

University of Chester

Programme Specification
Practical Theology MA
2023 - 2024

1. Final Award

Master of Arts

2. Programme Title

Practical Theology

3. Internal Programme Title

Practical Theology

4. Intermediate / Exit Awards

4a. Award	4b. Title
Postgraduate Certificate	Practical Theology
Postgraduate Diploma	Practical Theology

5. Awarding Institution / Body

University of Chester

6. Programme Delivered By

Missio Dei College

7. Location of Delivery

Misio Dei College and by Distance Learning

8. Framework

Postgraduate (Taught)

9. Mode of Study

Full-time and Part-time

10. Forms of Study

Distance, Residential and Open,

11. Normal length of study

2 years part time, 1 year full time

12. Maximum length of study

6 Years

13. Frequency of intake / starting month

Annual - September

14. UCAS Code

N/A

15. JACS and/or HECoS Code

V600

16. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check Required?

No

17. Faculty & Department

17a. Faculty

Arts and Humanities

17b. Department

Theology & Religious Studies

18. Subject Benchmarking Group

Theology and Religious Studies

19. Professional Recognition By (if applicable)

N/A

20. Name of Module Assessment Board (MAB)

Theology and Religious Studies

21. Date of Approval

Thursday 8th June 2023

22. Educational Aims of the Programme

The Aims of this programme are

- To offer a flexible, full-time or part-time postgraduate degree programme in selected areas of Practical Theology articulated in relation to the critical methods practiced at the forefront of the discipline.
- To develop an advanced ability to handle written sources and empirical data using appropriate critical awareness, methods and controls; to marshal coherent and effective arguments and communicate conclusions in oral and written forms; and, for those taking the full Masters awards, to integrate these skills in the production of the Master's dissertation.
- To enable students to develop and demonstrate a range of technical skills arising within the subject and cognate disciplines including a range of approaches to textual historical, hermeneutical and cultural issues, and both quantitative and qualitative approaches to the investigation of individual and social experience and behaviour, and respond critically to their use by others.
- To relate research and learning to key areas of theological and ecclesiological praxis.

23. Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

Following successful completion of the programme, students should be able to:

- Address analytically a range of current questions in Practical Theology possibly focused around a study specialism, applying an advanced, systematic and critical understanding, and to interpret a range of sources using a variety of tools, critical approaches and methodological approaches from the forefront of the discipline. Knowledge will be further deepened through the development of a 18,000-word dissertation (e.g. TH7402, TH7441, TH7444, TH7446).
- Relate their more specialist knowledge to the wider discourses of Christian Theology and praxis and/or within a study specialism and be able to articulate the possible significance of their insights and research findings for the wider theological and professional communities (e.g. TH7405, TH7406, TH7408, TH7409, TH7411, TH7413, TH7415, TH7416, TH7429, TH7436, TH7437, TH7438, TH7439, TH7444).

Cognitive Skills

Following successful completion of the programme, students should be able to:

- Identify, locate, interpret and analyse primary texts and advanced secondary sources with confidence at a research level, possibly as more particularly required within a study specialism, including articles from major peer-reviewed journals, scholarly monographs, historical and archival data, and engage with them critically and creatively (e.g. TH7405, TH7406, TH7407, TH7408, TH7409, TH7411, TH7413, TH7414, TH7416, TH7429, TH7436, TH7437, TH7438, TH7439).
- Exercise a critical awareness of their own and contemporary scholars' differing stances, representing them with fairness and integrity and placing them, competently, within or between traditional outlooks or positions, and justifying both analysis and synthesis in relation to the contextual and developmental nature of intellectual, social, aesthetic and political responses (e.g. TH7402, TH7441, TH7446).
- Manipulate, represent, evaluate and explore complex and potentially incomplete knowledge from the forefront of the field and/or any study specialism chosen by constructing sustained and specifically theological arguments, drawing upon a range of sources and data, and routinely applying more than one mode of analysis to form new hypotheses. These skills will be particularly developed in the independent study module and/or the dissertation (e.g. TH7402, TH7441).

Practical and Professional Skills

Following successful completion of the programme, students should be able to:

- Apply at a professional level critical, analytical and presentational skills, showing a routine instinct to test evidence, assess arguments, evaluate commitments and detect bias.
- Employ a variety of methods, including emic and etic approaches, to solve problems, and to present results creatively.
- Make advanced use of library, IT, computer and internet skills to identify and locate sources, capture, analyse and present data, represent and manipulate knowledge, communicate with others, organise and backup work and operate safely online. Students must be able to use information technology and computer skills for data capture, to identify and retrieve material and support research and presentations.
- Exercise personal responsibility and decision-making, necessary for employment and ministerial vocations, and to apply professional ethical standards to the gathering and use of research data.
- Improve their own learning and performance and develop the self-evaluation and reflective practice required to continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills appropriate to a professional context.
- Make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (e.g. peer reviewed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline such as writings of theologians, historical sources/writings relevant to the study of church history, documents from key Christian conferences, etc.)

All of these skills may be related to each of the modules, i.e. TH7402, TH7405, TH7406, TH7407, TH7408, TH7409, TH7411, TH7413, TH7414, TH7416, TH7429, TH7436, TH7437, TH7438, TH7439, TH7441, TH7444, TH7446

Communication Skills

Following successful completion of the programme, students should be able to:

- Deal with complex issues systematically, sensitively and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate information, ideas, problems, solutions and conclusions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences (as appropriate).
- Use clear expressions and observe correct academic form.
- Formulate a coherent argument, with appropriate use of data and evidence, and with an awareness of the implications of divergent views.
- Where appropriate, work with others to solve problems and/or reach coherent conclusions.

All of these skills may be related to each of the modules, i.e. TH7402, TH7405, TH7406, TH7407, TH7408, TH7409, TH7411, TH7413, TH7414, TH7516, TH7429, TH7436, TH7437, TH7438, TH7439, TH7441, TH7444, TH7446

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

24a. Programme Structure and Features (levels, modules, credits, awards)

The MA in Practical Theology is a full- or part-time programme, which can be delivered by a combination of residential teaching and additional tutorial support, or fully by Distance Learning. It sits alongside two other MA programmes: MA in Missional Leadership, and MA in Biblical Studies. Each programme has its own distinctive emphasis, though the MA in Practical Theology has several modules in common with the MA in Biblical Studies. There may be, also, the possibility of some overlap with the MA in Missional Leadership.

Classroom delivery is via intensive teaching sessions twice a year, and opportunities for ongoing contact with module tutors.

Modules are available via Distance Learning through the VLE (Moodle). Support includes audio recording of on-campus lectures and tutor-written study guides, together with the opportunity for substantial ongoing contact with tutors, through email or Skype.

The MA in Practical Theology requires students to have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of current scholarship and research as it relates, particularly to theological and ecclesiological praxis.

To be awarded the MA in Practical Theology, students must complete five 20-credit taught modules (from the list below) and an 80-credit dissertation (TH7441). For outline details of individual modules please refer to the module descriptors. Note that not all modules will be available in any particular academic year, though care will be taken to ensure that students continue to have a range of options. Options not taught in a particular year may be available to students through a combination of Distance Learning and on-campus tutorials with subject lecturers.

In order to ensure that students have the correct level of theoretical orientation to undertake advanced study, TH7446 Critical Methods in Practical Theology is required (unless a closely equivalent module has been completed successfully in the context of previous study at an approved institution and at the same or higher level). Because of the significant focus on praxis, especially within a Pentecostal context, it is required that two modules are chosen from TH7416 Contemporary Issues in Global Mission: Strategy and Praxis, TH7429 Pentecostal Theology, TH7439 Contemporary Christian Leadership, and TH7444 Christian Leadership and Current Issues.

It is expected that all students will submit a dissertation proposal for formative assessment and feedback prior to commencing the dissertation.

24b. Module Structure

Mod-Code	Level	Title	Credit	Single
TH7402	7	Independent Study Unit	20	Optional
TH7405	7	Biblical Pneumatology	20	Optional
TH7406	7	Biblical Theology of Mission	20	Optional
TH7407	7	Exegetical and Hermeneutical Methods	20	Optional
TH7408	7	Johannine Studies	20	Optional
TH7409	7	Lukan Studies	20	Optional
TH7411	7	New Testament Theology	20	Optional
TH7413	7	Old Testament Narrative	20	Optional
TH7414	7	Old Testament Theology	20	Optional
TH7416	7	Contemporary Issues in Global Mission: Strategy and Praxis	20	Optional

TH7429	7	Pentecostal Theology	20	Optional
TH7431	7	Leadership Development	20	N/A
TH7432	7	Leadership Strategy	20	N/A
TH7433	7	Organisational Leadership	20	N/A
TH7434	7	Self Leadership	20	N/A
TH7436	7	The World of the Bible	20	Optional
TH7437	7	Paul's Letters: Methods, Context and Theology	20	Optional
TH7438	7	Pentecostal and Revivalist History: 19th–21st centuries	20	Optional
TH7439	7	Contemporary Christian Leadership	20	Optional
TH7441	7	Dissertation in Practical Theology	80	Comp
TH7444	7	Christian Leadership and Current Issues	20	Optional
TH7446	7	Critical Methods in Practical Theology	20	Optional

24c. Credit Accumulation

PG Certificate: 60 credits entitles the student to a Postgraduate Certificate

PG Diploma: 120 credits entitles the student to a Postgraduate Diploma (this will require students to take a sixth 20-credit module, which in most cases will be TH7402 Independent Study Unit)

Masters Degree: 180 credits entitles the student to a Masters degree

24d. Details of any derogation from University Regulations (if applicable)

N/A

25. Professional Body Requirements (if applicable)

26. Admission Requirements

Evidence of candidates' academic ability to work in the area of theological and ecclesiological praxis at an appropriate level and their potential to complete the programme may be provided in one of the following ways:

- A second class (or above) degree in Biblical Studies, Religious Studies, Theology or a cognate subject
- A second class (or above) degree in another subject area, together with certificated learning (e.g. a Graduate Diploma) in Biblical Studies, Religious Studies, Theology or a cognate subject.
- At least two years' professional experience in a senior position in a Church or Mission context. In such cases, where candidates do not have formal academic qualifications, an access module or written assignment may be used to help assess suitability for the programme. A transparent policy will be followed to ensure equity and parity with regard to student admissions.

Accredited Prior Certificated and Experiential Learning will be considered for students wishing to transfer into the scheme with previously obtained part or intermediate qualifications from other UK universities. This will follow the rules and processes for APCL and APEL set out by the University of Chester.

International Admissions

Those applicants offering overseas qualifications in place of the standard academic entrance requirements will be assessed using UK NARIC and UCAS Guides to International Qualifications. Such qualifications would need to be of a standard equivalent to a second class honours degree or above in order to ensure parity. Overseas students might also be admitted on the basis of professional experience.

English language requirements:

All students must provide evidence of appropriate competency in written and spoken English. For students whose first language is not English, and who have not studied in English up to at least Level 3, the normal requirement will be IELTS 6.5, TOEFL 575, and equivalent.

27. Subject Benchmark Statements

The Theology and Religious Studies (TRS) Subject Benchmark Statement, published by the QAA in 2000 and revised in 2007, 2014 and 2019, details the range of subject knowledge (3.1), the qualities of mind (3.2), and the generic skills (3.4) acquired and developed in TRS degree programmes. Appendix A of the Subject Benchmark Statement sets out additional benchmark standards for a master's degree in TRS. The MA in Practical Theology builds on the benchmark standards set out in our BA programme, which are in line with those TRS benchmarks.

Students are introduced to a range of research approaches and an expanded range of study tools in TH7446, including electronic resources and web-based tools. They develop, too, the research skills necessary to conduct independent study, to find and engage with appropriate source material, to reflect, critically, on academic practice, conclusions and the ethical implications of particular lines of research, and explore and apply appropriately different methodological approaches methodologies (A4.2, A4.3, A6.1). In other modules these attributes are further developed. In addition to tutorial support, students are required to take responsibility for their own learning and to develop a high degree of independence and self-motivation. This is necessary in all modules, though is evident, particularly, in TH7402 and TH7441. All modules require students to engage with sources (primary and secondary), to evaluate source material critically, and to arrive at, and justify, their own independent conclusions. In TH7402 and especially TH7441 students design their own projects and demonstrate an advanced ability to think independently, to select relevant sources, and to engage critically with, and reflect on, a chosen area of in-depth study.

28. Learning, Teaching and Assessment Methods

At level 7 students develop a wide range of advanced study skills. They are also given significant responsibility for their own learning, and, are expected to demonstrate independent study and research skills, albeit with the encouragement and guidance of tutors and within a supportive teaching, learning and research environment.

Students experience a variety of teaching methods. This includes face-to-face teaching, workshops, group work and seminars during residential sessions (in September and January), complemented with lecture notes, additional information via Moodle and email, telephone and Skype support.

Distance Learning will receive a Study Guide or textbook for each module taken and additional information via Moodle – including, where available, audio files of on-campus teaching sessions. The material supplied will contain sufficient information to guide the student through the module – and will include self-assessment questions, and points for further reading and research. A Module Tutor will be available via e-mail, telephone or Skype, to give guidance and ongoing support to students in areas specifically relating to the subject material of the module (we anticipate around 2.5 hours of one one-to-one interaction per module – though will offer additional reasonable support as necessary).

Guidance in research methodology is given to all students at the start of the programme in TH7446 (unless they have successfully completed a module with similar Learning Outcomes).

All 20-credit modules will be assessed by means of a 4,500-word essay, or a 4,000-word essay and a 1,000-word book review or theological reflection. The 80-credit dissertation will be assessed by way of an 18,000-word piece of research writing. There will be no examinations. At Masters level, students should be able to write at length, and engage, critically, with specialist literature in their chosen field. A 4000-word or 4500-word written assignment is regarded as an appropriate way to develop these skills and to assess student progress. Ongoing contact with module tutors allows for formative as well as summative assessment of modules.

Students are expected to submit a dissertation proposal ahead of starting an 80-credit dissertation. This is not formally assessed, though students receive feedback, offering formative assessment. Students are assigned to a specialist supervisor for this part of the programme, and will have access to regular supervision – usually via email, telephone or Skype.

29. Careers and Employability

Following the acquisition of this award, students will be equipped to

- Conduct independent research into a particular area of study
- Gather, organise and assess data from primary and secondary sources
- Critically analyse and evaluate the views and arguments of others
- Structure and communicate ideas effectively by written and verbal means
- Organise their own workload towards the meeting of deadlines
- Show critical self-awareness and open-mindedness towards other cultures and viewpoints
- Present an argument to support their own view
- Demonstrate improved IT skills.

Successful students will be able to apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding, and to initiate and carry out projects; critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgements, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution - or identify a range of solutions - to a problem; communicate information, ideas, problems, and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.

Students will also have qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:

- the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;
- decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts; and
- the learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature.

This programme of study may be used for personal and academic development, or to prepare for further research. It is intended, too, as continuing professional development for those in Christian ministry who are seeking to improve their knowledge and understanding.

30. Equality

A number of modules on this programme offer opportunities for addressing questions of gender, sexuality, age, disability, race and religious identity, whether in the context of biblical backgrounds, church history or contemporary cultural and church contexts.

The MA in Practical Theology conforms to the University of Chester's policies and priorities regarding admissions, widening access and participation, equal opportunities and AP(E)L; and it offers individual academic support to all its students.

31. Additional Information

In the event of unforeseen circumstances which means that meeting in the classroom is not possible, lectures will take place online.

[Back](#) - to previous page [Close](#) - go to search page [Print](#) - launches the print options panel