



University of Chester

Programme Specification MA Theology (Master of Arts, KEDS) 2010 - 2011

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1. Final Award

MA

2. Programme Title

Theology (Master of Arts, KEDS)

3. Awarding Institution / Body

University of Chester

4. Validating Institution

University of Chester

5. Programme Delivered By

King's Evangelical Divinity School

6. Location of Delivery

King's Evangelical Divinity School eCampus (distance education)

7. Intermediate Awards

- Postgraduate Certificate
- Postgraduate Diploma

8. Frameworks

- Postgraduate

9. Programme Accredited By

University of Chester

10. Subject Benchmarking Group(s)

Theology and Religious Studies (www.qaa.ac.uk)

Master's students are expected to have attained the skills indicated for QAA Level 6 before proceeding to Master's Level work.

11. UCAS Code

12. JACS Code

13. Mode of Study

- Full-time
- Part-time

14. Forms of Study

- Distance

15. Normal length of study

1-2

16. Maximum length of Study

6 Years

17. Frequency of Intake/ starting month

Variable -

18. Criminal Records Bureau Check Required by Students

- No

19. Faculty

- Humanities

20. Date of Validation / Revalidation

- June 2010

21. Name of Subject / Programme Assessment Board

Theology and Religious Studies Subject Assessment Board

22. Subject Area(s)

Theology and Religious Studies

23. Educational Aims of the Programme

The aims of the MA in Theology are to:

- offer students a thorough, detailed and scholarly examination of the history, thought and expressions of Evangelicalism, with a special emphasis on current trends and developments within the movement
- provide a challenging course to students of a variety of ages and academic backgrounds to develop and expand their range of theological skills and knowledge.
- enable students to undertake a range of learning experiences that are supported by a variety of teaching approaches and delivered in a supportive, learning and Christian environment.
- offer to students the opportunity to explore and reflect critically upon theological studies with a particular regard to the richness of Evangelical practice and expression.
- develop an informed awareness of the dynamic nature of the Evangelical tradition and a developed facility in the theological task of subjecting this tradition to a process of critical testing and renewal.
- draw on a variety of academic disciplines and discourses to enable students to reflect critically on Evangelical faith and practice.
- foster in students an ability to relate areas of Theology to broader areas of human understanding and life.
- use the research interests of staff to inform and enhance the students' learning experience.
- promote the development of key transferable skills that will assist students in their career options.
- equip students to undertake original research at doctoral level.
- help students develop a wide range of intellectual abilities and skills which will enable them to make a significant contribution in their chosen careers, particularly academic research.

24. Programme Structure and Features; Levels, Modules, Credits and Awards

120 credits are completed from a range of 20-credit modules. Two are mandatory core modules and four are electives.

Core Modules:

- + TH7601 Study and Research Methods (20 credits)
- + TH7602 History, Thought and Expressions of Global Evangelicalism (20 credits)

Electives (students choose any four):

- + TH7603 Case Study: Evangelicalism in Latin America (20 credits)
- + TH7604 Case Study: Evangelicalism in Africa (20 credits)
- + TH7605 Case Study: Evangelicalism in Asia (20 credits)
- + TH7606 Case Study: Evangelicalism in Western Europe and North America (20 credits)
- + TH7607 Biblical Theology (20 credits)
- + TH7608 Evangelical Approaches to Biblical Hermeneutics (20 credits)
- + TH7609 Theological Studies in the Book of Romans (20 credits)

The final part of the MA programme is the dissertation:

- + TH7615 Dissertation of 15000 words (60 credits)

Code	Level	Name	Credit	Single Honours	Major	Minor	Equal
TH7601	7	Study and Research Methods	20	Comp.	N/A	N/A	N/A
TH7602	7	History, Thought and Expressions of Global Evangelicalism	20	Comp.	N/A	N/A	N/A

TH7603	7	Case Study: Evangelicalism in Latin America	20	Optional	N/A	N/A	N/A
TH7604	7	Case Study: Evangelicalism in Africa	20	Optional	N/A	N/A	N/A
TH7605	7	Case Study: Evangelicalism in Asia	20	Optional	N/A	N/A	N/A
TH7606	7	Case Study: Evangelicalism in Western Europe and North America	20	Optional	N/A	N/A	N/A
TH7607	7	Biblical Theology	20	Optional	N/A	N/A	N/A
TH7608	7	Evangelical Approaches to Biblical Hermeneutics	20	Optional	N/A	N/A	N/A
TH7609	7	Theological Studies in the Book of Romans	20	Optional	N/A	N/A	N/A
TH7615	7	Dissertation	60	Comp.	N/A	N/A	N/A

180 credits: Master of Arts

25. Subject Benchmark Statements

Master's students are expected to have attained the skills indicated for QAA Level 6 before proceeding to postgraduate level work.

The Theology and Religious Studies Benchmark Statement published by the QAA in 2000 and revised for 2007 details the range of subject knowledge (TRS Benchmark 3.1), the qualities of mind (3.2), and generic skills acquired and developed in TRS degree programmes. These are listed below mapped, illustratively, against modules in the programme.

C1 TRS Benchmark - subject knowledge

(i) A broadly based core, together with the wider context required for the subject area covered by the programme in question; and specialised study in depth of some aspects of the discipline or field. This implies not just the mastery of data but also the setting of these data within a theoretical framework which includes critical analysis and debate about how to understand and structure the raw data into a coherent whole. All modules.

(iii) The reading, analysis and interpretation of texts, sometimes in the original languages, particularly texts that have been sacred to one or more practising communities. This study will often focus both on the historical context which generated the text(s) and on hermeneutical questions concerning its meaning and application for the appropriate community of believers in the present, or for other readers today. (Biblical Theology, Theological Studies in the Book of Romans, Theological Studies in Matthew, Theological Studies in Revelation)

(iv) Engagement with some of the major religious thinkers, prophets, teachers, ascetics, mystics, healers or leaders through their extant work or subsequent influence. (History, Thought and Expressions of Global Evangelicalism, Case Studies in Evangelicalism)

(v) The application of a variety of critical methods of study, often adapted from those of other

disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, to the study of texts, practices, religious communities as social or cultural entities, or their diverse art forms. All modules.

(vi) The history of the particular discipline(s) covered by the programme, including the major theories, movements and thinkers. (All modules, especially History, Thought and Expressions of Global Evangelicalism)

(vii) Ethics, morality and values. All religions have certain expectations in these areas, and the student will include them in the study along with other aspects of the religion. (Case Studies in Evangelicalism)

C2 TRS Benchmark – qualities of mind

(a) The ability to understand how people have thought and acted in contexts other than the student's own, how beliefs, doctrines and practices have developed within particular social and cultural contexts and how religious traditions have changed over time. All modules.

(b) The ability to read and use texts both critically and empathetically, whilst addressing such questions as genre, content, context, perspective, purpose, original and potential meaning, and the effect of translation if the text is not read in the original language. (Biblical Theology, Theological Studies in the Book of Romans, Theological Studies in Matthew, Theological Studies in Revelation)

(c) The appreciation of the complexity of different mentalities, social behaviours and aesthetic responses, and of the ways they have been shaped by beliefs and values, and conversely, how beliefs, sacred texts and art forms have been shaped by society and politics. All modules.

(d) Sensitivity to the problems of religious language and experience, and to issues of multiple and conflicting interpretations of language and symbols, texts and traditions. Simplistic, literalising or doctrinaire explanations are less likely to be advanced by a student of Theology and Religious Studies. All modules

(e) Appreciation of both the interconnectedness of and internal tensions within a system of beliefs and practices. (History, Thought and Expressions of Global Evangelicalism, Case Studies in Evangelicalism)

(f) Basic critical and analytical skills; a recognition that statements should be tested, that evidence and arguments are subject to assessment, that the interpreter's role demands critical evaluation. All modules.

(g) The ability to employ a variety of methods of study in analysing material, to think independently, set tasks and solve problems. All modules.

(h) The capacity to give a clear and accurate account of a subject, marshal arguments in a mature way and engage in debate and dialogue with respect for the opposite case or different viewpoint. All modules.

C3 TRS Benchmark – generic skills

The Statement also lists these generic (transferable) skills acquired through the study of Theology and Religious Studies:

- * independence of mind and initiative
- * capacity for reflexive learning
- * capacity to modify, suspend or otherwise change position when warranted
- * ability to gather, evaluate and synthesise different types of information
- * analytical ability and the capacity to formulate questions and solve problems
- * presentation skills, both oral and written
- * IT skills, including word-processing, communicating by email and using the web, accessing

information from electronic as well as non-electronic sources

- * writing skills, including accurate referencing and clarity of expression
- * ability to attend closely to the meaning of written documents
- * ability to read texts in a different language

At level 7 some of these are prerequisite for study. These skills are developed and are reflected in the assessment criteria.

The Statement also lists these as skills:

- * empathy and imaginative insight, with a tolerance of diverse positions
- * self-discipline
- * ability to attend to others and have respect for others' views
- * commitment to lifelong learning
- * teamwork skills
- * ability to work with others

These are developed through the learning ethos of the department and specifically through formative learning methods such as assignment proposal development, dissertation research and essay writing. Self-discipline and self direction are particularly required in the supervisor-led 15,000 word dissertation.

26. On successful completion of the programme students will have achieved the following outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

By the end of this programme, students should be able to:

- Identify, understand and analyse complex and diverse approaches to theological reflection in Evangelicalism.
- demonstrate a critical and scholarly competence in communicating the subject with respect to extended writing.
- demonstrate a critical understanding and competence in other academic disciplines relevant to the Theology modules in this programme (notably Philosophy, Ethics, History, Social Sciences)
- read and use primary texts both critically and empathetically
- evaluate the significance of major religious, social, cultural and philosophical movements for Christian, particularly Evangelical, faith and practice
- engage with a range of issues relating to personal, communal and public life.
- engage productively with the research literature on interactions within and outside Evangelical scholarship.

Thinking or Cognitive Skills

By the end of this programme, students should be able to:

- read and use primary texts both critically and empathetically
- write with appropriate scholarly and critical nuance, persuasion and style
- evaluate the significance of major religious, social, cultural and philosophical movements for Christian, particularly Evangelical, faith and practice

- engage with a range of issues relating to personal, communal and public life.
- engage productively with the research literature on interactions within and outside Evangelical scholarship.

Practical Skills

By the end of this programme, students should be able to:

- demonstrate an awareness of the variety of overarching methodologies available in theological studies and an ability to situate themselves in relation to this range of methodologies
- develop a systematic understanding and awareness of recognised problems, insight, or ideas that are at the forefront of Evangelical studies.
- critically evaluate the history, thought, and affects of the Evangelical movement.
- demonstrate an ability to draw on a variety of academic discourses in reflecting critically on global expressions of Evangelical thought and practice
- offer informed comment from a theological perspective on contemporary issues in key global case studies
help students objectively critique and offer originality in the application of knowledge with respect to the various components of Evangelicalism
- evaluate methodologies, develop critiques, and where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses in the assessment of Theology.
make independent and imaginative use of theological information and resources
- demonstrate the development and extension of practical skills in areas such as pastoral care, Christian communication and leadership.

Key Skills

- Communication
- Application of Number
- Information Literacy and Technology
- Improving own learning and performance
- Working with others
- Problem solving

Transferable Professional Skills

- **Communication:** identify relevant sources of information, critically evaluate the material and present their own interpretation in a coherent way, showing an ability to understand complex lines of reasoning;
- **Personal Responsibility:** the exercise of initiative, self-directed learning and discipline in approaching postgraduate level academic study;
- **IT:** use IT effectively to aid efficient searching, evaluation and selection of information and to present work using a format and style to suit the purpose, subject and audience;
- **Problem solving:** select information effectively to tackle a particular issue or problem and present information clearly and accurately, with evidence to support their conclusions;
- **Working with others:** establish and effectively maintain co-operative working relationships and negotiate and develop effective ways of presenting outcomes;
- **Improving own learning:** identify future targets, manage time effectively and critically reflect on what and how they are learning.

27. Learning and Teaching Methods

A range of learning and teaching methods are used within the context of distance learning / online eCampus (sometimes called "blended learning"). Learning and teaching are thus structured in the following ways:

- Distance learning (or open learning) in which students are supplied with recorded lectures, audio interviews, written study notes, guided reading, and other suitable material. This material is provided online via the eCampus but where necessary can also be provided through post. The learning is supported by individual contact with tutors by e-mail, eCampus interaction, and where appropriate, telephone and/or face-to-face meetings. Students are also encouraged (but not required) to partake in educational conferences
- Occasional conferences which are organised in order to give students the experience of a wider range of scholarship and the possibility of participating in academic discussion and debate with a wider peer group.
- Supervision of dissertations involving regular contact with a supervisor by e-mail, telephone, face-to-face, or by post.
- Research seminars which are organised where appropriate to give students working on dissertations the experience of presenting and discussing their research in a peer environment.
- Tutorials as appropriate for students embarking on the dissertation phase of the programme.

At level 7, students work with responsibility for their own independent learning. There is emphasis upon research level study and examination of subjects from a scholarly and nuanced position.

28. Assessment Strategy and Methods

Assessment is by assignments of a minimum of 4000 words for individual modules and a 15000 word thesis for the dissertation module. However, assessment methods are chosen for fitness of purpose with the modular learning outcomes and so some may vary from this prevailing pattern.. Where appropriate, students are offered the opportunity of presenting coursework in alternative forms to traditional essays

29. Graduate Characteristics

A wide range of careers are pursued by people who have studied at King's. These typically include Christian pastoral ministry and related paths within the church but also encompasses a wide range of nonreligious careers. The program is also suitable for students intending to proceed to doctoral research or further academic study.

The skills developed in this programme include include:

- Cultural understanding
- Open-mindedness - less likely to judge others and more likely to listen
- Researching and interviewing skills through fieldwork
- Confidence in own abilities
- Academic, intellectual and social development
- IT skills
- Writing skills
- Presentation
- Organising own workload and meeting deadlines
- Working independently

30. Admissions Requirements

Students applying for the MA programme must demonstrate the ability to undertake a Masters degree of this nature successfully. This is usually understood to be a good undergraduate degree in a subject in Theology or a related subject (2:2 or above). In some cases, students who are able to demonstrate an

ability to undertake postgraduate studies without these requirements are considered on an individual basis.

An IELTS score of 7.0 is required where English is not the applicant's first language.

The school recognises the place of prior learning (APL) and prior experiential learning (APEL) in the recruitment of students to this programme.

All candidates must complete an application form and satisfy King's entrance requirements. All candidates must supply an appropriate reference and may be interviewed by the Programme Leader or nominated substitute.

31. Equality and Diversity

It is the policy of King's Evangelical Divinity School to recognise and encourage the variety of contributions that are made by all who work and study at the college. King's does not turn down applications on confessional grounds, accepting students from a variety of religious and nonreligious backgrounds. The school complies with existing equality legislation, aiming to provide equality of opportunity for all prospective students.

32. Additional Information
