



Durham
University

Theology & Religion

Postgraduate study opportunities 2012/13

World-class taught and research degrees to PhD

Ranked 2nd

in *The Times University Rankings 2012*.



One
of the leading institutions
for the study of Theology
and Religion in Britain.

Theology & Religion

The Department of Theology and Religion has flourished at Durham University since its foundation in 1832, and has an established international reputation as one of the leading departments in its field.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

In the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise, the Department was ranked at number one among all departments of Theology and Religion in the UK in two categories:

- The highest percentage of publications at 4* (world-leading research)
- The highest Grade Point Average for these publications.

This is a major achievement which confirms the Department's position as one of the world's leading institutions for the study of Theology and Religion. The Department's traditional strengths lie in the fields of biblical studies and Christian theology, where it continues to provide teaching and research in depth and breadth second to none in the UK. In recent years the Department has also broadened its range of expertise to include Early Jewish studies, the sociology and anthropology of religion, theological ethics, historical theology and Catholic and Anglican studies.

The Department enjoys many cross-departmental and interdisciplinary links around the University, as well as strong

collaborative relationships with the denominational theological institutions based in and around Durham.

There are 21 full-time, research active staff in the Department, making us one of the largest and most influential departments in our field in the UK. We have a strong community of about 180 postgraduate students including large numbers of international students and a significant proportion of part-time students.

The postgraduate community is supported by our 11 regular research seminar series, along with interdisciplinary seminars and other conferences and colloquia which place Durham at the centre of international scholarship. There is also a full professional development and training programme available for postgraduates, including opportunities to work as a Teaching Assistant or Research Assistant.

Our home, Abbey House, right next to Durham Cathedral, is a stunningly beautiful and immensely exciting place to study and to pursue research in Theology and Religion.

POSTGRADUATE DEGREES

The following degrees are currently offered, among which is the newly developed doctoral programme in Theology and Ministry (DThM):

- MA
- MLitt
- DThM
- PhD
- Dip.

MAIN RESEARCH AREAS

Old Testament

We supervise research in a wide range of both traditional and distinctive approaches to Old Testament studies, including the historical, critical, and theological. Our research staff have special interests in biblical theology, biblical ethics and spirituality; the Septuagint and Jewish reception and interpretation of Scripture; the wisdom literature; textual criticism; and biblical hermeneutics.



New Testament

Durham has a long tradition of outstanding New Testament scholarship, and supervision is available in almost every area of New Testament studies, including the Jewish and Graeco-Roman contexts of early Christianity; exegesis of New Testament texts; New Testament theology and ethics; the New Testament and contemporary hermeneutics; the social-scientific interpretation of the New Testament; and the New Testament and film.

Judaism

Durham's research strengths, especially in Second Temple Judaism, give opportunities for research in many areas, including the Jewish Diaspora in the Roman Empire, post-biblical Judaism, Aramaic Targums, Septuagint, Talmud and Midrash, Jewish Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, Dead Sea Scrolls, and Jews and the Church Fathers. We also offer teaching of several ancient languages, including Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac and Ethiopic.

Catholic, Anglican and Orthodox Studies

Durham scholars are engaging with historical and modern theology in all three of these traditions. With its focus in the Centre for Catholic Studies, there is taking place a renewed scholarly engagement with contemporary Catholicism marked by critical fidelity, ecumenical hospitality and academic rigour. The newly established Michael Ramsey Programme for Anglican Studies builds on the Department's close historical links with Durham Cathedral, via the Van Mildert Professorship, and with Cranmer Hall. Orthodox studies, grounded in patristic and Byzantine studies, constitute yet another major research strength of the Department unrivalled in the UK.

History of Christianity and Christian Theology

Durham is a well-established and highly successful centre for the study of the history of Christianity and Christian theology. Particular areas of specialism include Greek and Latin patristic studies, the history of Christianity in late antiquity, Byzantine theology, early Irish and Northumbrian church history, and the late medieval, Reformation and post-Reformation churches.

Theological Ethics

Staff research interests enable us to offer supervision across many areas of this growing discipline, including biblical theology and ethics, the foundations of Christian ethics and moral theology, as well as social and political ethics, the ethics of marriage and family, ethics and technology, and bioethics.

Systematic and Philosophical Theology

There is a long and distinguished history of systematic theology and the study of Christian doctrine in Durham. We are able to offer supervision in every area of systematic theology, as well as in many interdisciplinary subjects which relate theology to other fields of enquiry. Philosophical theology and the study of the relationship of philosophy to theology have also been traditional strengths of Durham theology, with current staff research interests including many aspects of classical, medieval and modern philosophical theology, as well as the encounter of theology with continental and American philosophical traditions.

Study of Religion and Spirituality

Durham's focus in the study of religion is on anthropological and sociological perspectives in the analysis of mainstream traditions and alternative religious movements, and on methods and issues in the study of contemporary religion. The Department hosts the Centre for Death and Life Studies. Specialist staff interests include Mormonism; death, dying and disposal; shamanism; religion and emotion; contemporary evangelicalism and post-evangelicalism; and religion and generational change. The academic study of spirituality is also clearly profiled in Durham, with scholarly expertise including spirituality and Scripture; the history of Christian spirituality; Roman Catholic, Anglican and Eastern Orthodox spiritual traditions; and the social scientific study of spirituality; and spirituality and health.

RECENT THESIS TITLES

- "Reading Joshua as Christian Scripture"
- "Image and glory of God, glory of Man: Evangelicals and Paul's Hermeneutics of gender in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16"
- "Hermeneutics and moral imagination: The implications of Gadamer's truth and method for Christian ethics"
- "God, time and eternity: Philosophical foundations for a defence of divine timelessness"
- "Death rites in Korea: The Confucian-Christian Interplay"
- "Mystical strategies and performative discourse in the theologia mystica of Teresa of Avila: A Wittgensteinian analysis".

See a list of current postgraduates' research interests at www.durham.ac.uk/theology.religion/postgrad/currentpostgrads

DOCTOR OF THEOLOGY AND MINISTRY

The Doctor of Theology and Ministry programme delivers doctoral level training and research opportunities in the interdisciplinary field of Practical Theology. We recruit practitioners in Christian ministry (lay and ordained) who wish to engage in professional development by critical reflection on practice in the light of theology and the human and social sciences. The programme is offered by the Department of Theology and Religion, with the support of the denominational theological training institutions in Durham: Cranmer Hall (Anglican) and the Wesley Study Centre (Methodist). The DThM is normally undertaken by part-time study over six years. It combines both a taught course element (years 1–2) and a research thesis element (years 3–6). Integral to the delivery of the programme is the annual summer school combined with ongoing research supervision.



Current examples of DThM research projects include:

- The pastoral care of self-harming women prisoners
- The re-shaping of Methodist circuits to facilitate mission
- The models of transformation suggested in 'reality TV' compared to those offered in typical Christian preaching
- The experience of Roman Catholic priests and people working collaboratively in multi-parish curacies.

Further information may be obtained from www.durham.ac.uk/theology.religion/postgrad/researchdegrees/dmin

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH FACILITIES

Library facilities for Theology and Religion in Durham are extensive, and the holdings at the Main Library are only the beginning. Our next-door neighbour, Durham Cathedral, houses two theological libraries: the Sharp Library, which focuses on modern and pastoral theology, and the Meissen Library, the largest collection of German-language theological materials in Britain. Some of the College libraries (notably St Chad's College and St John's College) hold extensive theological collections.

The Department has library resources of its own, in particular in Hebrew and Jewish studies. The historic library at Palace Green holds the University's Special Collections, including extensive collections of rare books and manuscripts of particular interest to students of Theology and Religion. Online research resources are increasingly an essential part of any researcher's work, and Durham subscribes to all the principal online databases relevant to our field.

We currently have 33 dedicated carrels or study spaces available to our research students, including some reserved for sharing between part-time students. Eleven subject-specific research seminars take place on a regular basis and underpin the culture of the Department. Postgraduates also hold their own regular workshops for the presentation and discussion of research. The Colleges also hold postgraduate colloquia allowing valuable cross-fertilisation of ideas. There are opportunities for study at Duke University, North Carolina, through our postgraduate exchange scheme.

STAFF RESEARCH INTERESTS

These are reflected in the main areas of research listed below. The following are some examples:

- Old Testament: the International Critical Commentary on Ecclesiastes and a major introduction to the Christian Bible
- New Testament: a major project on the formation of the Canonical and Non-Canonical Gospels
- Patristic and Byzantine Studies: an exploration of 'transformative listening' in the Church Fathers
- Catholic Studies: a major project on 'Receptive Ecumenism'
- Study of Religions: a project on emotion, identity and religious communities
- Theological Ethics: bioethics and genetics.

TYPICAL ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR RESEARCH DEGREES

- MA by Research: Normally 2:1 Honours degree in a relevant subject
- MLitt: Normally 2:1 Honours degree in a relevant subject
- DThM: Normally a good Masters degree in Theology and Religious

Studies or a related subject. It is especially suitable for those who have completed the MA in Theology and Ministry at Cranmer Hall, Wesley Study Centre or Ushaw College

- PhD: Normally a good Masters degree in a relevant subject.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

- IELTS of 7.0 or equivalent, with no band below 6.5.

We welcome applications from holders of international qualifications. For advice on the equivalency of international qualifications and further information on English language requirements, please contact our International Office on international.office@durham.ac.uk or visit our website at www.durham.ac.uk/international

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

There are several sources of funding available for postgraduate study within the Department of Theology and Religion. The two main sources are:

- AHRC doctoral scholarships
- Durham Doctoral Studentships.

Some other sources of funding are also available. For further information, visit our funding webpages at

www.durham.ac.uk/theology.religion/postgrad/funding

The University also has a range of funding opportunities for postgraduate students. To find out what support you could be eligible to receive see our online funding database at www.durham.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/fees/search

TAUGHT PROGRAMMES Graduate Diploma in Theology and Religion

This programme is ideal for students who hold a BA (Honours) degree, or equivalent, in a discipline other than Theology/Religious Studies, but who wish to acquire knowledge of theology and religion at a level which would permit them to undertake further study in the area. This programme can be thought of as a one-year 'conversion course', or as a 'condensed' degree in theology. It is a free-standing qualification which students may study for their own personal interest, but it can also act as a stepping-stone to postgraduate study in the field.

Typical modules include:

- Literature and Theology of the Old Testament
- New Testament Theology: Paul and John
- The Making of Modern Christianity: Medieval and Reformation Theology
- God, Freedom and the Soul
- Death, Ritual and Belief.

MA in Theology and Religion

The MA in Theology and Religion serves both the specific needs of students focussed on progressing towards doctoral research and those of students looking to continue relatively broad-based studies in Theology and Religion to Level four, perhaps in support of a career in teaching. Like the other MAs, it involves six modules: a module in research methods; three optional modules chosen from over two dozen options; and a double-module dissertation.



MA in Biblical Studies

The MA in Biblical Studies involves six modules: a module in research methods; two optional modules in Biblical Studies; one further optional module (which may or may not be in Biblical Studies); and a 12,000–15,000 word dissertation. The MA is also a stepping-stone to doctoral work.

Typical modules include:

- Advanced Hebrew Texts
- Advanced Aramaic and Syriac
- Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament
- The New Testament and the Social Sciences
- Paul and his Interpreters
- Theological Interpretation of Scripture
- The Bible in the Cinema.

MA in Christian Theology

The MA in Christian Theology involves six modules: a module in research methods; two optional modules in Christian Theology; one further optional module (which may or may not be in Christian Theology); and a 12,000–15,000 word dissertation. This MA is also a stepping-stone to doctoral work.

Students on this programme also have the opportunity, if they wish, to specialise either in Catholic or Anglican Studies.

Typical modules include:

- Theology and Ascetic Practice in the Ancient Catholic Tradition
- Transformative Listening
- Christian Northumbria 600–800
- Worship and Reform in Britain 1530–1662
- Liturgy and Sacramentality
- Christian Gender
- Conceiving Change in Contemporary Catholicism
- Twentieth Century Catholic Theology.

MA in Religion and Society

The MA in Religion and Society involves six modules: a module in research methods; two optional modules in Religion and Society; one further optional module (which may or may not be in Religion and Society); and a 12,000–15,000 word dissertation. This MA is also a stepping-stone to doctoral work.

Typical modules include:

- Social Scientific Methods in the Study of Religion
- Ritual, Symbolism and Belief in the Anthropology of Religion
- Religion, Modernity and Identity
- Christian Formation, Faith Development and Critical Education
- The Public Understanding of Science and Religion
- The Bible in the Cinema
- Theology, Ethics and Medicine
- Literature and Religion.

MA in Faith and Globalisation

This interdisciplinary programme is intended to provide the rigorous, and research-driven development of knowledge and understanding of the interrelations of faith/religion and globalisation. Starting from an agenda-setting module, students will be able to explore such interconnections in an advanced fashion across different approaches and topics, choosing selected modules from various departments in the humanities and social sciences. Political, economic, legal, and ethical issues that have emerged as religious actors become part of global processes, are addressed through questions of identity, freedom, rights, (economic and social) justice, peace, science and technology, and sustainability, among others. Reflection is also stimulated on how knowledge and social practices construct the different actors, and how the normative claims of each party either allow for or refuse dialogical engagements.

MA/MSc in Spirituality, Theology and Health

These programmes focus on the interdisciplinary and inter-professional issues that emerge in the study of spirituality and well-being, particularly in the healthcare context. It is possible to take an MA or MSc, depending upon the balance of theology and social science options selected. However, all students will engage in theological reflection on a relevant topic and undertake a double module research dissertation, as well as taking the taught core module on spirituality, religion and health. Both programmes provide a stepping-stone to doctoral work.

Optional modules in Theology include:

- The Public Understanding of Science & Religion
- Resources, Methods & Interpretation
- Theology, Ethics & Medicine
- Social Scientific Methods in the Study of Religion
- Specialised Aspects of Practical Theology
- Ritual, Symbolism and Belief in the Anthropology of Religion
- Spirituality, Anthropology, Life and Death.

Optional modules in Health and Anthropology include:

- Quantitative Health Research Methods
- Qualitative Health Research Methods
- Assessment Theory and Practice
- Theory, methods and principles in Medical Anthropology
- Advanced Theory in Medical Anthropology
- Advanced Perspectives on Mental Health and Drug Use.

TYPICAL ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

- Diploma: Normally a 2:1 degree in any discipline, or equivalent
- MA in Theology and Religion, MA in Biblical Studies, MA in Christian Theology, MA in Religion and Society: Normally a good 2:1 or equivalent in Theology and/or Religious Studies. Exceptions can be made for graduates of other disciplines who can demonstrate relevant experience of Theology or Religious Studies.



ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

- IELTS 7.0 (with no band below 6.5), or equivalent.

We welcome applications from holders of international qualifications. For advice on the equivalency of international qualifications and further information on English language requirements, please contact our International Office on international.office@durham.ac.uk or visit our website at www.durham.ac.uk/international

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

- AHRC MA scholarships
- Durham University MA scholarship scheme.

There are several sources of funding available for postgraduate study within the Department of Theology and Religion.

For further information, visit our funding webpages at www.durham.ac.uk/theology.religion/postgrad

The University also has a range of funding opportunities for postgraduate students. To find out what support you could be eligible to receive see our online funding database at www.durham.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/fees/search

CAREERS AND EMPLOYABILITY

A significant number of our graduates find employment in academic institutions (universities and seminaries) around the world. For some examples of academic careers in Theology launched at Durham, go to www.durham.ac.uk/theology.religion/postgrad/why.durham/academic.careers Others go into teaching, church ministry, the caring professions, and many other professional fields.

For further information on career options and employability, including the results of the Destination of Leavers survey, student and employer testimonials and details of work experience and study abroad opportunities, please visit www.durham.ac.uk/theology.religion/postgraduate/employability

KEY INFORMATION

The current number of postgraduates in the Department is approximately 180. This includes about 20 in the MA programmes and about 160 in the research programmes. There are 21 full-time academic staff in the Department.

“The Department has an established international reputation as one of the leading departments in its field.”

Jeremy William Bergstrom,
PhD Historical Theology (Patristics).

Name:
Jeremy William Bergstrom

Home Country:
USA

Postgraduate Course:
PhD Historical Theology
(Patristics)

I was first referred to Durham’s Department of Theology and Religion by my research supervisor for my MTh in the USA, as Durham for many years has been a centre for excellence in Patristics research.

I was attracted to this course by the research interests and quality of the Department; which is both personable and bursting with staff that are at the top of their academic field – a combination I couldn’t pass up, and for me the choice was clear.

The highlights of my course here at Durham have been the regular meetings with my supervisor, and the casual theological dialogue with students from other research specialties in the Department.

Durham has a strong collegial atmosphere, which is constructive yet challenging. But, for me, the best aspect of being a postgraduate at Durham is the combination of a top-notch department in an unparalleled environment. Every day I work with the splendid Cathedral right outside my window, so I am constantly mindful of the City’s rich heritage. My supervisory team has been exceptionally helpful and always available if I have had any problems. I can’t reiterate enough how much they have benefitted me both personally and academically.



Contact details

For further information on taught programmes or research degrees contact:

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Postgraduate Admissions Secretary

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