

# Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing



International Women's Day - 8th March



Deaf Awareness Week - 5th-11th May



LGBTQ+ Pride Month - June



# Introduction

# Making the most of Our Calendar

## Key Dates to Note

Our calendar has been designed to include a wide range of diversity, inclusion and wellbeing events, with the purpose of raising awareness of dates, which may be of relevance to you and your team/student group. We welcome recommendations of dates/themes from our staff and student community that we might recognise in future calendar years. Please email [DIW@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:DIW@qmu.ac.uk) with any suggestions.



## Religious dates

The calendar has given a special focus to religious dates as a feature of the calendar. We have tried to ensure that the dates included are representative of dates celebrated by our staff and student community. The aim is to recognise religious festivals and raise awareness of these to our community. If there are any specific religious festivals/dates that you consider are missing, please email [DIW@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:DIW@qmu.ac.uk)

## Community members participating in Religious Festivals

If you are a staff member wishing to observe a religious festival or holy day during working hours, please speak with your line manager in advance. Line Managers are encouraged to consider sympathetically, requests for annual leave or flexible working arrangements as long as it does not cause undue disruption.

## Introduction

### A warm welcome to QMU's Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing (DIW) Calendar for 2025

This calendar has been designed with our full staff and student community in mind. Each month considers a different Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing theme, which has been chosen given its relevance and links to QMU's commitment to social justice, wellbeing and supporting our local community.

Each month we will send out a communication on the chosen theme to raise awareness, provide information on support services available, and highlight planned activity happening on campus or remotely that you may wish to participate in.

We welcome your feedback on the calendar, such as key dates not included this year or recommendations for future monthly themes – please get in touch at [DIW@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:DIW@qmu.ac.uk)

\*If you are a member of staff at QMU who is interested in joining a Working Group to support the delivery of the DIW Calendar and its related communications, please email [DIW@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:DIW@qmu.ac.uk) to express your interest.

## Quick links

Our calendar has a monthly theme. To support each of these themes we have provided a number of quick links to outside support charities, relevant awareness websites and key internal/external support services available to both staff and students.

# January

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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27	28	29	30	31		

## World Religion Day

World Religion Day is celebrated each year on the third Sunday of January. First observed in 1950, this day of reflection is a chance to celebrate the global and religious diversity of our QMU community and promote an understanding and union of different religions and beliefs. Whether you are part of a religion or not, each and every one of us at QMU has a part to play in achieving the ultimate goal of World Religion Day; to help promote peace, understanding, and mutual respect amongst our different communities.

At QMU, we are proud to welcome staff and students from all faiths, spiritualities, beliefs or none. This calendar has given a special focus to religious dates as a feature, and although every effort has been made to ensure that the dates included are representative of our staff and student community, if you feel that there are significant dates missing that should be included in future calendars, please email [DIW@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:DIW@qmu.ac.uk) to let us know. On Campus, we have a quiet Contemplation Room on Level 1 for personal prayer, reflection and contemplation, which is available to staff and students of all faiths and none. Although there isn't a chaplaincy on the QMU campus, QMU works closely with the St Albert's Catholic Chaplaincy at the University of Edinburgh, which has chaplains for all faiths and beliefs.

## The Origins of World Religion Day

Initially a Bahá'í observance, World Religion Day was inspired by the Bahá'í principles of the oneness of religion and of progressive revelation, which describe religion as evolving continuously throughout the history of humanity. The purpose of this day was to highlight the ideas that the spiritual principles underlying world's religions are harmonious and each religion plays a significant role in unifying humanity. 'See the truth in all religions, for truth is in all and truth is one' - Baha'i Holy Writings.

January 2025

## Key Dates to Note

- World Braille Day** - 4th
- World Religion Day** - 19th
- International Day of Education** - 24th
- Holocaust Memorial Day** - 27th
- Chinese New Year (Snake)** - 29th

## Religious dates

- 6th **Epiphany** (Christian) 
- 6th **Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh** (Sikh) 
- 7th **Feast of the Nativity** (Orthodox Christian) 
- 10th **Fast of Tevet 10** (Judaism) 
- 14th **Maghi** (Sikh) 
- 14th **Makar Sankranti** (Hindu) 
- 14th **Mahayana New Year** (Buddhist) 
- 27th **Lailat al-Miraj** (Islam) 

## Quick links

[St Albert's Chaplaincy](#) – The University of Edinburgh, 0131 650 0900

[Religious Venues in Edinburgh](#)

[QMU Student Christian Society](#)

[QMU Student Muslim Society](#)

[Report & Support](#)

# February

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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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24	25	26	27	28		

## World Day of Social Justice

As we celebrate our 150th birthday in 2025, it is only appropriate to shine a light on World Day of Social Justice, held annually on 20th February. Social Justice is a core value of the University: in fact, it underpins our world view. We embrace equality, diversity, inclusion, respect and supporting our communities, and we believe in opportunities and access being open to all and on a fair basis.

World Day of Social Justice aims to help us recognise that, despite all the progress we have made as human beings, many barriers prevent millions of people from living a fair life. Each year, World Day of Social Justice highlights a different theme, encouraging global action to tackle social and economic injustices. In 2025, the theme “Empowering Inclusion: Bridging Gaps for Social Justice” emphasises the vital role of inclusive policies, ongoing learning, and social protections in addressing systemic inequality.

## QMU's History & Commitment to Social Justice

The institution now named Queen Margaret University was established as the Edinburgh School of Cookery in 1875. This institution emerged in a period that was notable for real economic progress, but also characterised by many social and economic divisions and inequalities, and widespread poverty. The School was established as a voluntary effort to address two key problems facing society at the time:

- (1) To provide educational opportunities for women. The institution's founders were part of the U.K.-wide mid Victorian “Women's Movement”, which was a campaign for better education and improved career opportunities for females. A main element of this campaign was directed at securing equality of opportunity for school girls, but another purpose was to open up post-school education at both university and technical levels. To this point young women had been excluded from higher and technical education, with an inevitable consequence being widespread female poverty. (One of the key leaders of the women's movement was Queen Victoria's fourth daughter, Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, and she became the School's leading patron.)
- (2) The need to bring about an improvement in diets, particularly the diets of working class families.

February 2025

## Key Dates to Note

- LGBT+ History Month** - 1st–28th
- World Interfaith Harmony Week** - 1st–7th
- Time to Talk Day** - 6th
- UK Race Equality Week** - 3rd–9th
- International Day of Women and Girls in Science** - 11th
- World Day of Social Justice** - 20th
- International Stand Up to Bullying Day** - 28th

## Religious dates

- 1st–2nd **Imbolc/Candlemas** (Wicca/Pagan) ☽☼
- 2nd **Vasant Panchami** (Hindu) ॐ
- 3rd **Setsubun-sai** (Shinto) 卍
- 12th–13th **Tu BiShvat** (Judaism) ⚡
- 13th **Magha Puja/Sangha day** (Buddhist) ☸
- 14th **Lailat al Bara'ah** (Islam) ☾
- 15th **Parinirvana/Nirvana Day** (Buddhist) ☸
- 26th–27th **Maha Shivratri** (Hindu) ॐ
- 28th–1st March **Ramadan begins** (Islam) ☾

## Quick links

- [QMU's Purpose & Values](#)
- [QMU History](#)
- [QMU 150](#)
- [QMU Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes Reports](#)

# March

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## International Women's Day

International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women, and it also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity. In 2025, the theme for IWD is #AccelerateAction, emphasizing the importance of taking swift and decisive steps to achieve gender equality.

QMU has a long and proud history of advancing gender parity and inclusion since its establishment. Founded in 1875, the institution that has now become Queen Margaret University provided education for working class women at a time when society made that challenging. Society, and the institution, have evolved significantly but this original commitment to making education open to all still inspires us. Today, we remain committed to driving our gender equality work as a proud member of the Athena Swan Charter, a framework used across the globe to support and transform gender equality.

Each year, the QMU Aurora Network host an event open to all staff and students to mark International Women's Day. Look out for more information which will be circulated later on in the year on 2025's event!

### History of International Women's Day

International Women's Day grew out of the labour movement. The seeds were planted in 1908, when 15,000 women marched through New York City demanding shorter working hours, better pay and the right to vote. A year later, the Socialist Party of America declared the first National Woman's Day. The idea to make it an international event came from Clara Zetkin, a communist activist and advocate for women's rights. In 1910, she raised it at an International Conference of Working Women in Copenhagen. Her suggestion was unanimously backed by the 100 women from 17 countries who were at the conference. The first International Women's Day was celebrated in 1911, in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland.

Ms Zetkin's original idea for an international celebration was not tied to a particular day. The 8 March date was chosen after Russian women demanded "bread and peace" during a war-time strike in 1917.

## March 2025

### Key Dates to Note

- International Wheelchair Day** - 1st
- Zero Discrimination Day** - 1st
- World Hearing Day** - 3rd
- International Women's Day** - 8th
- Deaf History Month** - 13th March–15th April
- International Day to Combat Islamophobia** - 15th
- Young Carers Action Day** - 16th
- Sign Language Week** - 18th–24th
- International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination** - 21st
- International Transgender Day Of Visibility** - 31st

### Religious dates

- 4th **Shrove Tuesday** (Christian) †
- 5th **Ash Wednesday** (Christian) †
- 13th **Holika Dahan** (Hindu) ॐ
- 13th–14th **Purim** (Judaism) ✡
- 14th **Nanakshahi/New Year** (Sikh) ੴ
- 14th–16th **Hola Mohalla** (Sikh) ੴ
- 17th **Saint Patrick's Day** (Christian) †
- 19th–20th **Naw-Rúz** (Bahá'í) ☼
- 20th **Spring Equinox/Ostara** (Wicca/Pagan) ☾☽
- 26th–27th **Laylat al-Qadr** (Islam) ☾★
- 30th **Chaitra Navratri begins, Ugadi NewYear** (Hindu) ॐ
- 30th–31st **Eid al-Fitr** (Islam) ☾★

### Quick links

- [Athena SWAN at QMU](#)
- [Futures for Women](#)
- [Engender Scotland](#)
- [International Women's Day](#)
- [Equate Scotland](#)
- [Aurora Staff Network](#)
- [QMU Annual Equal Pay Reports](#)



# April

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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

## Quick links

### Staff:

We encourage staff to talk your line manager, trade union representative, HR partner or [Employee Assistance Programme – MCL Medics](#)

[QMU Health and Safety Sharepoint](#)

[QMU Staff Stress Documents](#)

[QMU Staff Wellbeing Resources](#)

[Togetherall](#)

### Students:

[Togetherall](#)

[Student Services, Wellbeing Support Page](#)

Louise Gill, Wellbeing Adviser - [wellbeing@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:wellbeing@qmu.ac.uk)

Dona Smith, Wellbeing Adviser for Paramedic Science Students - [CWS@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:CWS@qmu.ac.uk)

[Don't panic: guide to being a QMU student: Stress](#)



## Stress Awareness Month

April is Stress Awareness Month; its aim is to remind us of the importance of taking time to pause and understand what the purpose of stress is, our triggers, how it affects us physically and mentally, and the impact it has in our day-to-day lives. It is designed to open up conversations about stress in our lives and remove some of the stigmas around talking about stress. We all experience periods of pressure in our personal and working lives, and short periods of pressure are not necessarily of concern. However, when demands and pressures ('stresses and stressors') become too great, they can induce, in anyone, the harmful or potentially harmful mental and physical feelings and reactions commonly known as "stress". Stress is not an illness, but exposure to excessive and prolonged stress can lead to mental and physical ill health.

The earlier a problem is tackled, the less impact it will have. If you think that you are having problems with stress at work or with your studies, we encourage you to talk to someone. Whether you are a staff or student, we encourage you to explore the support systems available to you in the quick links section to the left.

April 2025

## Key Dates to Note

**Stress Awareness Month** - 1st–30th

**World Autism Day** - 2nd

**Autism Acceptance Week** - 2nd–8th

**International Asexuality Day** - 6th

**World Health Day** - 7th

**International Romani Day** - 8th

**Earth Day** - 22nd

**International Lesbian Visibility Day** - 26th

**National British Sign Language (BSL) Day** - 28th

## Religious dates

6th **Rama Navami** (Hindu) 

10th **Mahavir Jayanti** (Jainism) 

12th–20th **Passover** (Judaism) 

13th **Palm Sunday** (Christian) 

13th–15th **Songkran/Thai New Year** (Buddhist) 

14th **Vaisakhi** (Sikh) 

17th **Maundy Thursday** (Christian) 

18th **Good Friday** (Christian) 

20th **Easter Sunday** (Christian) 

20th **Pascha/Easter** (Orthodox Christian) 

20th–21st **First Day of Ridván** (Bahá'í) 

21st **Easter Monday** (Christian) 

28th **Ninth Day of Ridván** (Bahá'í) 

30th **Akshaya Tertiya** (Jainism/Hindu)  

# May

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26	27	28	29	30	31	

## Deaf Awareness Week

In May, we celebrate Deaf Awareness Week. This week is an annual event that aims to raise awareness about the Deaf community, their language, culture, and history. The UK Council on Deafness created Deaf Awareness Week to increase the visibility of challenges the Deaf community face and educate others on how they can support them.

It is a time to celebrate Deaf identity, promote Deaf culture, and advocate for equal access to communication and services for the Deaf and hard of hearing. This week-long event provides an opportunity for individuals and organisations to come together and support the Deaf community, learn about their experiences, and work towards a more inclusive and accessible society.

## British Sign Language Plan 2024–2030

At QMU, we aim to create an inclusive, diverse and accessible environment where it is everyone's responsibility to ensure all members of our University community are treated with fairness, dignity, respect and have a sense of belonging. We are highly committed to protecting and promoting British Sign Language (BSL). As part of our commitments to the Scottish Government's BSL (Scotland) Act 2015, we have committed to a BSL Action Plan which is ambitious, responsive, builds on our progress and which is continually shaped by national initiatives, local needs and the priorities of BSL users. Our Action Plan is available on our website in English and in BSL – you can find direct links in the 'Quick Links' section of this page.



May 2025

## Key Dates to Note

**Deaf Awareness Week** - 5th–11th

**UK National Day for Staff Networks** - 14th

**International Nurses Day** - 12th

**Mental Health Awareness Week** - 12th–18th

**Global Accessibility Awareness Day** - 15th

**International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia** - 17th

**World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development** - 21st

**Pansexual & Panromantic Visibility Day** - 24th

## Religious dates

1st **Beltane/May Eve** (Wicca/Pagan)



1st **Twelfth Day of Ridván** (Bahá'í)



11th–12th **Pesach Sheni/Second Passover** (Judaism)



12th **Vesak/Visakha Puja** (Buddhist)



15th–16th **Lag B'Omer** (Judaism)



23rd **Declaration of the Báb** (Bahá'í)



24th **Pilgrimage of St Sara La Kali** (Roma)



28th **Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh** (Bahá'í)



29th **Ascension Day** (Christian)



## Quick links

[BSL Action Plan](#)

[BSL Action Plan \(BSL Version\)](#)

[Welcome to QMU \(BSL Version\)](#)

[Disability Service](#)

[RNID](#)

[Becoming Deaf Aware](#)

# June

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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
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## LGBTQIA+ Pride Month

Pride Month is about LGBTQIA+ communities and allies coming together in celebration and solidarity, and to continue to raise awareness of the inequalities and discrimination faced by LGBTQIA+ communities around the world and to campaign for equal rights and freedoms for all. The importance of Pride Month extends beyond just celebrating our differences - it's also about spreading love and acceptance worldwide. Pride allows us to come together as one united community under one common goal: creating a world where everyone can live without fear or discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.

QMU prides itself on its welcoming community and creating a place where people feel recognised and heard. This June, as well as throughout the year, we recognise the experiences and achievements of the LGBTQIA+ community, celebrate the great diversity of our communities, and support the right of every individual to live authentically.

June 2025

### Key Dates to Note

**LGBTQ+ Pride Month** - 1st–30th

**Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month** - 1st–30th

**World Environment Day** - 5th

**Race Unity Day** - 8th

**Carers Awareness Week** - 10th–16th

**Men's Health Week** - 9th–15th

**Autistic Pride Day** - 18th

**Learning Disability Awareness Week** - 16th–22nd

**World Refugee Day** - 20th

### Religious dates

1st–3rd **Shavuot** (Judaism) 

6th–10th **Eid al-Adha** (Islam) 

8th **Pentecost** (Christian) 

8th **Pentecost** (Orthodox Christian) 

16th **Guru Arjan Martyrdom** (Sikh) 

20th–21st **Summer Solstice/Litha** (Wicca/Pagan) 

27th **Muharram - New Year** (Islam) 

### Quick links

[Pride Edinburgh](#)

[Stonewall Scotland](#)

[Equality Network](#)

[Scottish Trans Alliance](#)

[LGBTQIA+ Student Society](#)

[LGBTQ+ Staff Network](#)

[LGBTQ+ Help and Support](#)

### The Origins of Pride Month

Pride month started as a riot against police brutality at a small dive bar in New York City called the Stonewall Inn in 1969. At the time there existed outdated “masquerade” or “cross-dressing” laws that suggested a “man” or a “woman” must be wearing a certain number of clothing items that matched the gender on their state-issued ID. The police took advantage of these laws to raid drinking establishments and arrest transgender and gender non-conforming individuals. Just after midnight on June 28, 1969, the police raided the Stonewall Inn like they had many times before. Only, this time, something unusual happened: Stonewall patrons fought back. On 1 July 1972, the UK's first Pride march was held in London. The date was chosen as the closest Saturday to the anniversary of the Stonewall riots of 1969.

# July

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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28	29	30	31			

## Disability Pride Month

Disability Pride Month takes place each July. It's a time when disabled people and allies celebrate disability as a positive identity and culture, and also challenge systemic ableism, discrimination and marginalisation.

Disability is complex, so disability pride will mean something different to each disabled person. Accepting a disability, neurodivergence or chronic illness is an ongoing journey, and everyone will be at different points. In a general sense, Disability Pride Month is a time for disabled people to celebrate whatever stage they're at, and non-disabled people to reflect on the fact that disability isn't an inherently negative thing, but rather simply a fact of life.

### Support at QMU

At QMU, we are proud of our diverse community and are committed to creating an inclusive and accessible environment. Disability Pride Month may be one month on the DIW calendar, but throughout the year we continue to work together to make the University a welcoming, accessible, and inclusive place for staff and students with disabilities. If you are a student with a disability, we have a dedicated disability team on campus made up of advisers who can provide specialist support. Likewise, if you are a member of staff with a disability or you have caring responsibilities for someone with a disability, we encourage you to contact your HR Partner to find out about the reasonable adjustments and flexible working arrangements that may be available to you.

July 2025

### Key Dates to Note

- Disability Pride Month** - 1st–31st
- International Non-Binary Day** - 14th
- South Asian Heritage Month**  
- 18th July–17th August
- International Friendship Day** - 30th

### Religious dates

- 8th–9th **Martyrdom of the Báb** (Bahá'í) ☼
- 10th **Asalha Puja/Dharma Day** (Buddhist) ☸
- 13th **The Three Weeks begin** (Judaism) ✡
- 25th **St James the Great Day** (Christian) ✝

### Quick links

- [Inclusion Scotland](#)
- [British Sign Language Plan 2024-30](#)
- Support for Students:**
  - [Student Disability Service](#)
  - [Policy on Inclusive Learning and Teaching Materials](#)
  - [How To Use the Library – Support for Students with disabilities](#)

Find additional resources on [Student Central](#)

### Support for Staff:

- [Neurodivergent and Disabled Staff Network](#)
- [Access to Work](#)
- [Able Futures](#)
- [Employee Assistance Programme: MCL Medics](#)
- [QMU Flexible Working Policy](#)
- [QMU Special Leave Policy](#)

# August

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25	26	27	28	29	30	31

## Environmental Awareness and Sustainability at QMU

This August, we have chosen 'Environmental Awareness and Sustainability' as our monthly theme. The concept of sustainability is widely contested across cultures, disciplines, historical and political contexts. At its most basic level, it is about the capacity to preserve ways of doing and being, but emphasis is also placed on the interactions of human, economic, social, and environmental concerns.

At QMU, we have placed sustainability at the very core of our vision, taking a joined-up approach to the social, environmental and economic dimensions of sustainable development. Our holistic approach not only takes account of our immediate campus environment and everyday behaviour but also extends to curriculum development and the impact of our teaching and research across the world. Sustainability requires us all to be participants by urgently reducing inequality, eradicating poverty, improving health and education, tackling climate change, and preserving our environment.

## Cycle to Work Day – 1st August

Cycle to Work Day is an annual event that encourages people who are able to commute by bicycle, promoting cycling as a sustainable and healthy mode of transportation. Cycling is a great way of getting to QMU. The University is located within close proximity to the National Cycle Route 1, which connects to the Centre of Edinburgh and the Route 76 which runs east through Prestonpans, Haddington and Dunbar. The following facilities are available to cyclists on the campus and surrounding:

- University bike hire schemes
- GO e-Bike hubs in East Lothian and Midlothian (Nearest hub at Musselburgh Train Station)
- Lockers (located on level 1 of the main academic building)
- Parking (3 secured locker sheds at accommodation and 1 for regular cyclists)
- Secure bike lockers (installed behind the bus stop and at accommodation)
- Showers & changing rooms (located on level one in main building and available in the sports centre)
- Emergency maintenance kits (available at reception)
- Dr.Bike sessions (15 minutes bicycle repair for minor problems, monthly)

August 2025

## Key Dates to Note

**World Breastfeeding Week** - 1st–7th

**Cycle to Work Day** - 1st

**Roma Genocide Memorial Day** - 2nd

**International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples** - 9th

**International Youth Day** - 12th

**International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence based on Religion or Belief** - 22nd

**International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition** - 23rd

## Religious dates

1st **Lughnassadh/Lammas** (Wicca/Pagan)



6th **Feast of the Transfiguration** (Christian)



8th–9th **Tu B'Av** (Judaism)



9th **Raksha Bandhan** (Hindu)



13th–15th **Obon** (Buddhist)



16th **Krishna Janmashtami** (Hindu)



27th **Ganesh Chaturth** (Hindu)



28th **Samvatsari** (Jainism)



## Quick links

[United Nations Sustainable Development](#)

['Can Creative Practice Influence How We Relate to Our Environment?'](#)

[QMU Sustainability](#)

[QMU Net-Zero Strategy 2023-2028](#)

[University Bike Hire Scheme](#)

[Bike to Work Scheme](#)

# September

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
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September 2025

## Key Dates to Note

**World Literacy Day** - 8th

**World Suicide Prevention Day** - 10th

**World Childless Week** - 15–21st

**International Equal Pay Day** - 18th

**International Day of Peace** - 21st

**National Inclusion Week** - 22nd–28th

**International Day of Sign Languages** - 23rd

**Bi Visibility Day** - 23rd

**World Deaf Day** - 28th

## Religious dates

4th–5th **Milad-un-Nabi** (Islam) 

6th **Anant Chaturdashi** (Hindu) 

22nd **Autumn Equinox/Mabon** (Wicca/Pagan) 

22nd **First Day of Sharad Navratri** (Hindu) 

22nd–24th **Rosh Hashanah** (Judaism) 

## Mental Health and Wellbeing

September is often a month of transition for our university community, and whilst the new opportunities that the month brings can be exciting, for many it can also present daunting or unknown challenges that can impact our wellbeing. With that in mind, the theme for September has been chosen as 'Mental Health and Wellbeing', to raise awareness of the wellbeing support available to our university community whenever they may need it. We know that between induction activities and the beginning of teaching, this month can be a busy time for many, but we recommend taking the time to familiarise yourself with the variety of wellbeing support available to you by exploring the links provided on this page. Whether you need it now or later down the line, QMU is here to support you.

## Suicide Awareness Day – 10th September

This month on 10th September, we recognise Suicide Awareness Day, providing an opportunity to raise awareness of suicide and encourage conversations to check in with each other. We support not just World Suicide Prevention Day itself, but we encourage all members of our QMU Community to talk to one another all year round because conversations can make a real difference and save lives. There are a number of local support charities and services available to all our community. We draw attention to these in the 'Quick Links' section, and more importantly, you can find information on what to do if you or someone you know is faced with a mental health emergency.

## Quick links

If you find yourself or someone you know experiencing a Mental Health Crisis or emergency, please know that support is available:

Call 999 if you or someone you know experiences an acute life-threatening medical or mental health emergency.

**Contact NHS 24 – Free phone: 111**

[Edinburgh Crisis Centre](#) to discuss a mental health crisis

NHS Emergency Mental Health Assessment Service - 0131 537 6000

[Contact a Samaritan](#) – 116 123

[Breathing Space Scotland](#) - 0800 83 85 87

Edinburgh Night Line - Confidential Support for Students  
**8pm–8am term-time - 0131 557 4444**

## Staff Wellbeing Support Links:

[Together All](#) – An online mental health support service

[MCL Medics Employee Assistance Programme](#) – offers a personal support service, including access to counselling and health and wellbeing support –  
**Helpline: 0808 196 1441**

[Able Futures](#) - Confidential ongoing support from a qualified mental health professional

## Student Wellbeing Support Links:

[Together All](#) – An online mental health support service

[Student Services, Wellbeing Support Page](#)

Louise Gill, Wellbeing Adviser - [wellbeing@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:wellbeing@qmu.ac.uk)

Dona Smith, Wellbeing Adviser for Paramedic Science Students - [CWS@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:CWS@qmu.ac.uk)

## External Support for all:

[How to Improve Your Mental Health \(Mind Org\)](#)

[Self Help Support for Anxiety \(NHS\)](#)

[Mental Health Support around Edinburgh \(iThrive\)](#)

[Mental Health Support in East Lothian \(East Space\)](#)

# October

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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## Black History Month

Each year throughout October, QMU recognises Black History Month: a time to celebrate the achievements, contributions and histories of Black people in the UK and around the world, and to raise awareness and campaign against present-day racism. It is important to recognise that Black history should be part of how we look at history in general and not just siloed into a month– but we recognise that, in a structurally racist society, there is a need to focus awareness in this way.

QMU is on a long and deep journey to tackle racial inequalities. Building on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) work at the University, Professor Paul Miller, Dr Leroi Henry and Dr Kenisha Linton-Williams have carried out an in-depth EDI culture review of the experiences and outcomes of ethnic minority staff and students. The findings from this review were published in 2024 and have enabled QMU to strengthen and develop a meaningful EDI anti-racism strategy and action plan. Amongst the commitments made as part of our EDI Culture Review, QMU has committed to hosting an annual Black History Month Lecture, open to all staff and students. Look out for further information coming later in the year to find out more information about 2025's lecture!

## Black History in Scotland

“Black history is Scotland’s history. It is as crucial as ever that Black history is celebrated in Scotland. This only happens with a change in our history and heritage sectors and our education system. Black history needs to be more integrated into the ways in which we teach and tell stories about Scotland. This encompasses the history of African, Caribbean and Asian people in this country; people who often have a direct link with Scotland through slavery, colonialism and migration. Black History Month focuses on people whose sacrifices, contributions and achievements against a backdrop of racism, inequality and injustice are often forgotten about.” - Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER)



## October 2025

### Key Dates to Note

- Black History Month** - 1st–31st
- International Day of Older Persons** - 1st
- Dyslexia Awareness Week** - 6th–13th
- Baby Loss Awareness Week** - 9th–15th
- World Mental Health Day** - 10th
- Dyspraxia Week** - 13th–19th
- Allied Health Professions Day** - 14th
- International Pronouns Day** - 15th
- International Day for the Eradication of Poverty** - 17th
- Menopause Awareness Day** - 18th
- Intersex Awareness Day** - 26th

### Religious dates

- 1st–2nd **Yom Kippur** (Judaism) 
- 2nd **Dussehra** (Hindu) 
- 6th–13th **Sukkot** (Judaism) 
- 13th–14th **Shemini Atzeret** (Judaism) 
- 14th–15th **Simchat Torah** (Judaism) 
- 20th **Birthday of Guru Granth** (Sikh) 
- 21st **Diwali** (Hindu, Jain, Sikh) 
- 22nd **Birth of the Báb** (Bahá'í) 
- 23rd **Birth of Bahá'u'lláh** (Bahá'í) 
- 27th–28th **Chhath Puja** (Hindu) 
- 31st **All Hallow's Eve** (Christian) 
- 31st **Samhain/Hallowe'en** (Wicca/Pagan) 

### Quick links

- [Black History Month Scotland](#)
- [Black History Month Online Events](#)
- [Decolonising QMU Sharepoint](#)
- [Scotland Black History Map](#)
- [EDI Culture Review – Professor Paul Miller and QMU](#)
- [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Culture Review](#)

# November

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## 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence

Starting in November, the '16 Days of Activism' campaign raises awareness about gender-based violence against women and girls as a human rights issue, focusing on the importance of grassroots work on violence against women as well as providing an international platform for advocacy and campaigning. The campaign starts on 25th November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) and runs until 10th December (Human Rights Day). The dates for the campaign were chosen to link violence against women and human rights and emphasise that gender-based violence against women is a violation of human rights. During these 16 days, individuals, organisations, and communities come together to advocate for a world free from gender-based violence.

### Intersectionality

As we reflect on the 16 Days of Activism, it is important to consider that women are not a homogenous group and gender-based violence affects some women to different degrees or in different ways. The following statistics from UN Women demonstrate the need to consider intersectional experiences in our work to end gender-based violence:

- Disabled women are more than twice as likely to experience domestic violence than non-disabled women in the UK
- Black women experiencing domestic abuse are 14% less likely to be referred for specialist support by police than white women (they're also 3% more likely to report the abuse)
- LGBTQ+ women, trans people and non-binary people also experience high levels of Intimate Partner Violence.

### Quick Links

[Report and Support: Relationship Abuse and Coercive Control](#)

[Report and Support: Rape, Sexual Assault and Harassment](#)

[Report and Support: Stalking](#)

Women's Aid [Edinburgh](#) / [East & Midlothian](#)

[Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre](#)

[NHS SARCS](#) (Sexual assault response co-ordination service)

[Scottish Women's Rights Centre](#)

## November 2025

### Key Dates to Note

**National Fertility Awareness Week** - TBC

**National Stress Awareness Day** - 5th

**Remembrance Sunday** - 9th

**World Kindness Day** - 13th

**Trans Awareness Week** - 13th–19th

**International Day for Tolerance** - 16th

**International Student's Day** - 17th

**Transgender Day of Remembrance** - 20th

**Carers Rights Day** - 21st

**International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women** - 25th

**16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence** - 25th November–10th December

### Religious dates

1st **All Saints' Day** (Christian) ✝

2nd **All Souls' Day** (Christian) ✝

5th **Kartik Purnima** (Hindu, Jain, Sikh) ॐ ॐ ॐ

5th **Guru Nanak Dev Sahib Birthday** (Sikh) ॐ

15th **Nativity Fast Begins** (Orthodox Christian) ✝

24th–25th **Day of the Covenant** (Bahá'í) ⬠

27th–28th **Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá** (Bahá'í) ⬠

30th **Advent Sunday** (Christian) ✝

# December

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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## Grief Awareness Week

Held in December, National Grief Awareness Week aims to raise awareness of grief, and to help to normalise conversations around it. Grief is something we all face at some point, but it can feel lonely and overwhelming. Grief affects people in different ways, and many people don't know where to turn for help or feel they must cope alone. This week encourages open conversations about loss. Talking about grief helps break the stigma and makes it easier for people to seek support.

## QMU Bereavement Charter Mark

In 2024, QMU became the first university in Scotland to achieve the Bereavement Charter Mark. This significant milestone is part of our University Hospice Partnership and reflects our commitment to supporting bereaved individuals within our community.

The Bereavement Charter for Children and Adults, launched in April 2020, aims to create bereavement-aware workplaces. By earning this Charter Mark, QMU has demonstrated its dedication to providing a supportive environment for those who are grieving. Our achievement is the result of collaborative efforts from a small working group across Nursing and Occupational Therapy, with strong support from HR and the Equality and Diversity Committee. As part of this recognition, we have committed to an action plan to further support bereaved individuals, aligning with the national strategy on healthy grieving.

December 2025

## Key Dates to Note

- International Day for the Abolition of Slavery** - 2nd
- National Grief Awareness Week** - 2nd–8th
- International Day of Persons with Disabilities** - 3rd
- Pansexual Pride Day** - 8th
- Human Rights Day** - 10th
- International Migrants Day** - 18th
- International Human Solidarity Day** - 20th

## Religious dates

- 1st **Gita Jayanti** (Hindu) ॐ
- 8th **Bodhi Day** (Buddhist) ☸
- 14th–22nd **Hanukkah/Chanukah** (Judaism) ✡
- 15th **Dhanu Sankranti** (Hindu) ॐ
- 21st **Winter Solstice/Yule** (Wicca/Pagan) ☾☀
- 24th **Christmas Eve** (Christian) ✝
- 25th **Christmas Day** (Christian) ✝
- 28th **Holy Innocents** (Christian) ✝

## Quick links

- [NHS Inform: Death and Bereavement](#)
- [Good Life, Good Death, Good Grief - Support](#)
- ['To Absent Friends...' Festival](#)
- [Cruse Scotland](#)
- [QMU Special Leave Policy](#)
- [Extenuating Circumstances Policy](#)