonable accommodations may include, but are not limited to:

- Allowance for approved absences from class;
- Ability to reschedule academic work or deadlines;
- Providing flexible course schedules to accommodate religious observance, including flexible arrival times, departure times, breaks, or floating holidays;
- Permitting dress or grooming related to Religious Beliefs; or
- Access to private spaces for prayer

Verto is not required to accept a requested preferred accommodation if there is more than one alternative that meets the needs of the religious accommodation request. When there is more than one alternative that meets the accommodation need, Verto will offer the alternative which least disadvantages the individual. Moreover, these accommodations will not be required if any or all of them cause an Undue Hardship in a particular case.

Decisions of the HWA Manager will be provided in writing to the requesting individual. A covered individual who is not satisfied with the decision regarding their request for accommodations is encouraged to work with HWA Manager to resolve any disagreements. If the covered individual is unable to resolve their concerns, they may appeal by making a formal report to the Dean of Students for failure to accommodate.

More information about procedures for specific types of accommodations requests, including time-sensitive requests for absences, is provided below.

A. Absences - Participants

Requests for more than two excused absences per academic year for religious observances will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis taking into account relevant factors set out above.

Participants who anticipate being absent from classes because of Religious Beliefs or Practices must submit the Religious Accommodation Request Form to the HWA Manager at least two weeks in advance of the date requested, or as soon as possible if the date occurs within the first weeks of the semester.

A participant whose absence has been approved by the HWA Manager is still responsible for working directly with individual course faculty or instructor(s) to reschedule exams or paper deadlines and to submit all required course work. A participant whose absence has been approved by HWA Manager will not be penalized for their absence. If a participant requests a particular form of make-up work or a particular extension to accommodate a religious belief, the participant should request that particular accommodation on the Religious Accommodation Request Form, in addition to the request for the absence from class.

Being absent from class or excused from other educational responsibilities does not relieve participants of their responsibility to keep up with any information shared or expectations set during the missed class(es). Participants are responsible for working with their individual course faculty or instructors to make alternate arrangements to obtain materials and information provided during any missed class(es).

Definitions

Religion: All aspects of religious observance and practice, as well as belief.

Religious Accommodation: A reasonable change in the work or academic environment that enables an individual covered by this Policy to practice or otherwise observe a sincerely held religious practice or belief without Undue Hardship on the Study Abroad Experience. It can also include any necessary modification to a policy, procedure, or other requirement for a covered individual's Religious Beliefs, observance, or practice provided such accommodation is reasonable and does not cause Undue Hardship.

Religious Beliefs: Religious Beliefs include moral or ethical beliefs as to what is right and wrong which are sincerely held with the strength of traditional religious views. They include theistic as well as non-theistic beliefs. Personal preferences, or social, political, or economic philosophies, are not considered Religious Beliefs.

Religious Practices: A religious practice is one motivated by a sincerely held religious belief, not any secular purpose. Certain practices may have both secular and religious motivations, which may require a case-by-case inquiry as to the purpose behind the practice.

Undue Hardship: Imposition of more than a de minimis cost on the Study Abroad Experience's operations, which may include those requests that are costly, compromise workplace safety, decrease workplace efficiency, infringe on the rights of other employees, or require other employees to do more than their fair share of the potentially hazardous or burdensome work.

Related Requirements

External Regulations and Consequences

- Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- [Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#)
- [29 C.F.R. Part 1605](#)
- [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines on Discrimination Because of Religion](#)