

Madinah Al-Ilm Course  
Frequently Asked Questions

### Timetable

**Q1. How long will we be in Iraq?**

We will be in Iraq for approximately two weeks, starting in Najaf where we will spend most of our course time, with 3-4 nights in Karbala and 1-2 nights in Kadhmayn. There will also be a day trip to Samarra and Balad.

The itinerary will be confirmed nearer the course starting date, and you will be given a detailed timetable on arrival.

A mandatory online pre-travel briefing will be scheduled with all participants, and we can address any additional questions then.

**Q2. Where will we be staying in Iraq?**

The Organising Team will ensure that we secure accommodation that caters to the needs of our participants and fulfills the Madinah al-Ilm course objectives/outcomes.

**Q3. What will the course involve?**

The course is aimed to offer you a uniquely spiritual Ziyarah to the Holy Sites in Iraq alongside experienced mentors, featuring an interesting 8-day Islamic course in Najaf by senior English-Speaking scholars, visits of Maraj'i and Mujtahidin alongside some recreational activities. You can find further details in the itinerary you will be given.

**Q4. How often will we be going to the Haram?**

Insha'Allah there will be an opportunity to visit the Haram every day.

### Expectations

**Q1. What are the Organisers' expectations from me?**

- We expect that you always display a positive and respectable manner with all involved.
- We expect that you attend all parts of the program and actively participate.
- We expect that you will use this time wisely and make the most of the opportunity.
- We expect that you will follow the guidelines & rules set out for you by the Organising Team.
- Stay safe and ensure the safety of your fellow team members.

Further details on "Behaviour and Attitude" that are expected from you can be found in the Terms & Conditions. Please refer to this.

**Q2. What is the dress code?**

You must dress modestly and maintain a respectful appearance at all times. Please familiarise yourself with the guidelines of the Shari'a and Mixed Gatherings policy paper [<https://lnk.worldfed.org/mixed-policypaper>].

Please note that December–January is the winter season in Iraq, we therefore advise the participants to carry suitably warm clothes.

Men:

*Outside the accommodation:*

Khanzus / Dishdashas are highly recommended for boys.

In line with the location and aims of the Course, we request that men refrain from wearing short-sleeved t-shirts and avoid wearing jeans or tracksuit bottoms. Tight-fitting clothing is not permitted at all.

*Inside the Accommodation:*

We request that you dress appropriately, keeping in mind that shorts, sleeveless tops, and tight-fitting clothes are not permitted.

Women:

*Outside the accommodation:*

Full hijab, ensuring that one's hair, arms, and feet are fully covered.

- Women are also required to wear the following to abide by local custom:
- Wear only dark-coloured scarves and shelas.
- Wear an Abaya-Chador. The chador will be provided by TWF on the second day of the Course.
- Wear non-transparent socks.
- Wear hand socks/sleeves which will be available for purchase by the participant in Iraq.
- Makeup and perfume must not be applied.

*Inside the accommodation:*

We request that you dress appropriately, keeping in mind that shorts, sleeveless tops, and tight-fitting clothes are not permitted.

NB: Women are required to enter and exit Iraq in their abayas.

**Q3. Are there any specific rules which need to be followed during my stay?**

Yes, the terms and conditions of the course form part of your application. Please note that you cannot apply for the course without formally agreeing to abide by these. Please familiarise yourself with them.

In addition, the accommodation has its own rules; you will be briefed on these upon arrival. These rules must also be adhered to. If at any time you are unsure regarding any of the above, refer to your mentor and they will assist you.

#### **Q4. Will I be able to leave the premises as and when I wish?**

We aim to be accommodating, where possible however you will need to liaise with your mentor on leaving the premises outside of the course schedule. Please note you will be required to leave in a group of a minimum of 2-3 persons with permission and be reachable.

### **Facilities**

#### **Q1. Are Western toilets available?**

Yes, western toilets will be available at the accommodation, however we cannot guarantee that this is the case at every location we visit outside of the accommodation.

#### **Q2. What facilities are there for washing clothes?**

Facilities for washing clothes will be available for both ladies and gents. Alternatively, paid laundry facilities may also be available. Ask your assigned mentor for guidance. You may prefer to bring your own washing liquid. We recommend that anyone that suffers from any skin condition should bring their own washing liquid.

#### **Q3. Will there be any place to store my valuables safely?**

Upon arrival in Iraq, the Organisers will take responsibility for safe keeping your passport. It is your responsibility to look after all your other valuables. The accommodation that you will be staying in is safe; however, please note that the Organiser will not be held responsible for any items that are lost or stolen.

#### **Q4. Will you be providing a SIM for use while in Iraq?**

The Course will not be providing any SIMs for use in Iraq.

Please check with your own network and provider in the country of your origin regarding use of your mobile and related charges.

We cannot always guarantee that there will be connectivity everywhere in Iraq apart from the accommodation that you will be residing in whilst in Iraq.

We suggest you look into purchasing an e-sim online. We do not take responsibility for the purchase and use of the e-sim.

More information is provided here - [What is an eSim? \(moneysavingexpert.com\)](https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/what-is-an-esim/)

#### **Q5. Can I bring my own snacks?**

Yes, you can bring your own snacks. The Course Organisers will always endeavour to provide the best quality food however if you have a particular dietary requirement then alternatives will **not** always be available, so you can bring dry or tinned foods such as packet soups, cereal bars, pot noodles, etc. as backup if you want.

#### **Q6. How many people will there be per room?**

This will differ year on year, however, we shall ensure that you are comfortable. The accommodation provided will be on a group basis and can house anywhere from 2-4 persons in a hotel type setting to 15-20 in a dorm-style setting.

**Q7. Will we be drinking bottled water throughout the trip?**

Bottled water will be provided throughout the trip. The drinking water available at the Haram and accommodation is safe to drink. While we are travelling within Iraq, we advise that you drink the bottled water provided as we cannot verify the water safety at every location.

**Q8. What happens if I get sick?**

The Organising team will look after you. Where possible, we try to ensure we have a medical professional on the team. Healthcare facilities in Iraq are adequate and going to a doctor or a hospital can be arranged if necessary. However, you must bring your own personal medication and ensure you have obtained all necessary vaccinations prior to your travel.

If you start to feel unwell, make sure the mentors are made aware, and we can then facilitate the required care and advice.

### Miscellaneous Questions

**Q1. What should I bring with me on the trip?**

We have asked some past participants & mentors to compile an essentials & recommended packing list to make your packing & travel easy. You can find this list here:

<https://lnk.worldfed.org/mai23-packinglist>

**Q2. How much money should I bring?**

Once you get to Iraq, accommodation, food, transportation, and all activities are covered. Please note- Visa for those holding European, UK, Canadian & American Passports will cost approximately USD\$75-100 which will need to be paid in cash upon arrival at the airport in Iraq.

Please ensure you have the right amount of cash available.

Please note that medical expenses, RT-PCR tests (if any), shopping, laundry, extra luggage charges etc, are **NOT** covered.

We have found that approximately £200 or \$250 is usually sufficient to cover these additional expenses.

**Q3. How will I exchange my money?**

There are exchange bureaus near the Haram and the Organisers can also exchange money for you. Approach your mentors with your requests.

**Q4. How often will we get to go shopping?**

This will be specified in the timetable. If there is a need for further shopping time, you should obtain permission from the Organisers who will ensure that the extra shopping time does not clash with other activities on the timetable.

In previous years, we have found that the amount of time allocated for shopping has been more than enough.

**Q5. How will media with me in it be used & saved?**

Images and videos of the course will be taken and will be used for various purposes as outlined in the Terms and Conditions, including for promotional use. Photographs and/or recordings of you will only be taken with your consent in accordance with the Terms and Conditions to which you agreed when applying for the course. If you would like to opt out and do not wish to be recorded, please notify your mentor.

**Q6. What is the role and duty of mentors?**

Mentors are there to provide extra help and support on the course and ensure you get the most out of your trip.

**Q7. What is the role and duty of the teachers?**

The teachers will be conducting daily classes, giving spiritual and informative talks, introducing the shrines and holding discussions. They will also be informally mixing with the participants to answer all their questions and get to know them and their challenges better. This is one of the distinguishing features of the course.

**Q8. Whom do I speak to if I feel uncomfortable with any individual or aspect during the course?**

We will endeavour to ensure that you are at ease throughout this journey, however if at any point you feel pressured or distressed, please do not hesitate to contact firstly your **Mentor**. If you do not feel comfortable sharing with your mentor, reach out to the **Course Director** - currently Sayyid Hani. Alternatively, reach out to the **Project Co-ordinator**. All individuals' contact information has been shared previously and will be added on to the WhatsApp Communication groups.

If you have any further questions or require clarification on any of the issues, please email us at [MadinahBabCourse@world-federation.org](mailto:MadinahBabCourse@world-federation.org)

**\*\* We hope you have a wonderfully unique and spiritually uplifting experience inshAllah. \*\***