

**RELIGION**

RELIGION EDITORIAL PRINCIPLES

The BBC respects the fundamental human right to exercise freedom of thought, conscience and religion, this includes an individual's freedom to worship, teach, practise and observe a religious belief. At the same time, we recognise our duty to protect the vulnerable and avoid unjustified offence or likely harm. We aim to achieve this by ensuring our output is not used to denigrate the beliefs of others.

## RELIGION EDITORIAL PRINCIPLES

- We will ensure that the beliefs and practices of the great world faiths are described accurately and impartially.
- We will ensure the religious views and beliefs of an individual, a religion or religious denomination are not misrepresented, abused or discriminated against, as judged against generally accepted standards.
- We will reflect an awareness of the religious sensitivity of references to, or uses of, names, images, the historic deities, rituals, scriptures and language at the heart of the different faiths and ensure that any use of, or verbal or visual reference to them are treated with care and editorially justified. Examples include the Crucifixion, Holy Communion, the Koran, and the Jewish Sabbath.
- We will respect the religious sensitivity surrounding the observance of holy days and the principal festivals of the various faiths so that unnecessary offence is avoided by material that might be more acceptable at other times.

In output dealing with the religious views and/or beliefs of a religion or religious denomination as the central subject, we should make clear both the identity of the faith and the purpose of the output. It should not be used to recruit. Contributors should not be allowed to undermine or denigrate the religious beliefs of others.

**We should treat any claims made in our religious programmes for the special powers or abilities of a living person or group**, with due objectivity. Such claims should not be made when significant numbers of children may be expected to be watching television or when children are particularly likely to be listening to the radio, or in online content likely to appeal to a high proportion of children.

Comedy and satire always has the potential for offence. Specialist advice is available from the Religion and Ethics department and from colleagues in the World Service as well as Editorial Policy.