

Staffordshire University Guidance for Staff and Students on the Wearing of Face Veils

Staffordshire University aims to ensure that everyone who studies, works at, or interacts with, the University will experience a culture of openness in which everyone is valued equally and can participate with confidence. We are committed to continue building a culture where diversity is celebrated and where individuals are valued and respected. Staffordshire University respects the rights of all individuals to dress according to their wishes unless this is detrimental to their capacity to do their job or is deemed unsafe or inappropriate for some other good reason.

Applying to the University

Any student applying to study at Staffordshire University must provide two forms of identification, one of which must have a photograph attached (e.g. passport or driving licence).

All applicants to Staffordshire University will be considered for admission based on the admissions criteria for their chosen award or job and the university and will not be influenced by the wearing of a veil.

If an applicant attends interview wearing a veil, for the purposes of confirming identity, a female member of staff will be asked to verify identity in a private area. This will be done in a sensitive manner.

Identification

Any application for University ID for women wearing the face veil should be dealt with by a female member of staff. The requirement for a full-face photograph should be explained before being asked if they would agree to remove their veil for long enough to allow the photo to be taken. If they agree at this stage then arrangements should be made to ensure that no males are able to see the photograph being taken.

Where the individual does not wish to remove the face veil, a passport size photograph should be requested to produce the ID. A female member of staff will need to verify the identity of the individual with the photograph in a private room where the veil can be removed briefly.

Students refusing both these options will not be able to enrol on their course. On occasion, ID may need to be produced for verification purposes. There may be instances when a student card or staff card is not available. To confirm someone's identity, additional photographic forms of verification can be used such as a passport or driving licence.

Examinations

Students will not be permitted to sit any examination unless identification is verified with a student card.

If an ID card is available and the individual is wearing a face veil, there are two options available in order to confirm identity:-

- Option 1 - A female member of staff can accompany the individual to a private room where she can be asked to show her face.
- Option 2 - If no female member of staff is available then an alternative and additional form of identification should be shown, such as an official document or card e.g. credit or debit card, driving licence.

Placements

Some of our awards students will be required to attend other venues or locations as part of their training. Placement providers are required to comply with equality legislation and good practice guidance. Wherever possible, care will be taken to ensure these placements are as comfortable as possible for all students. Students wearing veils must be prepared to attend a placement in a mixed gender environment. The university cannot guarantee finding a placement where the wearing of veils is the norm and indeed, when on placement students must be prepared to comply with the dress code. For example, some schools may have a policy on trainee teachers wearing the full veil. If students are not prepared to follow the policy of the placement provider they may in some instances be unable to complete the award.

If a student who wears a full veil is accepted on any of our awards where placements are involved, the university will make reasonable efforts to find a placement within our usual partnership arrangements. Should the university find it difficult to place a student who wears the full veil within the usual placement area, the student may suggest an alternative in order to fulfil the placement requirements. The student would be expected to meet any additional costs incurred by either the student or the university. Any such placement would need to be offered to the university in good time to allow for the formal placement approval process to be carried out by the university.

Students are encouraged to contact the award office at any point before or after an application / acceptance to discuss any concerns or queries.

Health and Safety

Appropriate Health and Safety provision may result in the request for the veil to be removed. This may be the case in some workshop areas. However, sensitivity will be used and the issue will be discussed with the student or member of staff before implementation. The individual will be asked for suggestions to overcome any issues that may be raised by this.

Further information and support relating to this guidance can be obtained from Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal Student Diversity Officer on extension 4610 or by emailing h.h.iqbal@staffs.ac.uk

Guidance for Staff and Students on the Different Forms of Veils

From BBC News 'Hijab in Graphics' http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/pop_ups/05/europe_muslim_veils/html/1.stm



The Hijab

The word 'hijab' comes from the Arabic meaning 'screen' or 'covering' and is used to describe the most common form of headscarves worn by Muslim women. These scarves are varied in materials, styles and colours. The type most common in the West consists of a rectangular piece of cloth which covers the head and neck whilst leaving the face uncovered.



The Niqab and The Burka

The niqab (left) is a veil that partially covers the face from the nose down to the neck, leaving the eyes uncovered. It is worn with an accompanying headscarf and may be worn with a separate eye veil. The burka (right) is the most concealing form of all Islamic veils. Covering the entire face and body, it leaves only a mesh screen to see through.



The Al-Amira and Shayla

The al-amira (left) is a two-piece veil consisting of a close fitting cap, usually made from cotton or polyester, and an accompanying tube-like scarf. The shayla (right) is a long, rectangular scarf popular in the Gulf region, wrapped around the head then tucked or pinned in place at the shoulders.



The Khimar and Chador

The khimar (left) is a long, cape-like veil that hangs down to just above the waist. It covers the hair, neck and shoulders completely, but leaves the face clear. The chador, worn by many Iranian women when outside the house, is a full-body cloak. It is often accompanied by a smaller headscarf underneath.