

Holding Faith

A practical guide to faith, religion and belief at CBRE UK



Faith at CBRE UK



Clarence Dixon
Global Head of
Loan Services
UK Advisory DE&I
Executive Sponsor



Kevin Lynn
Division President,
UK GWS | Local Chair,
GWS EMEA DE&I
Steering Committee

“At CBRE, we’re committed to fostering a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment, where everyone can thrive.

Your feedback helps us to build an understanding of the different barriers and challenges faced by colleagues from under-represented groups and drive meaningful resolutions for our people.

The CBRE UK Faith Network recently held focus groups with its members to identify ways in which we can better support colleagues who hold faith or religious beliefs. This guide provides an overview of the key themes and areas where we can recognise and celebrate different faiths, religions, and beliefs, and promote an inclusive workplace for all.

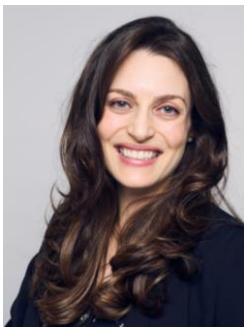
Please refer to this guide to understand how you can play your part in creating an environment where everyone feels like they belong.

Thank you to our Faith Network and DE&I team for putting together this guide. We hope you find it useful.”

Welcome to our guide!



Chris Tregilgas
UK Advisory Co-chair



Lucy Silverstone
UK Advisory Co-chair

“We hope with this guide to empower the wider CBRE community to support and celebrate their colleagues of all faiths. Faith, Religion and Belief for many is core to who they are as a person and that is why we believe this guide is important in helping CBRE create an inclusive working environment for all.

We worked with our CBRE UK Faith Network members to help create this guide. We believe that an interfaith approach builds the best foundation by which to support your colleagues and teams. Whilst we look at broad themes such as workplace, prayer and holidays we have also brought these to life with quotes and the lived experience of our members. Please remember, that faith is not one-size-fits all, and that levels of observance, required support and openness about discussing religion will vary from person to person.

We are incredibly proud to present this guide to you and as always welcome you to our future events, whether you hold a faith or religion or not.

With thanks to contributors:

- Ben Levy
- Holly Nineberg
- James Brandon
- Khushika Chavda
- Shrav Khera
- Umar Quraishi
- Vik Shukla
- Dan Lammin
- David Amuno
- David Diamont
- Ferhin Masters
- Lissa Ellis
- Zahra Iqbal

Christianity

“If one is not whole, then one is broken and no one can function optimally when broken.” Proverbs 17:22 says, “A joyful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit dries up the bones.”

“

My faith is a central part of my life. Although, I am blessed to have an amazing team of lovely people, faith isn't always a shared interest. However, the Faith Network more than makes up for it! It allows me to bring my whole self to work and be part of a community who offer support, encouragement, prayer and love.

”

David Amuni
Testimonial

1

Introducing Faith, Religion and Belief



Faiths - Overview

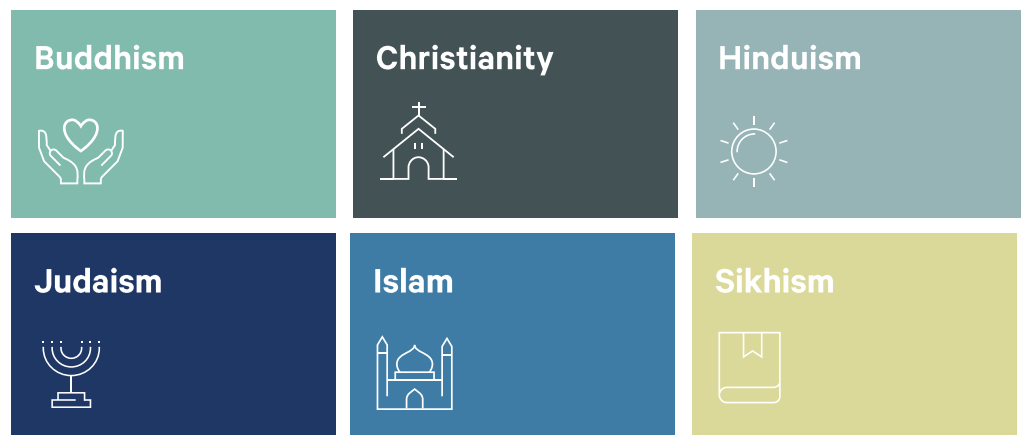
75%

of UK residents stated that they had a religious affiliation, with 59% declaring a Christian affiliation

National Census, ONS, 2011

There are many Faiths and Religions that people may have an affiliation with. It is also important to note that there are numerous religions across the globe that we may not immediately think of. For example Traditional African Religions, African Diaspora Religions and Indigenous American Religions. At the end of this guide is a resource list where you can access more information on this.

For this guide we have focused on the faiths most affiliated to in the UK. These are:



Some people also make an active choice to have no religion, for this guide we have focused on definitions for the above.

Buddhism

Buddhism is one of the world's major religions. It originated in India in 563–483 B.C.E. with Siddhartha Gautama, and over the next millennia it spread across Asia and the rest of the world. Buddhists believe that human life is a cycle of suffering and rebirth, but that if one achieves a state of enlightenment (nirvana), it is possible to escape this cycle forever. Siddhartha Gautama was the first person to reach this state of enlightenment and was, and is still today, known as the Buddha. Buddhists do not believe in any kind of deity or god, although there are supernatural figures who can help or hinder people on the path towards enlightenment.

Christianity

Christianity is the official religion of the United Kingdom and is currently the world's most followed religion. Despite the many branches of Christianity (Baptist, evangelical etc), most fall under two main denominations of Protestant and Catholic, with a small number of Eastern Orthodox, all with the belief in one God in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Bible, is the best-selling book ever with over 5 billion copies sold.

The Christian's place of worship, mostly on Sundays, is a church, of which there are over 40,000 in the UK (just 1,000 more than there are pubs).



Hinduism

Hinduism is the religion of the majority of people in India and Nepal. It also exists among significant populations outside of the sub-continent and has over 900 million adherents worldwide.

In some ways Hinduism is the oldest living religion in the world, or at least elements within it stretch back many thousands of years. Yet Hinduism resists easy definition partly because of the vast array of practices and beliefs found within it. Unlike most other religions, Hinduism has no single founder, no single scripture, and no commonly agreed set of teachings.

Throughout its extensive history, there have been many key figures teaching different philosophies and writing numerous holy books. For these reasons, writers often refer to Hinduism as 'a way of life' or 'a family of religions' rather than a single religion.

Islam

Islam translates as "Submission [to God]" and is an Abrahamic monotheistic (one God) religion. Its foundation is upon the holy book, the Quran, and the life of the main and final Islamic prophet Muhammad (died 632 CE). It is the world's second-most prevalent religion after Christianity, with more than two billion followers (called "Muslims"), comprising around 25 percent of the global population, mainly across 57 Muslim majority countries. There are over 3 million Muslims in the UK.



Judaism

Judaism (the Jewish Religion) is the world's oldest monotheistic religion (approx. 4,000 years) and is defined as the totality of beliefs and practices of the Jewish people, as recorded in the Torah (the Hebrew Bible). According to the text, God first revealed himself to a Hebrew man named Abraham, who became known as the founder of Judaism. The Jewish people believe that God made a special covenant with Abraham and that he and his descendants were chosen to become a great nation.

There are approximately 15million Jewish people worldwide, with the majority living in the USA and Israel.



Sikhism

Sikhism, also known as Sikhi, is a monotheistic faith emerging from and remaining concentrated in the Punjabi region that traverses Northern India and Eastern Pakistan. The Sikh religion came into focus during the late 15th century and draws its tenets of faith, meditation, social justice, and human equality from a scripture called the Guru Granth Sahib. Sikhism is the most recently founded major organised faith and stands at fifth-largest worldwide, with about 25–30 million adherents (known as Sikhs).

The first spiritual leader of Sikhism, Guru Nanak, lived from 1469 to 1539 and taught that a good, spiritual life must be intertwined with a secular life well-lived. He called for activity, creativity, fidelity, self-control, and purity.



Christianity

“Love your neighbour as yourself” Leviticus 19:18

“

For me one of the best aspects of working for CBRE is the sense of being valued and that I contribute to our success. Being able to bring my whole self to work allows me to be more engaged with my team and hopefully empowers and encourages my team to also bring their whole selves to work. This has allowed us to better understand and trust each other and work stronger together as a team. It's great to be able to share and talk about our time outside of work including family, faith, hobbies, pets and helps build real insight and interest in each other.

”

Dan Lammin



2

Five things
you should
know about
Faith

1. Prayer and Meditation is an important aspect of all religions

A consistent theme across all religions is the role of prayer and meditation. For some this is a form of service, for others it is a form of communication. Each religion has a unique approach to prayer and meditation. It is such an important part of an individual's practice, so it is vital to have conversations around how their prayer requirements can be facilitated. This may be through flexible working or through using prayer and contemplation spaces.



Christianity

Providing a prayer room would be helpful for groups who like to get together weekly. Private prayer can be done anywhere, but corporate prayer (prayer with other people) is often sought at nearby churches or if possible in the workplace.



Jewish Prayer Services

Some Jewish employees will pray three times each day (morning, afternoon/early evening and after nightfall). They may need access to a quiet room at work for prayer throughout the day, and some may wish to attend prayers with a Minyan (quorum of 10 males) at synagogue before or after work, or at lunchtime. In Judaism, a Minyan is required to constitute a representative “community of Israel” for the purposes of worship.



Islamic Prayers (Salah)

Muslims must pray 5 times a day and this takes approximately 5-10 minutes for each prayer. Prayer times are based upon length of the day and vary between summer and winter months. In summer months, only the post midday prayer is likely to be during office hours. During winter months 3 prayers are likely to be during office hours as the days are shorter. The midday prayer on Friday is the most important of the week, Muslims require access to suitable washing facilities to perform ablution (wudu) prior to the prayer. For the prayer itself they will require a clean and quiet place where they will face towards Mecca (in Saudia Arabia) and perform the ritual which consists of briefly standing, bowing and sitting on the floor.



1. Prayer and Meditation is an important aspect of all religions

A consistent theme across all religions is the role of prayer and meditation. For some this is a form of service, for others it is a form of communication. Each religion has a unique approach to prayer and meditation. It is such an important part of an individual's practice, so it is vital to have conversations around how their prayer requirements can be facilitated. This may be through flexible working or through using prayer and contemplation spaces.



Hindu Worship

Hindu worship, or Puja, involves images (Murtis), prayers (Mantras) and diagrams of the universe (Yantras). Central to Hindu worship is the image, or icon, which can be worshipped either at home or in the temple. The majority of Hindu homes have a shrine where offerings are made and prayers are said. A shrine can be anything: a room, a small altar or simply pictures or statues of the deity.



Sikh Prayers

Sikhs are required to pray minimally 3 different times of the day (morning, evening and night time prayers); this applies for strict practicing Sikhs, optionally additional prayers may be added to a Sikh's prayer routine. Morning prayers are referred to as the five hymns (Five Banis) and these are recited during the early morning hours (between 2am and 6am). Evening prayers, referred to as the Rehras Sahib hymn, is recited after sunset and lasts for about 8–12 minutes. The last prayer of the day, the night prayer, which is referred to as the Kirtan Sohila Shaib, is recited before going to bed and takes about 5–12 minutes.



Buddhist meditation

Buddhists will find time to practice mediation and reflection. They may make use of Faith and Contemplation spaces.

2. Some religions have special observances to be aware of

Many religions have observances that are particular to them and their scripture. Whilst not all people holding faith will adopt all observances it is important to understand the needs of those that do. This may be important if you are providing catering, organising an event or a work trip. Religious observances are important to the individual and should be respected and valued.



Christianity

Some minor dominations may have strict views about dress codes, of which it would be helpful to be sensitive. Often, Christians will fast from certain unhealthy habits during Lent (the six weeks before Easter), so look out for Christian colleagues who choose to avoid alcohol or chocolate during this time.



Judaism

Kashrut is a set of dietary laws that outline what Jewish people are permitted to eat and how those foods must be prepared. Observance of these laws may vary, from not eating pork and shellfish, to a diet that requires all prepared food be produced in a strictly regulated environment and certified as kosher. When planning events or meetings that involve food, for some, a vegetarian or vegan option will be sufficient, but for others, food will need to be labelled as strictly kosher.

There are also days throughout the year when Jewish employees may fast. For those observing, this means not eating or drinking from nightfall until the following nightfall.

Some very observant Jewish people practice a prohibition on physical contact between themselves and those who are neither related to them nor of the same gender. It would be considerate to allow Jewish colleagues to take the initiative when shaking hands.

A note on language

Religious based hate-speech including blasphemy are criminal offenses in many countries. One of the ways you can create a faith friendly workplace is by being mindful of the language we use. For example, using the name of Jesus Christ and God as a curse or phrase of frustration will cause offense to those who consider those names holy. If you do happen to hear someone use these names in this way, it would be comforting to people of faith if you point out the offense that may be caused

2. Some religions have special observances to be aware of

Many religions have observances that are particular to them and their scripture. Whilst not all people holding faith will adopt all observances it is important to understand the needs of those that do. This may be important if you are providing catering, organising an event or a work trip. Religious observances are important to the individual and should be respected and valued.



Islam

Muslims eat Halal food. Halal is a general Arabic term which means permissible. In regard to food this means meat slaughtered in a specific manner and not containing alcohol or pork.

Muslims believe that physical contact with non-family members of the opposite gender is unnecessary and discouraged. Therefore, shaking hands may not be appreciated if the recipient is of the opposite gender. When meeting a new Muslim, an approach would be to let them take the lead, to assess whether they feel comfortable shaking hands or not.



Hinduism

Hindus do not eat beef and many are vegetarian. Some Hindus may require special consideration at times of ritual fasting on certain days like Janmashtami or Ram Navami.



Sikhism

Many Sikhs are vegetarian but Sikhs believe that the decision to eat meat is an individual choice. However, with respect to eating meat Sikhs follow the Jhatka method of slaughter. This means that the animal must be killed as quickly as possible so that the animal experiences as little suffering as possible.



Buddhism

Buddhists will have some general observances, however, this will have limited impact on work.



3. Festivals and Religious holidays

Festivals and Religious Holiday are an important way that people observe their faith and contribute to their communities. These vary from faith to faith and have different requirements. The Faith Network issues an observance calendar every year.



Christianity

Christmas & Easter are the major dates in the year. In the UK we have Bank Holidays to celebrate these events. It is worth noting that Orthodox Christians may celebrate holidays at different times.



Islam

Ramadan is one of the busiest times of the year where Muslims are obliged to fast (to not eat or drink, including water) from dawn until sunset for 30 days. The obligation does not apply to anyone who is unable to fast for medical reasons or menstruating. Ramadan follows the lunar calendar, it commences 10-12 days earlier every year. As Muslims will wake before sunrise for breakfast and may feel hungry and thirsty during the day, they may require breaks or adjustment to their office hours. Further details can be found in our [Employers Guide to Ramadan](#).



Hinduism

Hindus may ask for special consideration for joining family during the celebrations of Diwali, Holi or Raksha Bandhan. Shravan month falls in July/August. During the month of Shravan, devotees pray to Lord Shiva for good health and fortune. It is believed that fasting during this month pleases Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati, who bless their devotees with a peaceful and prosperous life For Raksha bandhan, the sister always visits the brother to tie a sacred thread round his wrist. It would be essential to facilitate such meetings between brothers and sisters on this day. Other festivals like Diwali can involve visitors and guests who exchange gifts and sweets.

3. Festivals and Religious holidays

Festivals and Religious Holiday are an important way that people observe their faith and contribute to their communities. These vary from faith to faith and have different requirements. The Faith Network issues an observance calendar every year.



Judaism

There are several Jewish festivals that are times for religious and cultural celebration and mark events from the Torah, Jewish history and the seasonal cycle. Rituals are performed and traditions observed both at home and at the synagogue.

Some festivals and holidays include restrictions on working and travelling, and all start at sunset and end at nightfall the following day, or nightfall on the last day of the festival (for festivals that span more than one day). Some Jewish festivals and holidays with such restrictions include:

- Rosh Hashanah – the Jewish New Year
- Yom Kippur – Day of Atonement
- Passover – celebrates the exodus from Egypt and the start of Spring
- Shabbat (the Jewish sabbath) - begins at sunset on Friday and ends at nightfall on Saturday evening

Employees may request time off for some or all of the Jewish festivals, and festival dates vary from year to year (as the Jewish religion works to a lunar calendar).



Sikhism

There are several major festivals in the Sikh calendar: Vaisakhi (April), Bandi Chhor Divas (October/November), Guru Nanak Dev Ji's Gurburab (some Sikh communities celebrate this in November, and others celebrate it in April - the same time as Vaisakhi) and Guru Gobind Singh Ji's Gurburab (December/January).



Buddhism

Buddhists main celebration is Buddha Day which takes place between May/June

“

Creating a faith-inclusive workplace allows all employees the opportunity to practice their faith without stigma, and helps to build a culture that celebrates and embraces faith in the workplace. For those who practice, faith is a large part of their identity and daily lives - ensuring they feel comfortable to bring their whole selves to work is crucial to their sense of belonging. At the same time, we all benefit from the ways in which the faith community's beliefs, practices and perspectives enrich our wider CBRE culture.

”

Lucy Silverstone



4. Many people show their faith through their dress

Many people choose to display their faith through dress or observe their religion by following directions from scripture. For some this visibility may attract negative comments and for others it is a way to celebrate their religion. All colleagues should be supported to wear the dress that reflects their religion, where appropriate.



Christianity

Some Christians may choose to wear a cross as representation of their religion.



Islam

According to the Quran, Muslims shall wear loose, non-revealing clothing. Men will often cover between the navel and the knees, and some women will cover their heads, revealing only their face and hands. In some countries and cultures, women will cover their entire body, including their face and hands. Shia Muslims may also wear turban.



Sikhism

Practicing Sikhs are known for wearing 5 specific things (known as the 5 K's), being: Kesh (uncut hair), Kara (a steel bracelet), Kanga (a wooden comb), Kaccha - also spelled, Kachh, Kachera (cotton underwear) and a Kirpan (steel sword). Another K is a Keksi, a type of turban, which is commonly worn by Sikh men.



4. Many people show their faith through their dress

Many people choose to display their faith through dress or observe their religion by following directions from scripture. For some this visibility may attract negative comments and for others it is a way to celebrate their religion. All colleagues should be supported to wear the dress that reflects their religion.



Hinduism

Women will often adorn themselves with a red spot (Bindi) on the forehead to denote their faith. Married Hindu women usually wear black beads, or a specially consecrated gold chain (Mangalsutra) around their necks and will not remove this. A minority of Hindu men wear a small ponytail in their hair (Shikha) and orthodox Hindu men usually have a religious marking (Tilak) on their foreheads.



Judaism

Some Jewish men will wear a kippah (meaning 'dome') on their heads, in recognition that God is always above us.



Buddhism

Buddhist monks and nuns wear a traditional robe called a Kāṣāya. Generally Buddhists may show their faith through jewellery.

5. Mourning practices vary between religions

Practices relating to death and mourning vary by religion. It is important to understand these requirements so that we can utilise our People policies to support individuals.



Islam

Muslims usually bury their deceased as quickly as possible. In Muslim countries this may be in a matter of hours and in UK it is likely to be within a few days. The mourning period is advised to be 3 days, however, the people affected may take longer to revert to a normal routine and normal feelings. Muslims do not customarily wear black at the time of death.



Hinduism

Hindus have elaborate funeral and mourning rituals lasting eleven days and may require sympathy and consideration for taking time away for participating in the mourning.



Sikhism

Arrangements for a Sikh funeral usually begin immediately after death, ideally within three days. After death a Sikh's body is cremated. A memorial is not usually created, instead, the ashes of the deceased are immersed in a river either in India or in another country where they were living.



Judaism

Judaism requires that funerals take place as soon as possible after death, with the closest relatives of the deceased beginning a week-long mourning period known as sitting shiva (seven) immediately afterwards. During this time, those that are sitting stay at home, to be visited and comforted by friends and relatives.



Islam

“By time, humanity is in loss. Except those who have faith, do good deeds, encourage each other to truth and encourage each other to patience.” (Quran, no.103)

This very short chapter outlines a complete system for human life based on the Islamic viewpoint. In the clearest and most concise form, the basic concept of faith in the context of its comprehensive reality. In a few words the whole Islamic constitution is covered and the community is described in its essential qualities and message.

“

CBRE provides its employees with the opportunity to not only exhibit their technical competencies, but also provides a platform to bring their whole selves to work. For me personally, the multi-faith spaces are an example of this and helps me practice my faith - which is an integral part of me. The Faith Network supplements this by helping me better understand colleagues, both within the organisation and from other organisations, which makes working and collaboration deeper and more meaningful.

”

Muz Hussain

3

Resources and Support

CBRE UK Faith Network

The CBRE UK Faith Network aims to raise awareness about faith in the workplace and create a culture where people from all religions feel comfortable about discussing their faith without stigma.

TO ACHIEVE THIS, THE FAITH NETWORK HAS IMPLEMENTED A FOUR-PRONGED APPROACH:

Representation

The Faith Network Steering Committee includes a representative from each of the six main religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism) whose role is to act as a point of contact for employees who want to discuss their faith, whether it is to discuss local areas of worship or to pray and celebrate together. The Network can also arrange a buddy from a similar faith to meet with you.

Collaboration

The Faith Network Regularly collaborates with other CBRE networks to ensure resource and knowledge sharing. By collaborating with networks such as the REACH Network, the Faith Network can tap into other networks and resources to raise the profile of and to get people talking. The Faith Network also leverages external relationships to collaborate with other firms and clients whenever possible. Interfaith collaboration is also a main focus of our events and programming.

Awareness

Raising awareness of the Faith Network, and the Faiths themselves, is best achieved by hosting company-wide events around major celebrations such as Diwali and Hanukkah. This helps to bridge the gap between people of different faiths and allows people to feel more comfortable discussing faith in the workplace.

Education

With over 10,000 employees in the UK, reaching every employee in the company can only be achieved by ensuring that company literature, where relevant, mentions the existence of the Faith Network. This will help to spread the relevance of the Faith Network far beyond London and into other CBRE offices across the UK. Faith Network programming also aims to educate the business on the Faiths themselves, as well as the unique issues facing the faith community.



Protecting you

The following are the key policies that you should know about and draw upon if needed:



Discrimination, harassment & victimisation policy

This policy sets out our definitions of Discrimination and Harassment in response to the Equality Act 2010. It also details the processes that you can draw upon to raise a complaint and the support that you can expect in this instance.



Employee personal information protection & data protection policy

This policy sets out our approach to handling Employee Personal information and sets out our legal obligations for handling special category information.



Grievance procedure

In the unfortunate situation where there has been unacceptable behaviour this policy set out the processes that an employee can take to find a resolution.



Support available to you

This guide has been put together by the Faith Network to support your conversations relating to Faith and Religion. Having a conversation with your team or line manager allows you to speak to your needs and adjustments that will help you day to day. If you are wondering what support there is available to you at CBRE, we have a number of different initiatives that show our commitment to supporting our diverse workforce:

- Our [DE&I policy](#) is available to read which explains our standpoint on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and how it is integral to our company.
- View our policy on [Discrimination, Harassment & Victimization](#) to see how we protect all individuals working for us from any of these behaviours, irrespective of their status, level or grade.
- [WorkWell MIND](#) is a hub for all things to help support your mental health. Here you will be able to find a list of our trained Mental Health First Aiders who you can reach out to confidentially for help.
- We also provide access to an [Employee Assistance Programme](#) which enables you to speak to specialist mental health nurses 24/7, giving you additional support outside of working hours.
- [The Wellbeing Network](#) is a place for employees to come together and share ideas on how to maintain and improve your wellbeing, inside and outside of work. At CBRE, we are committed to creating a safe and secure environment for all of our employees and this is promoted through our [Wellbeing Guidelines](#).

Judaism

Jewish scripture recounts that on the sixth day of creation Go-d created mankind 'Be'selem Elokhim' – in the image of Go-d.

Moral of the quote - We should recognize that all people are created in His image and we are told in Ethics of the Farthers (Pirkei Avoth) to greet everyone with a pleasant face. We shine upon others in order to help others shine and to validate their sense of self-worth.

“

When we encourage our people to come together through the Faith Network it strengthens the culture of CBRE by having deep meaningful conversations and stronger relationships amongst our staff, business partners and clients. Having a genuine interest in our staff outside of technical skills is important to make us stand out by breaking down barriers and creating unity to build a strong culture.

”

Ben Levy



