

University of St Andrews: Human Resources – Equality & Diversity Inclusion

A-Z of Cultural Ethnicity, Religion and Belief Considerations

Reviewed: 17 November 2014 (part of the University's trial in the 'Race Equality Charter Mark' pilot)

Purpose:

- ✓ Important for promoting cohesion and fostering good relations amongst 'equality groups' within the University's working and studying environments.
- ✓ Greater understanding of others cultural beliefs to enhance working relationships and reduce the potential negative impact in the University operating as a global institution.

The information is divided into the following four sections:

Practice	A background of cultures, religions and beliefs practiced nationally.
Dress, Jewellery, Identity	Acknowledgment and understanding of what may be important to someone's identity is essential for inclusion through engagement.
Diets & Health	When organising meetings, seminars, internal/external events, it is important to be inclusive so attendees are not excluded.
Festivals & Observances	Awareness of the global diversity of people associated with the University enhances acceptance and eliminate barriers.

Engagement:

Document has been created through engagement with University groups/societies and external equality organisations since April 2011, in addition to including information from the suite of 'Faith Guides' developed by the 'Higher Education Academy'. It is continually updated to be inclusive to community feedback and comments are welcome.

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Race Equality Charter Mark: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/hr/edi/race/charter/>

Alternative formats are available upon request.

Practice	Dress/Jewellery/Identity	Diets & Health	Festivals & Observances
Culture: AFRICAN & CARIBBEAN			
<p>Ethnic groups: The terminology ‘African-Caribbean’ is a cultural-diversity term known to promote race relations and understanding in Europe and North America.</p> <p>Although there are vast linkages between the many nations within the African continent (54 sovereign and 9 non-sovereign) and the Caribbean (30 territories), it is important to understand that there are regional contrasts. These are evident in regional traditions, customs, languages, foods, art forms, music and social institutions.</p> <p>Religion: Most common religious practices include African spirituality, Christian, Muslim and Rastafarian. The practice of each religion may differ regionally due to historic customs. Other impacts to cultural religious practice stem from historic immigration from Europe and South Asia.</p> <p>Specific languages:</p> <p>Africa – over 1,000 languages including Afrikaans, Amharic, different styles of Arabic, Chichewa, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Malagasy, Sango, Seychellois, Shona, Swahili and Tigrinya.</p> <p>Caribbean – Creole and Patois.</p> <p>European languages – Dutch, English, French, Greek, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish.</p>	<p>Facial ceremonial signs may be displayed voluntarily due to cultural identity among Africans stemming from historic tribes. These may have a special significance to the individual.</p> <p>The wearing of turbans by females and males stem from national dress.</p> <p>Also refer to sections on Christian, Muslim, and Rastafarian.</p>	<p>Food: Each territory has their own distinct dishes associated with traditions passed down through families. There is a strong influence of regional cuisines in both Africa and the Caribbean e.g. Cassava, Cornmeal, Sweet Potato, Yams, Plantains, and Okra. Food can be highly spiced or seasoned and rice may form a staple part of the diet depending on geographical location.</p> <p>Also refer to sections on Christian, Muslim, and Rastafarian.</p>	<p>Various Independence Days are celebrated and observed in nations across the African continent and in the Caribbean.</p> <p>Black History Month, October in the UK and February in the USA: promoting understanding between cultures; celebrating the abolishment of slavery and equality of opportunities amongst people of different cultures and faiths.</p> <p>Also refer to sections on Christian, Muslim, and Rastafarian.</p>

Practice	Dress/Jewellery/Identity	Diets & Health	Festivals & Observances
Culture: ARAB			
<p>Religion: Mainly religion is Islam. Some people may be Christian, especially from Lebanon or Iraq.</p> <p>Countries with Arab populations: Jordan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Israel, Turkey and the North East Africa coast.</p> <p>Specific languages: Arabic (The Qu'ran (Holy book of Islam) is also written in Arabic.</p>	<p>Certain cultural groups may wear a turban.</p> <p>Also refer to section on Muslim.</p>	<p>Also refer to section on Muslim.</p>	<p>Also refer to section on Muslim.</p>
Religion/Belief: ATHEIST			
<p>Atheists do not profess any form of religious belief whatsoever and dismiss the idea of a supreme being, God or gods of any kind. They are distinct from Agnostics, who are unsure about faith and belief in God.</p> <p>An Atheist may be humanist (refer to section on "Humanist") or they may not wish to be described as belonging to any one group of people.</p>			
Religion/Belief: BAHAI'			
<p>It began in Iran (Persia) during the mid-nineteenth century and spread to virtually every part of the world. It embraces believers from virtually every racial, cultural, social and religious background, based on the teachings of its founder Baha'u'llah. The faith recognises the unity of God and his/her prophets.</p> <p>It teaches that the fundamental purpose of the religion is to promote harmony. Bahai's believe that religion must go hand in hand with science. Its basis is composed of the sole and ultimate progress of a</p>	 <p>An important sign to the Baha'i faith is the nine pointed star, emphasising completion.</p>	<p>Drink/smoke: Alcohol is not permitted - including alcohol in cooking.</p> <p>Fasting: Members of the Baha'i faith fast for a period from 2nd March - 21st March. The fast is from sunrise to sunset. Invalids, children, the elderly, expectant mothers and nursing mothers are exempt from fasting.</p>	<p>Naw-Ruz: Celebrating New Year.</p> <p>Ridvan: 12 day festival celebrating the day when Baha'u'llah stating that he was the prophet predicted by the Bab.</p> <p>Birth of Baha'u'llah.</p>

Practice	Dress/Jewellery/Identity	Diets & Health	Festivals & Observances
<p>BAHA'I continued... peaceful and ordered society. The principles of equal opportunity for all, compulsory education and universal peace are advocated.</p> <p>Jesus and Muhammad are acknowledged as prophets but there is a belief that the nature of God must be re-taught by new prophets in each generation.</p> <p>Followers (Estimated): Over 8 million worldwide.</p>		<p>Health: There are generally no objections to blood transfusion, organ donation/transplant or post-mortems.</p>	
Culture: BANGLADESHI			
<p>Religion: Islam is the majority religion. Religion may play a part in the way social structures are organised.</p> <p>Specific languages: Bengali, Sylheti (dialect).</p>	Also refer to section on Muslim.	Also refer to section on Muslim.	Independence Day of Bangladesh (1971): March 26
Religion/Belief: BUDDHIST			
<p>Buddhism is more a way of life than a formalised religion. Based on the teachings of Buddha, meaning 'one who is awake' (The Enlightened) who lived in India in the 5th/6th Century BC, Buddha is revered by Buddhists as the founder of their Way of Life but not as a God.</p> <p>There are 3 main schools – Theravada, Mahayana (includes Zen Buddhism and is more liberal) and Tantric (which holds the Dalai Lama as a religious and political leader).</p> <p>Followers seek to emulate Buddha in perfect morality, wisdom and compassion culminating in a transformation of consciousness known as enlightenment.</p>	 <p>This sign represents the all-seeing eyes of Buddha. The small dot depicted between the eyes represents the third eye, a sign of spiritual awakening. The curious squiggle between the eyes is the Sanskrit numeral one, and emphasises the Unity of all things.</p>	<p>Food: Mostly vegetarian, but meals vary considerably depending upon their country of origin.</p> <p>Fasting: Usually connected with the moon or Buddha, will not eat after 12noon.</p>	<p>Wesak: Birth of Buddha.</p> <p>Dharma Day: Stemming from the first teaching to Buddha's original five disciples, known as "The First Turning of the Wheel of the Dharma (Dharmachakra)" and is seen as a practical time and a chance to express gratitude that the Buddha, and other enlightened teachers, have shared their knowledge with others.</p> <p>Parinirvana: Observance of the death of Buddha and his release from the cycle of death and rebirth.</p>

Practice	Dress/Jewellery/Identity	Diets & Health	Festivals & Observances
<p>BUDDHIST continued... The way of life involves living morally; being generous; observing special festivals; pilgrimage to sacred places; and social responsibility.</p> <p>Followers (Estimated): Over 350 million Buddhists in the world (some estimate 1000 million) with many variations of Buddhism.</p> <p>Place of worship: Wat and Buddhist Temple.</p>	 <p>Dharmachakra, the wheel represents the teachings of Buddha. The Buddha was the one who "turned the wheel of the dharma" and is therefore it is the known as the "wheel of law and transformation".</p>		<p>Chung Yuan: Chinese Buddhist festival when objects for use in the spirit world are made and offered to assist spirits with no descendants or resting place to reach Nirvana. Large paper boats are made and burnt at temples.</p>
Culture: CHINESE			
<p>Ethnic groups: Han (large majority of the population), Zhuang, Manchu, Mongols, Miao, Dai.</p> <p>Religion: Chinese Folk religion, Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism.</p> <p>An ethical system is commonplace, emphasising respect for authority and seeing law as essential in order to make life possible. This maybe influenced by a variety of beliefs, all of which may figure in bringing up a Chinese child.</p> <p>Ancestor worship may still be very strong in the belief system. These may be central to most Chinese peoples' lives. Some who were born after the Second World War may not be so strongly influenced by ideas and beliefs. Shrines are not usually found in Chinese homes, altars may be set up for specific festivals or weddings on a temporary basis.</p> <p>Specific languages: Cantonese, Mandarin, Hakka.</p>	 <p>The image of the dragon is one of the most prominent cultural symbols.</p> <p>The dragon is a highly revered mythological character in the Chinese culture.</p>	<p>Food: In order to be healthy, equilibrium between "hot" and "cold" needs must be maintained and this relates to food, herbs and medicines (not related to temperature).</p> <p>Hot foods include most pulses, spices, eggs, nuts, honey, onions, lamb, tea, coffee.</p> <p>Cold foods include cereals, rice, wheat, fruit, potatoes, white sugar, green vegetables and milk.</p> <p>Health: A soak in the bath can be believed to be bad for the body in the later life, therefore showers are preferred.</p>	<p>Yuan Tan (Chinese New Year): First day of first lunar month, (3 days), marked with dancing, gifts, fireworks sweets and flowers. Red symbolizes good luck and gold prosperity.</p> <p>Ching Ming: Family festival where ancestors are remembered.</p> <p>Chung Yuan: Buddhist festival when objects are made and offered to assist spirits with no descendants or resting place to reach Nirvana.</p> <p>Teng Chieh (Lantern Festival): Marks the first full moon of the year and lengthening of days. Homes are decorated with strings of lanterns.</p> <p>Moon Festival: Autumn, celebrated with lanterns, moon cakes and fruits.</p>

Practice	Dress/Jewellery/Identity	Diets & Health	Festivals & Observances
Religion/Belief: CHRISTIAN			
<p>The Christian religion acknowledges that God (the Son) became human, with Jesus being fully human and fully God. This reality and interaction occurred throughout his life, with the humanity constantly obedient, this leading into the cross where Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world. After being buried, he rose physically on the third day, and was seen by many. He ascended to heaven and ten days later the gift of the Spirit was given, to be with the believers, so that they participate in the life of the risen Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Christians declare and share a belief in one God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - called the Holy Trinity. Christians gladly acknowledge that God puts them right with himself through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. They believe that God created the world, interacts with the world, and that Jesus will return one day and a renewed creation will be formed.</p> <p>As with most major religions, there are many different structures, rites and rituals. Varieties of practice include: Anglican; Baptist; Brethren; Church of England; Church of Scotland; Episcopalian; Free Evangelical Church; Methodist; Orthodox (refer to Orthodox); Quakers; Pentecostal; Plymouth Brethren; Presbyterian; Roman Catholic; Salvation Army; Seventh Day Adventist; The Lutheran Church; and the United Reformed Church.</p> <p>Followers (Estimated): Over 2,000 million worldwide.</p>	<div data-bbox="813 225 898 360" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>The most well known cross is the Latin cross, which to Christian Catholics represents the cross of Christ's crucifixion. When shown with the image of Christ, it is called a crucifix.</p> <div data-bbox="808 619 898 746" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>The cross pictured above is also important to some Christians as the cross being empty resembles that Christ is alive.</p>	<p>Food: Some may abstain from meat on a Friday, while others may wish to fast before receiving Holy Communion (some sit, kneel or stand).</p> <p>Seventh Day Adventists abstain from eating certain animal meats especially pig and offal. Many are vegetarians or vegans. They avoid alcohol and tobacco and may avoid tea and coffee.</p>	<p>All Saints Day.</p> <p>Christmas Eve: Celebrated as the day before Christmas Day.</p> <p>Christmas Day: Celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Ash Wednesday: Day of fasting/abstinence for many Christians, February/March.</p> <p>Good Friday: Observance of the death of Jesus Christ (two days before Easter).</p> <p>Easter Day: Observance of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Sundays are observed for a day of worship.</p>

Practice	Dress/Jewellery/Identity	Diets & Health	Festivals & Observances
Culture/Religion/Belief: CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX			
<p>Main denominations:</p> <p>Chalcedonian (Greek & Russian Orthodox Church).</p> <p>Eastern Coptic (Syrian Orthodox Church).</p>	<p>Some forbid the use of cosmetics and require their female members to dress particularly modestly.</p>	<p>Food: Some may abstain from meat on a Friday.</p> <p>Fasting: Some fast before receiving Holy Communion on Sunday.</p> <p>40 day fasting before Easter, alcohol, tobacco, meat and cheese.</p>	<p>Nativity of Christ.</p> <p>Christmas Eve: Celebrated as the day before Christmas Day.</p> <p>Christmas Day: Celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Good Friday: Observance of the death of Jesus Christ (two days before Easter).</p> <p>Easter Day: Observance of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Sundays are observed for a day of worship.</p>
Religion/Belief: CHRISTIAN: JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES			
<p>Jehovah's Witnesses were founded in the U.S.A. in late 19th Century.</p> <p>Jehovah's Witnesses believe the entire Bible is the 'Word of God'. Belief that Jesus is the Son of God (but not divine) and is now ruling as King at God's right-hand. The human soul ceases to exist at death but the resurrection of the dead will come in the future.</p> <p>Followers (Estimated): Over 2 million worldwide, over 120,000 in the U.K.</p> <p>Place of worship: "Kingdom Hall".</p>		<p>Food: Food containing blood is forbidden. They do not smoke or use tobacco products.</p> <p>Health: Most Jehovah's Witnesses carry a Medical Directive/Release card which directs emergency services staff not to use blood products for their treatment.</p>	<p>Memorial of Christ's death: Observance to 'The Lord's Evening Meal', held after sundown.</p>

Practice	Dress/Jewellery/Identity	Diets & Health	Festivals & Observances
Religion/Belief: CHRISTIAN: LATTER-DAY SAINTS (MORMON)			
<p>In addition to the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, the Book of Mormon is also used. Belief in ‘Pre-existence’, that there is spirit in the world in which we exist prior to birth, and that after death the spirit and the body will be resurrected and return to live in the presence of Jesus Christ (who is not divine) and God the Father.</p> <p>Followers (Estimated): Over 13 million worldwide.</p> <p>Place of worship: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.</p>		<p>Drink/smoke: Alcohol and Tobacco are not permitted.</p> <p>Do not drink caffeine such as tea, coffee, fizzy drinks because it is seen as a stimulant, preference is on decaffeinated drinks.</p> <p>Food: Usually health conscious and eat little meat.</p>	<p>Christmas Day: Celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Good Friday: Observance of the death of Jesus Christ (two days before Easter).</p> <p>Easter Day: Observance of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Pioneer Day: Celebrates arrival of the first Latter-day Saint pioneers.</p> <p>Monday evenings and Sunday (morning and afternoon) are observed for a day of worship.</p>
Religion/Belief: CHRISTIAN SCIENTIST			
<p>Christian Scientists believe in the Bible and in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.</p> <p>There is a strong belief that the teachings and healing practice of Christ, or the application of the laws of God, can be practiced today.</p> <p>Christian Scientists believe that through prayer, knowing and understanding, all things are possible for good through God, such as the practice of prayer for the purpose of healing of sickness and disease.</p>		<p>Drink/smoke: Alcohol and tobacco are prohibited.</p>	<p>Christmas Day: celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Good Friday: observance of the death of Jesus Christ (two days before Easter).</p> <p>Easter Day: observance of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.</p>

Practice	Dress/Jewellery/Identity	Diets & Health	Festivals & Observances
Religion/Belief: DAS DHARAM			
<p>In Das Dharam, a Das means “a servant to humanity”. One of the youngest religions originating in India (1970s). Embraces unity with faiths and cultures by acknowledging the lives of prophets of other faiths.</p> <p>Written teachings are through the Holy Book “Yashwanti Niradhar” which was created by the founder Mahraz Darshan Das, with the five principles: Sach - Speaking the Truth; Sadh Sangat - Learning in congregations; Sarbat Da Bhala – serving others positively; Sidak – contentment; Shahadat -sacrifice of selfish passions.</p> <p>Followers (Estimated): Over 1 million worldwide.</p> <p>Place of worship: Dera.</p>	 <p>The “Shamsheer (sword)-Mala (meditation beads)” symbolises peace over violence.</p>  <p>Identity of the ‘Sachkhand Nanak Dham’ places of worship.</p> <p>During worship, plain white Indian dress is worn; a red “Tilak” mark on the forehead; top of the head is covered; and black clothing is not worn.</p>	<p>Drink/smoke: Alcohol is not permitted.</p> <p>Food: Eastern/Indian vegetarian.</p> <p>Health: Washing of mouth face, hands, arms and feet is considered as the minimum washing required before worship.</p>	<p>Das Dharam Foundation Day.</p> <p>Joyti Diwas: Celebrating day of enlightenment.</p> <p>Aman Diwas: Observing the remembrance day of Mahraz Darshan Das.</p> <p>Janam Diwas: Birth of the founder Mahraz Darshan Das, and birth of the Spiritual Head Mahraz Tarlochan Darshan Das.</p> <p>Observance for worship is daily 2pm, particularly on Thursdays.</p> <p>Monthly Amavas; Pooranmashi; and Sangrands are observed for worship.</p>
Culture: GREEK			
<p>Religion: Christian Greek Orthodox and Varieties of practice of Christian.</p> <p>A way of greeting is to wave a clenched fist in the air and say ‘Oui’. To raise an outstretched hand is a symbol of a curse – if this happens, they may cover their faces to avoid the curse.</p> <p>Specific languages: Greek and English.</p> <p>Place of worship: Church.</p>		<p>Health: Thalasaemia is a medical condition that is common in ethnic Cypriots. Beta – Thalasaemia is more prevalent among people of Mediterranean origin.</p>	

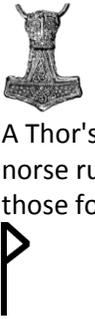
Practice	Dress/Jewellery/Identity	Diets & Health	Festivals & Observances
Religion/Belief: HINDU			
<p>Hinduism is the result of 5000 years of continuous cultural development. Central to Hinduism is reincarnation. Hindu religious practices vary a great deal, depending on areas of origin. Hinduism is a social system as well as a religion, therefore customs and practices are closely interwoven.</p> <p>Hindus believe in one supreme spirit, from which the whole universe emanates. This spirit can be worshipped in many ways. There is a belief in an eternal soul (Atman) and in a law that determines in which form a person may be reincarnated (Karma). People face consequences to their actions in previous lives. There are many personal gods such as:</p> <p>Demi-gods: Ganesh (the respected elephant god), Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Indra, Ram, Hanuman (the respected monkey god), Krishna.</p> <p>Demi-goddesses (Maatha ji's): Shakti, Ganga, Durga, Kali, Lakshmi.</p> <p>Every person has a duty to fulfil to society (Dharma). There is a great respect for all living things. Yoga is one of the six orthodox systems of Hindu philosophy, although it is also found in Buddhism. Sacred texts: Bhagavad-Gita, Upanishads, Rig Veda.</p> <p>Followers (Estimated): Over 950 million Hindus worldwide.</p> <p>Place of worship: Mandir and Hindu Temple.</p>	 <p>The Sanskrit word Om (aum) is known as the sound by which the earth was created.</p>  <p>The Swastika is derived from the Sanskrit language, from "Su," meaning "good," and "Vasti", " meaning "being". In India, it is used as a good luck charm.</p>  <p>The dance of Shiva is sign of the dynamic forces of creation and destruction, and the harmonious balance of opposites. The circle of flames surrounding the figure denotes the universe in its entirety.</p> <p>Bangles are worn, "Upanayana" (sacred thread) over the right shoulder, red marks on the foreheads and nuptial threads/necklaces.</p>	<p>Drink/smoke: Alcohol and Tobacco are not generally accepted.</p> <p>Food: Most Hindus do not eat beef. Some will not eat eggs/chicken. Dairy produce is acceptable, so long as it is free of animal fat. Some Hindus are very strict vegetarians so they will not eat food which has come into contact with prohibited food/utensils.</p> <p>Fasting: Eating only "pure" foods such as fruit or yoghurt rather than complete abstinence.</p> <p>Health: Hand-washing is considered essential before and after eating.</p> <p>Some Hindus will not cut hair and facial hair during fasting and on Tuesdays (many local barber shops are closed in India on this day).</p>	<p>Dipavali (Diwali): Celebrating New Year with a festival of lights; celebrates the return of Rama with Sita symbolising the triumph of good over evil; and celebrates Lakshmi (goddess of wealth).</p> <p>Holi: Spring festival dedicated to the god of pleasure. People shower each other with coloured water and smear red and green powder on each other.</p> <p>Navratri: Festival of the divine mother honouring Durga, wife of Shiva, and seeking her blessings. Also observed as a celebration recalling the days of Lord Krishna.</p> <p>Janmashtami: Celebration of the birthday of Krishna. Nightlong prayers are held in the Temples.</p> <p>Hanuman Jayanti: Celebration of the birthday of Hanuman.</p> <p>Monthly Amavas; Pooranmashi; and Sangrands are observed for worship.</p>

Practice	Dress/Jewellery/Identity	Diets & Health	Festivals & Observances
Religion/Belief: HUMANIST			
<p>Humanism is an approach to life based on reason and concern for humanity. Humanists believe that moral values are founded on human nature and experience alone. A belief in God or the idea of life after death is not accepted.</p> <p>Humanists aim to live full and meaningful lives and try to help others do the same. The fundamental moral principles of Humanism are freedom, tolerance and happiness.</p> <p>Followers (Estimated): Over 3.5 million.</p>	 <p>The commonly known symbol of the Humanist belief.</p>	<p>Humanists are free to choose their own diets.</p>	<p>Humanists prefer to support the rights of the individual in participating of seasonal festival celebrations.</p> <p>The Amsterdam Declaration 2002 was a key year for Humanists in Europe.</p> <p>World Humanist Day: globally celebrated annually by many Humanist organisations.</p>
Culture: INDIAN			
<p>Ethnic groups: Bengali, Gujarati, Nepali, Punjabi, Tamil and also ethnicities across the different 35 states.</p> <p>Religion: Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, plus other regional religions.</p> <p>Specific languages: English, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannda (Tamil), Kutchi, Marathi, Nepali, Punjabi, Urdu (dialect), plus 11 other official languages.</p>	<p>Guajarati's may have tattoos around the upper part of the body, representing names of God in Hindi script, along with flowers or dots.</p> <p>Both Sikh and non-Sikh Indians commonly wear turbans (Dastar or Pagri), and some consider it insulting to have the turban taken off or touched by others.</p>	<p>Food: Mainly vegetarian, beef and pork are not permitted.</p> <p>Also refer to sections on Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist and Jain.</p>	<p>Independence Day of India (1947): August 15.</p>
Culture: IRANIAN			
<p>Ethnic groups: Persian, Azeri, Gilahi, Mazdarani, Kurd, Arab, Lur, Baloch and Turkmen.</p> <p>Religion: Most of the population are Shia Muslims, and 10 per cent are Sunni Muslims. Also a small number of Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians and Baha'i.</p>	<p>Also refer to sections on Muslim and Zoroastrian.</p>	<p>Also refer to sections on Muslim and Zoroastrian.</p>	<p>Also refer to sections on Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Zoroastrian and Baha'i.</p>

Practice	Dress/Jewellery/Identity	Diets & Health	Festivals & Observances
Religion/Belief: JAIN			
<p>Began in India, 'Jain' means a follower of the Jinas. They have a belief in a creator God. Belief that through the cycle of birth and death spiritual progress should be made that will eventually lead to moksha (release). Ahimsa is the key principle (non-violence).</p> <p>Followers (Estimated): Over 3.5 million Jains worldwide, most live in India.</p> <p>Place of worship: "Derasar" (temple).</p>	 <p>The Jain Sign is a compound made up of a number of other signs significant to Jainism. By sharing concepts with Hinduism and Buddhism, the sign encompasses Jain teachings.</p>	<p>Drink/smoke: Alcohol is not permitted.</p> <p>Food: Strict vegetarians although they may eat some dairy products like milk, curds or clarified butter. They may prefer to avoid garlic, onion and potatoes. Some may not eat before sunrise or after sunset.</p>	<p>Paryushanaparva: Jains participate and request forgiveness of their wrongdoings.</p>
Culture/Religion/Belief: JEWISH			
<p>Judaism is the oldest of the world's three great religions worshipping one God who is creator and ruler of the whole world.</p> <p>According to the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament), God created the heavens, earth, and all living things. Then, with Abraham, God established a covenant and founded the Hebrew people. Jews believe they are descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (The Three fathers). Jewish religious practices try to maintain the covenant established with Abraham along with the laws given to Moses, and the Hebrew people, on Mount Sinai.</p> <p>How a Jewish person practices often depends on personal belief and the sect he or she belongs to. The various sects include: Hasidim; Modern Orthodox/Traditional Jews, whose life is governed by the Torah (the first five books of the Bible); Reform/Progressive Jews, who no longer hold that</p>	<p>Many symbols and signs appear among the Jewish people.</p>  <p>The Star of David is the primary modern emblem of the Jewish religion.</p>  <p>The Menorah is one of the oldest signs of the Jewish faith.</p> <p>Kippah (head covering). This garment is worn by religious Jews as a sign that God is always above them and always on their mind.</p>	<p>Food: Many Jews will request Kosher food (specially prepared meat). Only lamb, beef or chicken is allowable (no pork) and only true fish (with scales and fins). Meat and milk should be kept apart in cooking and not be served at the same dish. In a place where Kosher food may be difficult to acquire, most Jews will keep to a vegetarian diet.</p> <p>Fasting: Late September/ early October.</p> <p>Health: Boys are circumcised on the 8th day after birth if healthy. The ceremony is conducted usually by a trained medically certified functionary called a "Mohel".</p>	<p>Yom Kippur: Day of atonement and fasting.</p> <p>Rosh Ha'Shanah: Jewish New Year 3 daily prayers from the 'Siddur' (the Jewish prayer book): Shacharit - morning Minchah - afternoon Ma'ariv - evening</p> <p>Passover (Pesach): Jewish 8-day (7-day in Israel) celebration of the deliverance of the Jews from slavery in Egypt. The story of the Exodus is recounted, and the on-going struggle of all peoples for freedom from internal and external tyranny is celebrated. A special meal is featured.</p>

Practice	Dress/Jewellery/Identity	Diets & Health	Festivals & Observances
<p>JEWISH continued... the Torah is factual and binding and so live a more secular lifestyle; and Secular Jews, who identify with the culture rather than the belief.</p> <p>Specific languages: Hebrew and European.</p> <p>Followers (Estimated): Over 15 million Jews worldwide.</p> <p>Place of worship: Synagogue.</p>	<p>The Israeli flag can serve as either a religious symbols and/or as a cultural symbol. Jews wear the Israeli flag often as a sign that a Jewish home exists. There is no universal view or stance one takes on Israel as a Jew, each Jew has his or her own belief.</p>		<p>Fridays: Sabbath, from sundown. Friday to sundown Saturday.</p> <p>Yom Ha'atzmaut: Israel independence day (observed by some Jews).</p>
Culture: MAURITIAN			
<p>Religion: Hindu, Muslim and Christian.</p> <p>Specific languages: Patois, French, English, Hindi, Chinese, and Tamil.</p>	<p>Also refer to sections on Christian, Hindu and Muslim.</p>	<p>Also refer to sections on Christian, Hindu and Muslim.</p>	
Religion/Belief: MUSLIM			
<p>Islam, an Arabic word, meaning peace, purity, acceptance and commitment. The literal religious meaning of Islam is "surrender to the will of God".</p> <p>Followers of Islam are called Muslims.</p> <p>Shariah law is a religious and moral law based upon the Holy Book of Islam called the Qu'ran.</p> <p>Muslims believe in God alone as creator of the universe and in the revelations sent down to the Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him) who was born in Mecca in Saudi Arabia in 570 AD.</p> <p>Five main principles of Islam important to Muslims:</p>	 <p>Calligraphic rendering of the name Allah (God). Islamic faith forbids pictorial renderings of living things.</p>  <p>A common sign above Mosques is the use of Crescent, and also used in decorative arts, jewellery, and national flags. It is associated with the use of the moon to time</p>	<p>Drink/smoke: Alcohol is forbidden.</p> <p>Fasting: The fast of Ramadan between dawn and dusk in the ninth month of the Muslim calendar (late November/ December).</p> <p>Food: Must be Halal (prepared in a special manner). Further, any food or preparation containing any kind of pig product is to be avoided.</p>	<p>Ramadan.</p> <p>Eid ul Fitr.</p> <p>Eid ul Adha.</p> <p>Fridays: Performing of prayer each Friday is priority.</p> <p>Five daily prayers: Fajr - dawn Dhuhr - noon 'Asr - afternoon Maghrib - sunset 'Isha - evening</p>

Practice	Dress/Jewellery/Identity	Diets & Health	Festivals & Observances
<p>MUSLIM continued...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Declaration of faith (Shahadah) 2) Prayer (Salat) 3) Fasting (Ramadan) 4) Compulsory charity (Zakat) 5) Pilgrimage (Hajj) <p>Followers (Estimated): Over 1,500 million worldwide, over 1 million in the U.K.</p> <p>Place of worship: Mosque.</p>	<p>festivals. However it is not accepted by all Muslims.</p> <p>The following are types of female cultural and belief dress: Hijab; Niqab; Burka; Al-Amira Shayla; Khimar; and Chador.</p>	<p>Extends beyond pork meat, ham and bacon to such things as gelatine and pig fat used in some soaps.</p> <p>Health: Hands, feet and mouth are washed before prayer.</p>	
Religion/Belief: PAGAN			
<p>Modern Paganism has its roots in the indigenous, pre-Christian religions of Europe, evolved and adapted to the circumstances of modern life.</p> <p>Pagans understand Deity to be manifest within Nature and recognise divinity as taking many forms, often finding expression in Goddesses as well as Gods.</p> <p>There are many paths, traditions or “denominations” within Paganism. Goddesses are particularly important to modern Pagans, and many venerate a single Goddess of Nature. Some traditions are formally structured, with membership, initiation and ordination, others are informal and spontaneous. Some Pagans identify themselves with specific such as Druidry, Heathenry, Wicca, Shamanism or Witchcraft. Most simply identify as Pagan.</p> <p>Pagans see nature as sacred and understand the natural cycles of birth, growth and death as carrying profoundly spiritual meanings. Human beings are</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>The Pentacle, or pentagram, is frequently used Pagan signs and the most recognisable sign of Wicca.</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Various artistic renditions of the Awen are worn by many who follow a Druid path.</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>The Ankh is often worn by those following an Egyptian path. It is a symbol of eternal life.</p> </div>	<p>Food: For ethical reasons, most Pagans have a strong preference for foods derived from organic farming and free-range livestock-rearing, while many are vegetarian or vegan.</p>	<p>Imbolc: Celebrates the first hints of Spring.</p> <p>Spring Equinox: Celebrates the renewed life of the Earth that comes with the Spring.</p> <p>Beltane: Celebrated with fires and maypole dances marks the coming of the Summer.</p> <p>Summer Solstice - Litha: Celebrates the longest day of the year</p> <p>Lammas: Celebrates the beginning of the harvest.</p> <p>Autumn Equinox - Mabon: Celebrates the change from the light to the dark half of the year.</p>

Practice	Dress/Jewellery/Identity	Diets & Health	Festivals & Observances
<p>PAGAN continued... seen as part of nature, along with other animals, trees, stones, plants and everything else that is of this Earth. Pagans are strongly committed to sexual equality and women play a very prominent role in the community.</p> <p>Pagans take it for granted that different people will experience the divine in different ways, and are thus very tolerant of other life-affirming religious beliefs.</p> <p>Followers (Estimated): According to the 2001 Census, Paganism is now the seventh largest religion in the UK (HMSO, 2003).</p> <p>Place of worship: Pagans hold their ceremonies in woods, on hilltops, along the seashore, at standing stones, in parks, gardens and private homes.</p>	 <p>A Thor's hammer; or a individual norse rune, is often a symbol of those following Heathenry.</p> <p>Runic alphabets are used in Paganism.</p>		<p>Samhain (Hallowe'en - pronounced 'sow'inn'): Marks the Feast of the Dead. Celebrated as the old Celtic New Year.</p> <p>Winter Solstice – Yule: marks the longest night when the Sun is reborn.</p>
Religion/Belief: RASTAFARIAN			
<p>Ras means prince, so Ras-Tafari becomes Prince Tafari, who became the Emperor of Ethiopia (Haile Selassie I) in 1930. He is considered to be a divine being who will eventually lead all black people to freedom. He is seen as the new messiah and (linked to the Spirit of Jesus of Nazareth but not Christian) would lead the black African people to freedom.</p> <p>Rastafarians try to follow the Nazarite Vow of Separation, which forbids the cutting of hair, prohibits certain foods and requires shunning of the dead in order to emphasise life.</p> <p>Followers (Estimated): Over 1 million worldwide.</p>	 <p>The Lion of Judah emblem.</p> <p>Members have a distinctive hairstyle - dreadlocks (locks) are a symbol of faith and a source of black pride. Orthodox members may not permit their hair to be cut.</p>	<p>Food: Most do not eat meat. Pork is forbidden. Fresh natural food is preferred. Many are vegetarian.</p>	<p>Ethiopian New Year's Day: Recognised because Rastafarians believe Ethiopia to be their spiritual homeland, and a place to which they want to return.</p> <p>Ethiopian Christmas: Christianity has existed in Ethiopia since 330 AD, Rastafarians regard blacks as the Jews of the Bible.</p> <p>Anniversary of Haile Selassie visit to Jamaica.</p>

Practice	Dress/Jewellery/Identity	Diets & Health	Festivals & Observances
Culture: ROMANY ORIGIN (TRAVELLERS)			
<p>Derives from the language that has been spoken, 'Romanes', which is still spoken.</p> <p>Some have become more settled by living on permanent places but they retain their ethnic identity. They are usually of Celt origin – Irish, Scottish and Welsh and sometimes English.</p>			<p>Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month: June.</p>
Religion/Belief: SHINTO (KAMI)			
<p>Shintoism originated in Japan over 2000 years ago. Japanese culture finds its main religious expression in a mixture of Shintoism and Buddhism.</p> <p>“Shinto” means “Way of the Kami”. It used to be the state religion of Japan until 1945. In practice, many people follow Shinto but feel free to choose Buddhist rites for funerals etc. Much of what has been written about Chinese culture is relevant to Shintoism.</p> <p>Followers (Estimated): 3 million worldwide.</p> <p>Place of worship: Jinja. Places in Japan have their own shrine dedicated to the kami.</p>	 <p>The Gate to a Shinto Shrine (Jinja), the Torii designates holy ground.</p> <p>As Shinto is a religion of worship of nature spirits, or Kami, most Shinto shrines are located outdoors. The Gate marks the gateway between the physical and spiritual worlds.</p>		<p>New Year is celebrated at Jinja shrines/temples.</p>

Practice	Dress/Jewellery/Identity	Diets & Health	Festivals & Observances
Culture/Religion/Belief: SIKH			
<p>Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak Dev in 1469. His message, "Ek Ong Kar", is that we are all one, created by the one creator of all creation. Originating in the Punjab, northern India, Sikhs believe in the same cycle of birth, death and rebirth like the Hindus. Stressing truthfulness, generosity, equality, regardless of cast, creed, colour or gender.</p> <p>The Sikh Holy Book is called the 'Guru Granth Sahib' and is read daily in the morning and late afternoon. During observed days, it is read throughout.</p> <p>The Ten Gurus are: Guru Nanak Dev, Guru Angand Dev, Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das, Guru Arjan Dev, Guru Har Gobind, Guru Har Rai, Guru Har Krishan, Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh.</p> <p>Females receive the name Kaur (princess) and males are given the name Singh (lion). Both femlaes and males who are initiated normally wear a turban (Dastar).</p> <p>Specific languages: Many of the scriptures written in Gurumukhi and read in Punjabi, plus explained in hundreds of languages.</p> <p>Followers (Estimated): 25 million worldwide, 300,000 in the U.K.</p> <p>Place of worship: Gurdwara.</p>	 <p>Ek Onkar meaning God is One. The "Khanda" is the emblem of the four pillars of Sikh belief.</p>  <p>The centre sword (Khanda) represents knowledge of divinity and the creative power of God. The circular is called Chakkar, meaning wheel, a medieval weapon emphasising the unity of God. On either side, crossed daggers, or kirpans, called Piri and Miri (after the personal weapons of the Sixth in Sikhism, Guru Har Gobind), emphasising the spiritual and temporal (earthly) power in balance.</p> <p>Sikhs five 5 respected symbols: Kesh – uncut hair and facial hair; Kangha – comb that holds the hair together; Kara – the bracelet worn on the wrist; Kachha – special shorts as underwear; and the Kirpan – a miniature sword that is worn.</p>	<p>Drink/smoke: Alcohol and tobacco is forbidden.</p> <p>Food: Many Sikhs are vegetarian. Some may not eat eggs or fish. A few Sikhs who eat meat will not eat beef.</p> <p>Health: Hands, feet and mouth are washed before prayer.</p>	<p>Birth of Guru Nanak Dev.</p> <p>Birth of Guru Gobind Singh.</p> <p>Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev.</p> <p>Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur.</p> <p>Vaisakhi/Baisakhi: Observing the birth of Sikhism as a faith.</p> <p>Bandi Chhor Diwas: occurs on the same date as Diwali. In 1619 the Golden Temple was illuminated with many lights to welcome home and celebrate the release of Guru Hargobind from imprisonment in Gwalior fort.</p> <p>Monthly: Amavas; Pooranmashi; and Sangrands are observed for worship.</p> <p>3 daily prayers: Japji Sahib - morning Rehras Sahib afternoon Soheila Sahib (Kirtan Soheila) - evening</p>

Practice	Dress/Jewellery/Identity	Diets & Health	Festivals & Observances
Religion/Belief: TAOISM & CONFUCIANISM			
<p>Taoism (or Daoism) & Confucianism are both philosophies and religions. Often followers will draw from both philosophies and also Buddhism.</p> <p>Taoism has been long associated with a search for immortality and it is believed that longevity can be encouraged by holding together the yin (the principle of rest, or what is dormant) and the yang (the active principle, or what is creative). Matter and spirit are regarded as being the same thing. There is no distinction between the two.</p> <p>Confucianism emphasises respect for authority. Law is essential in order to make life possible.</p> <p>Followers (Estimated): Over 9 million worldwide.</p> <p>Place of worship: Daoguan.</p>	 <p>The Taoist sign symbolises the interplay of forces in the universe.</p>	<p>Food: In order to be healthy, equilibrium between “hot” and “cold” needs must be maintained and this relates to food, herbs and medicines (not related to temperature).</p> <p>Hot foods include most pulses, spices, eggs, nuts, honey, onions, lamb, tea, coffee.</p> <p>Cold foods include cereals, rice, wheat, fruit, potatoes, white sugar, green vegetables and milk.</p> <p>Health: A soak in the bath can be believed to be bad for the body in the later life, therefore showers are preferred.</p>	<p>Yuan Tan (Chinese New Year): First day of first lunar month. Lasting about three days, is marked with fireworks, dancing and giving of gifts, sweets and flowers. Red symbolizes good luck, Gold prosperity.</p>
Culture: VIETNAMESE			
<p>Religion: Majority are Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism and Ancestral Worship.</p> <p>For those of Chinese descent, they may retain their distinctive customs and culture. Others may combine reverence for ancestors with Buddhism.</p> <p>Some families may have one belief, but a mixture of the two, or parts of all three may be quite usual. In Buddhist and Catholic families, a family shrine dedicated to ancestors is usual, which may also feature photographs of recently deceased relatives. Incense sticks may be a feature of domestic shrines.</p>		<p>Food: In order to be healthy, equilibrium between “hot” and “cold” needs must be maintained and this relates to food, herbs and medicines (not related to temperature).</p> <p>Hot foods include most pulses, spices, eggs, nuts, honey, onions, lamb, tea, coffee.</p>	<p>“Tet” Vietnamese New Year: February 14, celebrated by the extended family with presents, new clothes, feasts and gifts of money to the young.</p> <p>Moon festival: celebration of the new moon.</p>

Practice	Dress/Jewellery/Identity	Diets & Health	Festivals & Observances
<p>VIETNAMESE continued... There is a special emphasis on family life socially and in terms of beliefs. The beliefs and social rules may be more closely intertwined than in Western cultures.</p> <p>Specific languages: Vietnamese.</p> <p>Place of worship: Nhà thờ họ (ancestral house).</p>		<p>Cold foods include cereals, rice, wheat, fruit, potatoes, white sugar, green vegetables and milk.</p> <p>Health: A soak in the bath can be believed to be bad for the body in the later life, therefore showers are preferred.</p>	
Religion/Belief: ZOROASTRIAN (PARSIS)			
<p>Based on the teachings of Zoroaster (Zarathustra), who lived in Iran in the 6th century BC. Zoroastrianism remained the main religion of Persia until the Muslim conquest of the 7th century AD.</p> <p>Today Parsis, who can only be a one by birth, form a well educated, articulate minority mainly centred in India. The sacred literature is the Avesta. Fire plays a major role in the rituals and haoma, a drink, is also important.</p> <p>Place of worship: Fire temple, Atash Behram, or Agiyari.</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>A living flame, symbolising the manifested presence of God, is an emblem of the faith.</p> <p>Female and male wear two pieces of sacred clothing. The Sudreh (shirt) and the Kusti (cord) which is a string which passes loosely around the waist three times and is tied in a double knot at the back.</p>	<p>Food: A vegetarian diet in the main but definitely no pork or beef.</p>	<p>Nouruz, a Zarathushti New Year: from the year of accession 632 C.E. Celebrated on the day of the Spring. Traditionally in Iran a table is set up with a display of the seven creations (Haft Seen).</p> <p>Khodad Sal: The birthday of the Prophet Zarathushtra is celebrated on the sixth day (Khodad Sal) of the year.</p>