

*Chapter IV*

**Post Graduate Degree Programmes**

**in the**

**Faculty of Theology**

**at the**

*Pontifical University*



Stoyte House, where Saint Patrick's College was founded in 1795

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## Licentiate in Divinity (STL)

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*Programme Co-ordinator:* Dean of Postgraduate Studies

To obtain the Licentiate in Divinity (STL), two years' full time specialised study is required in the Second Cycle. It is an ecclesiastical award aligned to the Qualifications Framework of the Holy See. The course and degree are designed for candidates who have attained honours standard, *magna cum laude*, in their previous theological studies. A part-time option is also possible. Part-time candidates may, with the approval of the Dean of Postgraduate Studies, take the course over three or four years.

### Programme Learning Outcomes

On completion of the programme, graduates will be able to:

- demonstrate an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the specialist subject they have chosen and that they are equipped with the capability to produce a methodologically sound contribution, aimed at strengthening theological knowledge [*Veritatis Gaudium*, art. 74, b]
- acquire the ability to integrate the various aspects of theological knowledge in order to address scientific, cultural, and ecumenical issues and engage in dialogue with other more complex religions [*Veritatis Gaudium*, art. 71-72];
- discern the specific domains in which the Church's evangelizing mission can play a role, in the complex and fragmentary nature of human-social development, by being able to devise specific initiatives independently [*Veritatis Gaudium*, art. 73];
- clearly communicate and unambiguously promote the unity of theological knowledge, so that Christianity can be proclaimed to all peoples [*Veritatis Gaudium*, art. 70, § 2], both in specialist and non-specialist contexts;
- convey this theoretical and practical knowledge in the fulfilment of ecclesiastical posts, with particular reference to teaching in major Seminaries or equivalent schools [*Veritatis Gaudium*, art. 50, § 1];
- have fully developed the theoretical, methodological, and language skills in the domain of theological studies to continue their studies at Doctoral level.

### Admission Requirements

In order to register for courses leading to the degree of Licentiate in Divinity, a candidate must

- hold at least a Baccalaureate in Divinity, second honours, Grade I (*magna cum laude*) or, what in the judgement of the Faculty is regarded as an equivalent standard of theological study.

- meet the criteria for Greek, Hebrew and/or Latin as outlined under Language Requirements in the following pages..
- satisfy the English language requirements, if the candidate's first language is not English.

## Programme of Study

Candidates must complete *Postgraduate Induction* which takes place before the commencement of the academic year (i.e., in September).

The programme comprises the following:

### Year 1

#### Seminar Courses

Full-time candidates usually take three seminar courses in year one including (2/3 within field and 1/2 from remaining available modules) and an obligatory course *PG09442: The Soul of Theology* in semester 2.

#### Reading Courses

Candidates select two reading courses from the list of courses on offer (at least one from within their theological discipline)

### Year 2

#### Seminar Courses

Full-time candidates usually take one seminar course in year two within chosen theological discipline, plus the obligatory course *PG09464: Research in Theology: Historical and Methodological Approaches*.

#### Research Colloquium

Formal colloquium presentation. All candidates must present a piece of research at the Research Seminar in Semester Two or Three. NB: Presentations in another setting (e.g., a module/seminar) does not fulfil this requirement.

**Reading courses** are to convene at least once per month during the academic year (i.e., *at least 6 meetings*). Reading Courses are to be assessed by a variety of means including in-semester papers, end-of-semester papers and possibly a formal colloquium presentation. Assessed papers are to total 7,000 words. The STL Programme Co-ordinator, in consultation with those offering the suite of reading courses, is to ensure variety and balance in the means of assessment.

**Seminar courses** are normally assessed by assignment(s) of c.7,000 words. Variations may be approved by the Programme Co-ordinator in consultation with the Postgraduate Board.

The full list of seminar courses is to be found on the following pages.

Part-time candidates agree an initial schedule of seminar courses with the Programme Co-ordinator

### **Scriptum**

Each candidate shall prepare a *scriptum* or dissertation under the direction of a member of the Faculty, on a topic approved by the Faculty. The *scriptum* shall be between 25,000 and 30,000 words in length, inclusive of footnotes but exclusive of bibliography and appendices. The *scriptum* is to be submitted by the last Friday in June. A grace period of two weeks will apply.

According to the qualifications framework of the Holy See, the STL is a 120 ECTS degree where, 30 ECTS are deemed to represent fulltime study for *one* semester. In this schema, the following credit weightings apply:

Taught Seminar Course	= 10 ECTS
Reading Course	= 10 ECTS
Scriptum and <i>viva</i>	= 40 ECTS
Research Colloquium	= <i>Qualifier</i>
Theological Languages	= <i>Qualifier</i>

<i>Year 1</i> : 4 SCs + 2 RCs	40+20	= 60 ECTS
<i>Year 2</i> : 2 SCs + <i>Scriptum &amp; Viva</i>	20+30+10	= 60 ECTS

### **Assessment**

The Final Assessment of the STL is a weighted culmination of the following:

- Reading Course assignments.
- Seminar Course assignments (as outlined in the respective module descriptors).
- The *Scriptum* and its *Viva Voce* examination.

The *scriptum* will be assessed in a 30–50-minute *viva voce* examination, in accordance with the regulations for *viva voce* examinations in the Pontifical University. (See the *Kalendarium*, Ch. II, “Code of Practice for Viva Voce Examinations and Defences.”) The examiners shall be one internal reader and one external reader appointed by the Faculty.

Any theological language courses, as well as the Research Colloquium are qualifying requirements and do not form part of the final assessment.

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## Doctorate in Divinity (DD/STD)

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*Programme Co-ordinator:* The Dean of Postgraduate Studies

### Admission Requirements

The Doctorate in Divinity is a Third Cycle programme accredited to the Educational Standards Framework of the Holy See.

In order to register for courses leading to the Doctorate in Divinity (DD/STD), a candidate must hold at least a Licentiate in Divinity (STL) second class honours, Grade I (*magna cum laude*) or what, in the judgement of the Faculty, is regarded as an equivalent standard of theological study. A basic knowledge of Greek and Hebrew is required, as well as an appropriate knowledge of two modern languages, see 'Language Requirements'. Candidates whose first language is not English will be required to satisfy the English language requirements of the Faculty of Theology.

Candidates must complete *Postgraduate Induction* which takes place before the commencement of the academic year (i.e., in September).

### Programme Learning Outcomes

On completion of the programme, graduates will be able to:

- demonstrate that they are endowed with a systematic understanding in the domain of theological studies they have chosen [*Veritatis Gaudium*, art. 74.];
- develop the full capability to use the specialist knowledge they have acquired to devise, design, and implement original research projects, in order to contribute to the progress of theological knowledge [*Veritatis Gaudium*, art. 49, § 1];
- developed both analysis and synthesis capabilities to evaluate complex theological research questions, that are determined by a variety of interrelated factors;
- systematically convey the knowledge they have acquired through teaching at academic level [*Veritatis Gaudium*, art. 50, § 1];
- acquire the intellectual skills and the specific human and relational abilities to fulfil special ecclesiastical posts [*Veritatis Gaudium*, art. 50, § 2];
- communicate with academic and professional experts, in the various domains, in order to contribute to human civilization through the evangelizing mission of the Church [*Veritatis Gaudium*, art. 3, § 1. Cf Giovanni Paolo II, «Proemio», Cost. Apostol. Sapientia Christiana, I, II.

## Programme of Study

- The doctoral dissertation, which forms the basis for granting the degree, must be a substantial and original piece of research in a theological area, offering a notable contribution to the advancement of the theological sciences.
- The dissertation must be prepared under the direction of a member of the Faculty on a topic approved by the Faculty.
- Candidates who have completed the STL programme in the Faculty are required only to take two further seminar courses in Year One.
- Candidates who have not taken any special courses at the Faculty but have a Licentiate of the required standard must take four courses, including *PG09442: The Soul of Theology* and *PG09464: Research in Theology: Historical and Methodological Approaches* in Year One.
- At the end of Year One, doctoral candidates will provide sufficient evidence of progress in the preparation of the dissertation to warrant continuance. Accordingly candidates will give a presentation to two members of Faculty by June 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Dissertations submitted by November 30<sup>th</sup> are accepted for examination by early spring. Those submitted by June 15<sup>th</sup> are accepted for examination in late summer. Examination at any other time may be considered only in exceptional circumstances, and by express leave of the Faculty.
- The dissertation shall be presented to the Dean of Postgraduate Studies at least two months before the candidate may be admitted to defend it. In exceptional cases the Council of the Faculty may shorten the period required.
- Three copies of the dissertation are to be submitted in the first instance; these may be ring-bound. A hard-bound copy, incorporating any corrections which the examiners may require, must be submitted to the Pontifical University Office, following successful defence of the work.
- An electronic copy of the final corrected dissertation must be submitted to the Pontifical University Office for the Library.
- All dissertations shall remain the property of the Pontifical University.

## **Assessment: Public Examination (Doctoral Defence)**

The public examination—termed the *Doctoral Defence*—shall be held in accordance with the Pontifical University regulations on doctoral defences. The format and components of the DD defence can be found in the *Kalendarium*, Ch. II, “Code of Practice for Viva Voce Examinations and Defences.”

## **Publication of Doctoral Dissertation**

Before the Doctorate in Divinity can be conferred, the dissertation, or at least a substantial part thereof, must be published. Publication may take any of the following forms:

- Appearance as a book, or as an article in a recognised theological journal.
- Circulation of copies of the dissertation, or of a major excerpt, in printed form, or electronically, to the main ecclesiastical Faculties of Theology.
- Deposition of a copy of the dissertation in the John Paul II Library at St Patrick’s Pontifical University, Maynooth, via MURAL (Maynooth University Research Archive Library), together with notification of the fact through appropriate means of inter-library exchange.

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# Doctorate in Theology (PhD)

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*Programme Co-ordinator:* The Dean of Postgraduate Studies

The Doctoral Degree of PhD in Theology is awarded to those who satisfactorily complete the course and research requirements for the Degree.

## Admission Requirements

- A Master's Degree in Theology (120 credits) of at least Second-Class Honours Grade I or its equivalent.
- Depending on academic background, the Faculty of Theology admits candidates either directly into the Research Phase of the Doctorate or, first, to a Qualifying Phase. (For more information on each phase, see 'Programme of Study' below.)
- A competence in at least two theological languages: Hebrew, Greek or Latin. A candidate who has not already attained an acceptable level of competence in theological languages is required to pass qualifying courses in at least two of the following: Hebrew, Greek, or Latin (see 'Language Requirements').
- Candidates must have or must acquire a good reading knowledge of one modern continental European language (see 'Language Requirements').
- Candidates whose first language is not English will be required to satisfy the English language requirements of the Faculty of Theology.

Postgraduate Degree candidates will normally be expected to register year by year on a continuous basis until they have completed their degree. Candidates wishing to suspend registration may do so only on the express permission of the Faculty. Upon registration, PhD candidates will be assigned a staff mentor to assist them.

Progress at doctoral level demands a significant investment of time by the candidate in personal study and research. As such, study and research require access both to resources that are frequently only available in research libraries, as well as easy access to the candidate's director or mentor, it is strongly recommended that doctoral candidates, *especially at the beginning of their studies*, spend at least *three days per week* on the Maynooth campus, during the semester.

## Programme of Study

Candidates must complete *Postgraduate Induction* which takes place before the commencement of the academic year (i.e., in September).

### ***Doctoral Qualifying Phase***

The Doctoral Qualifying Phase is undertaken by candidates who require further foundational work before entering into the Research Phase of the Doctoral programme. Candidates who gain an aggregate 2:1 (60% or higher) may progress to the Doctoral Research Phase. Candidates who do not achieve the required 2:1 may graduate with a Postgraduate Diploma in Theology.

The qualifying phase of the doctoral programme is comprised of six seminar courses (60 ECTS) from the palette of postgraduate seminar courses offered in any academic year. Three courses shall be taken in each semester, and the standard course requirements and assignment submission deadlines will apply. The courses are chosen in consultation with the Dean of Postgraduate Studies at the beginning of the academic year.

*Note:* Candidates who have not fulfilled the theological languages requirement for the PhD may do so during the Qualifying Phase.

### ***Doctoral Research Phase***

Candidates must normally complete four years of full-time study. The first two years is termed the “Research Phase.” The second two years is termed the “Completion Phase.” Candidates requiring an extension of the study period must inform the Postgraduate Board by May of the fourth year of study.

The first year includes four postgraduate seminar courses. Two of these courses will normally be *PG09464: Research in Theology: Historical and Methodological Approaches* and *PG09442: The Soul of Theology*. Candidates who have recently completed these two courses as part of an STL or Masters in St Patrick’s Pontifical University are exempt.

In order to be considered for progression to the second year of the doctoral programme, candidates are to achieve an aggregate 2:1 across these four seminar courses.

In the Second Semester of Year One, the candidate shall, with the guidance of a mentor or director, identify a topic of research interest, and present a brief outline to two members of the Faculty by June 15<sup>th</sup>. This research topic, is not a doctoral proposal, but rather a research area that creates direction and focus for the doctoral proposal.

Normally, the doctoral proposal, which forms the basis of the doctoral dissertation, will be presented for approval to the Faculty of Theology during the second year of the Research Phase.

### ***Doctoral Completion Phase***

The Completion Phase denotes the period of research and study after the candidate's proposal has been approved by the Faculty. It is during this time (usually, years 3 and 4 for a candidate who began the doctorate directly in Research Phase), that the candidate completes the dissertation.

The doctoral dissertation, which forms the basis for the award of the degree, must be a substantial and original piece of research, which offers a notable contribution to the advancement of the theological sciences. The dissertation must be prepared under the direction of a member of the Faculty of Theology, on a topic approved by the Faculty.

#### **Assessment: Examination (PhD Defence)**

The PhD Defence shall be held in accordance with the code of practice for defences of the Pontifical University. The format and components of the PhD defence can be found in the *Kalendarium*, Ch. II, "Code of Practice for Viva Voce Examinations and Defences."

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# Master's in Theology (MTh)

## Two Years—Full-Time

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*Programme Co-ordinator:* The Dean of Postgraduate Studies

The programme for degree of Master in Theology (MTh) offers candidates the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of Theology through specialised study, personal work and research.

Candidates complete six seminar courses (60 ECTS) and write a minor dissertation (25,000-30,000 words) (60 ECTS).

### **Theological Languages**

A competence in theological language(s) is a qualifying requirement – see ‘Language Requirements’ page after this section.

### **Admission Requirements**

The minimum entry requirement is an honours primary degree in which Theology comprises at least an equal joint honours component. Candidates should have obtained at least Second-Class Honours, Grade I overall, and Second Class Honours, Grade I in Theology. An interview will be part of the selection procedure.

The Faculty of Theology may also accept applicants whom it deems to have achieved an equivalent standard. Where an applicant's qualifications are insufficient for admission to the MTh, applicants are recommended entry to the Higher Diploma of Theological Studies (Daytime). Achieving a Second-Class Honours, Grade I, in the Higher Diploma is necessary for admission to the MTh.

Candidates whose first language is not English will be required to satisfy the English language requirement of Faculty of Theology. Candidates will normally be expected to register year by year on a continuous basis until they have completed their degree. Candidates wishing to suspend registration may do so only on the express permission of the Faculty.

### **Programme of Study**

Candidates must complete *Postgraduate Induction* which takes place before the commencement of the academic year (i.e., in September).

The duration of the programme is two years. The first year is considered a year of full-time study in one of the options below. In the second year the candidate, takes one seminar course in the first semester and completes a dissertation. The dissertation is 25,000—30,000 words. The dissertation is pursued under the direction of a member of the Faculty of Theology. While completing the dissertation, the candidate is not required to be in full-time attendance. The dissertation is to be submitted by 3.00pm on the last Friday in June. A grace period of two weeks will apply.

***Course Option I: Systematic Theology***

In Year One the candidate takes five seminar courses: two seminar courses in Systematic Theology, two seminar courses from the remaining suite, as well as the obligatory course *PG09442: The Soul of Theology* in the second semester.

In Year Two the candidate takes obligatory course *PG09464: Research in Theology: Historical and Methodological Approaches* in semester one and completes the dissertation.

***Course Option II: Moral Theology***

In Year One the candidate takes five seminar courses: two seminar courses in Moral Theology, two seminar courses from the remaining suite, as well as the obligatory course *PG09442: The Soul of Theology* in the second semester.

In Year Two the candidate takes obligatory course *PG09464: Research in Theology: Historical and Methodological Approaches* in semester one and completes the dissertation.

***Course Option III: Biblical Theology***

In Year One the candidate takes five seminar courses: three seminar courses in Biblical Theology, one seminar course from the remaining suite, as well as the obligatory course *PG09442: The Soul of Theology* in the second semester.

In Year Two the candidate takes the obligatory course *PG09464: Research in Theology: Historical and Methodological Approaches* in semester one and completes the dissertation.

***Course Option IV: Liturgical Theology***

In Year One the candidate takes five courses: one reading course in Liturgical Theology, two seminar courses in Liturgical Theology, the obligatory course *PG09442: The Soul of Theology* and one seminar course from the remaining suite of modules.

In Year Two the candidate takes one further seminar course in Liturgical Theology, and completes the dissertation.

## Assessment

The Final Assessment of the MTh is a weighted culmination of the following:

- Reading/Seminar Courses           60 credits
- Dissertation                           60 credits

The dissertation shall be examined by the dissertation supervisor and an external examiner chosen by the Faculty.

Any theological language courses are qualifying requirements and do not form part of the final assessment.

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## Research Master's in Theology (MTh)

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*Programme Co-ordinator:* The Dean of Postgraduate Studies

The Research Master's in Theology (MTh) offers candidates the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of Theology by means of a longer dissertation without coursework taken for credit.

Candidates submit a major dissertation (40,000 words) and fulfil the requirements of *PG09464: Research in Theology: Historical and Methodological Approaches* seminar course.

### **Theological Languages**

A competence in theological language(s) is a qualifying requirement – see 'Language Requirements' page after this section.

### **Admission Requirements**

To qualify for admission to the Research Masters in Theology (i.e., by dissertation only), candidates shall have Second Class Honours, Grade I in the theological component of their honours degree. The Faculty of Theology may also accept applicants whom it deems to have achieved an equivalent standard. The Research Masters is recommended only for candidates who have a clear research focus and a proven ability to work on their own.

Candidates whose first language is not English will be required to satisfy the English language requirements of the Faculty of Theology. Candidates will normally be expected to register year by year on a continuous basis until they have completed their degree. Candidates wishing to suspend registration may do so only on the express permission of the Faculty.

### **Programme of Study**

- Candidates must complete *Postgraduate Induction* which takes place before the commencement of the academic year (i.e., in September).
- Candidates must fulfil the requirements of *PG09464: Research in Theology: Historical and Methodological Approaches*, and work for at least three semesters under the direction of a permanent member of the Faculty of Theology.
- The subject of the dissertation requires the approval of the relevant Head of Department.

- The length of the dissertation shall be approximately 40,000 words, exclusive of footnotes and bibliography.
- Candidates shall be required to submit their dissertations within three years. Extensions will be granted only in exceptional circumstances.

### **Assessment**

The Final Assessment of the Research MTh is constituted by a mark given to the dissertation. The dissertation shall be examined by the dissertation supervisor and an external examiner chosen by the Faculty. Any theological language courses and PG09464 are qualifying requirements and do not form part of the final assessment.

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# Language Requirements

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## Theological Languages Requirement

DD, PhD, STL and both two-year MTh programmes.

- Candidates admitted into the **DD, PhD, STL** programmes in the Faculty of Theology shall be required to sit a qualifying examination in at least two of the following: Hebrew, Greek, or Latin. Syllabi for these examinations are provided on the Faculty website.
- Candidates admitted into the two-year **MTh (Biblical)** programme in the Faculty of Theology shall be required to sit a qualifying examination in Greek and Hebrew. Syllabi for these examinations are provided on the Faculty website.
- Candidates admitted into the two-year **MTh (Moral/Systematic/Liturgy)** programmes in the Faculty of Theology shall be required to sit a qualifying examination in Latin. A syllabus for this examination is provided on the Faculty website.
- Candidates who do not pass the above qualifying examination(s) are required to attend and pass qualifying course(s) in the relevant theological language(s).
- Candidates can opt **not to take** the qualifying examination(s) and register to take the qualifying course(s) in the relevant theological language(s).
- Candidates taking the qualifying exam in a language for postgraduate study must reach at least 60%.
- Candidates who have previously successfully completed the theological language courses with at least a 60% mark in the Pontifical University are exempt.

## Modern Language Requirements

DD (STD)

Candidates must have or must acquire a good reading knowledge of **two** continental European languages.

PhD and STL

Candidates must have or must acquire a good reading knowledge of **one** modern continental European language.

*Note:* Qualifying examinations are offered during orientation and at one other point during the academic year. Details are posted on the postgraduate information pages on the University website.

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# Master's in Theology (MTh)

## One Year—Full-time

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*Programme Co-ordinator:* The Dean of Postgraduate Studies

### Admission Requirements

The minimum entry requirement is a primary degree in which Theology comprises at least an equal joint honours component. Candidates should have obtained at least Second Class Honours, Grade I overall, and Second Class Honours, Grade I in Theology. An interview will be part of the admission process.

The Faculty of Theology may also accept applicants whom it deems to have achieved an equivalent standard. Applicants whose first language is not English will be required to satisfy the English language requirements.

### Programme Rationale

This one-year Taught Masters programme is offered for candidates who wish to spend one year in deepening their theological expertise and skill in a number of areas in which the Faculty of Theology has particular expertise. With the guidance of a mentor, candidates choose from the palette of modules on offer across various theological disciplines in any particular year.

### Programme of Study

Candidates must complete *Postgraduate Induction* which takes place before the commencement of the academic year (i.e., in September).

The course runs over one academic year and consists of six taught modules (60 ECTS) delivered over two semesters, three modules per semester; and a minor dissertation of 15,000 words (30 ECTS). Lectures are delivered from Monday to Thursday. A programme of study, from the seminar courses indicated in the Overview of Postgraduate Modules in the following pages, is agreed with the programme co-ordinator. All modules are available except for Yearlong Reading Courses (RCs); *PG09464: Research in Theology: Historical and Methodological Approaches*; *PG09442: Soul of Theology*. A choice of modules may be restricted due to timetabling constraints.

#### **Minor Dissertation** (15,000 words)

The dissertation is to be written under the direction of a member of the Faculty of Theology, and submitted by candidates by 3.00pm on August 15<sup>th</sup>. A grace period of two weeks applies.

**Note:** Completing the MTh (One Year) with a Second Class Honours, Grade I, is necessary for admission to the Qualifying Phase of the Doctoral programme, the parameters of which are established by the Faculty of Theology and can be found in the *Kalendarium*'s 'Doctorate in Theology (PhD)'.

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## **Master's in Theology (MTh) *Contemporary Ethics*** **Two Years Part-time / Taught Masters**

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*Programme Co-ordinator:* Dr Padraig Corkery

The course will consist of six taught modules (60 ECTS) delivered over two years, and the submission of a thesis of 15,000 words (30 ECTS). Assessment of modules is by essay (c. 7,000 words).

### **Admission Requirements:**

The minimum entry requirement is an honours primary degree in which Theology comprises at least an equal joint honours component. Candidates should have obtained at least Second Class Honours, Grade I overall, and Second Class Honours, Grade I in Theology. An interview will be part of the selection process. The Faculty of Theology may also accept applicants whom it deems to have achieved an equivalent standard. Candidates whose first language is not English will be required to satisfy the English language requirement.

### **Programme of Study**

In addition to the following programme of study, candidates must complete *Postgraduate Induction* which takes place before the commencement of the academic year (i.e., in September).

#### **Cycle A (2025-2026)**

##### **Semester 1**

**PG09710** Reimagining the Human

**PG09726** The Legacy of Pope Francis from the Perspective of Moral Theology

##### **Semester 2**

**PG09727** Ecclesial Ethics for a Participatory Synodal Church

#### **Cycle B (2026-2027):** (indicative)

**PG09302** History of Christian Thought

And other seminars to be determined.

*Minor Dissertation* (15,000 words)

The dissertation is to be written under the direction of a member of the Faculty of Theology, and submitted by candidates in their second year by 3.00pm on August 15<sup>th</sup>, in Year 2. A grace period of two weeks applies.

**Note:** Completing the MTh (One Year) with a Second Class Honours, Grade I, is necessary for admission to the Qualifying Phase of the Doctoral programme, the parameters of which are established by the Faculty of Theology and can be found in the *Kalendarium*'s 'Doctorate in Theology (PhD)'.

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# **Master's in Theology (MTh)**

## ***Bible and Spirituality***

### **Two Years Part-time / Taught Masters**

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*Programme Co-ordinator:* Jessie Rogers DPhil

#### **Admission Requirements**

The minimum entry requirement is a primary degree in which Theology comprises at least an equal joint honours component. Candidates should have obtained at least Second Class Honours, Grade I overall, and Second Class Honours, Grade I in Theology. An interview will be part of the admission process. The Faculty of Theology may also accept applicants whom it deems to have achieved an equivalent standard. Applicants whose first language is not English will be required to satisfy the English language requirements.

#### **Programme Rationale**

As Scripture, the Bible is a collection of writings that reflects the dynamic experiences of ancient Israel and of the early Christian Church, and which continues to nourish and make sense of people's lives. This Masters has a two-fold focus: it explores both spiritualities within the Bible and spirituality shaped by engagement with the Bible. The programme approaches biblical spirituality from the perspectives of liturgy, history and biblical studies, understands spirituality incarnationally as communal and personal expressions of lived faith, and includes a strong practical dimension. The programme equips learners to employ a range of methods in biblical interpretation, with a strong focus on literary and narrative approaches. It aims to form learners as competent theologians and to situate the study of sacred scripture within the broader theological enterprise.

#### **Programme Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of the MTh in Biblical Spirituality, students should be able to:

- Exhibit proficiency in scholarship at the intersection of biblical studies and the contemporary academic field of spirituality.
- Contextualise the study of the biblical canon and of spirituality within the broader theological landscape, critically analysing its intersections with current trends in theology.
- Employ the hermeneutical methods and theoretical frameworks of biblical studies to interpret biblical texts and engage critically with sources and methods in the academic study of spirituality.

- Make a constructive contribution to the study of how the biblical canon functions as Scripture in several traditions and faith contexts.
- Select appropriate approaches and methodologies for communal and personal engagement with scripture and interpret biblical texts ethically and responsibly in diverse contexts
- Cultivate a disposition of intellectual curiosity, academic rigor, and a commitment to ongoing exploration and learning.
- Critique historic and contemporary spiritual and religious practices of engagement with the Bible through the lens of oppressive or transformative hermeneutics.

## **Programme of Study**

Candidates must complete *Postgraduate Induction* which takes place before the commencement of the academic year (i.e., in September).

The course consists of six taught modules (10 credits each) delivered over two years, and the submission of a thesis of 15,000 words. Modules will be delivered on Wednesdays, with some blended learning. Assessment of modules is by essay (c. 7,000 words).

Cycle C 2025/26

### **Semester 1:**

**PG09710**

Reimagining the Human

**PG09728**

Christ and His Interpreters: Early and Contemporary Christological Reading(s) of the New Testament

### **Semester 2:**

**PG09481**

Liberation and Law: Approaches to the Book of Exodus

**PG09729**

The Verdant Word: Towards a Theology of the Written Word of God

Cycle A 2026/27 (Indicative)

### **Semester 1:**

**PG09709**

Re-sourcing: Theology and Renewal in the 20<sup>th</sup>

Century

**PG09495**

Exploring Biblical Narratives

### **Semester 2:**

**PG09467**

Exploring Ways of Reading Genesis

**PG09658**

Pathways in Biblical Spiritualities

**Minor Dissertation** (15,000 words)

The dissertation is to be written under the direction of a member of the Faculty of Theology and submitted by candidates in their second year by 3.00pm on August 15<sup>th</sup>. A grace period of two weeks applies.

**Note:** Completing this programme with a Second Class Honours, Grade I, is necessary for admission to the Qualifying Phase of the Doctoral programme, the parameters of which are established by the Faculty of Theology and can be found in the *Kalendarium*'s 'Doctorate in Theology (PhD)'.

## Overview of Postgraduate Modules in the Academic Year 2025-2026

<i>Research Modules</i>				
Code	Lecturer(s)	Title	Semester	Comment
PG09464	Conway	Research in Theology	1	
PG09442	Macnamara	The Soul of Theology	2	
<i>Cross-Discipline Modules</i>				
PG09710	Rogers/Furnal	Reimagining the Human	1	
<i>Fundamental Theology • Systematic Theology • Faith &amp; Culture</i>				
PG09719	Conway	Karl Rahner: The Theological Foundations of Synodality	2	
PG09725	Scerri	<i>Domina</i> or <i>Ancilla theologiae</i> ? Philosophy and Theology at Nicaea and Beyond	2	
RC09525	Furnal	Readings in Contemporary Systematic Theology: Essential Questions in Modernity	Yearlong	
<i>Moral Theology</i>				
PG09726	Corkery	The Legacy of Pope Francis from the Perspective of Moral Theology	1	
PG09727	McGrath	Ecclesial Ethics for a Participatory Synodal Church	2	
RC09524	Winright	Readings in Moral Theology (The Moral Theology of Leo XIII and Leo XIV: Continuities and Discontinuities)	Yearlong	

<b><i>Pastoral Theology • Religious Education</i></b>				
RC09522	Sheridan	Readings in Religious Education and Catechesis in the Life and Ministry of the Church	Yearlong	
PG09523	TBD	Emancipating Practical Theology	1	
<b><i>Liturgy</i></b>				
PG09487	Tracey	Sacramental Theology: Liturgical and Systematic Approaches	1	
PG09708	Tracey	The Pastoral Practice of Liturgy	2	
RC09523	O'Donoghue	Readings in Liturgical Theology: The Eucharist	Yearlong	
<b><i>Scripture</i></b>				
PG09728	O'Connell / Scerri	Christ and His Interpreters: Early and Contemporary Christological Reading(s) of the New Testament	1	Online + intensive week in January
PG09729	O'Connell	<i>The Verdant Word: Towards a Theology of the Written Word of God<sup>f</sup></i>	2	
PG09481	Corley	Liberation and Law: Approaches to the Book of Exodus	2	
<b><i>Academic Life</i></b>				
PG0901	Various	Postgraduate Information and Research Page	Yearlong	Academic Formation— Not for Credit

## GENERAL NORMS for Postgraduate Modules

Each postgraduate module above, unless otherwise stated, is rated as 10 ECTS.

A minimum of FOUR participants is required for a seminar module to be offered.

Exceptions are to be referred to the Postgraduate Board.

If a particular taught programme cannot be offered, the related programme-specific modules are withdrawn.

Descriptors for each of the above modules can be found on the Pontifical University website.

### NOTES and OBSERVATIONS

- a. For PhD, STL, Masters (120-credit programme) and Research Masters (qualifying not for credit) only;
- b. 12-hour module
- c. Blended Learning.
- d. Required by MTh Year 2 (Programmes in Pastoral Theology) with sufficient numbers.
- e. Students on the Qualifying Phase of the Doctoral Programme may not take PG09464: Research in Theology, PG09442: Soul of Theology and/or Reading Courses.
- f. Awaiting completion of faculty approval.

General Note: Postgraduate Courses Offered on a CYCLICAL BASIS

In order to permit postgraduates plan their studies in a balanced way, it is to be noted that the following modules are offered on a cyclical basis:

**PG09708:** Pastoral Practice of Liturgy *and* **PG09484:** Liturgy: Ritual, Theological and Historical Approaches

**PG09495:** Exploring Biblical Narratives *and* **PG09728:** Christ and his Interpreters: Early and Contemporary Christological Reading(s) of the New Testament

**PG09496:** The David Story, **PG09467:** Exploring Ways of Reading Genesis, *and* **PG09481:** Liberation and Law: Approaches to the Book of Exodus

**PG09710:** Reimagining the Human *and* **PG09709:** Re-Sourcing: Theology and Renewal in the Twentieth Century *and* **PG09302:** History of Christian Thought

For further information on any of the programmes listed above contact:

Postgraduate Admissions Office  
St Patrick's Pontifical University  
Maynooth, County Kildare  
IRELAND

[www.sppu.ie](http://www.sppu.ie)

Email: [pgadmissions@spcm.ie](mailto:pgadmissions@spcm.ie) /  
[postgraduate@spcm.ie](mailto:postgraduate@spcm.ie)  
Telephone: Ireland: 01-708-3391 /  
01-708-3600  
International: +353-1-708-3391/  
+353-1-708-3600

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## Higher Diploma in Theological Studies

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*Programme Co-ordinator:* Prof. Séamus O'Connell

This one-year Level 8, 60 ECTS credits, programme provides a foundation in Theological Studies for students who hold a primary degree in another discipline. The Higher Diploma in Theological Studies meets all the requirements of the *Teaching Council of Ireland* for the teaching of Religious Studies at post-primary level. It entitles teachers holding degrees recognised by the Department of Education in the Republic of Ireland, as well as those holding teacher training qualifications, to teach *Religious Education* for up to 15 hours per week in a secondary school.

The programme may also be of interest and value to those who seek a structured approach to reflecting in a theological key upon the significant questions of life, to those who desire to delve more deeply into the theological thrust and existential demands of Catholic tradition, or to adults who wish to embrace greater responsibility, or take a more active role in their local church community. It is offered in two modes: a *hybrid mode*—consisting of online lectures on one evening each week and six on-campus residentials over the course of the academic year, and a *daytime mode*—consisting of on-campus lectures over three weekdays during the academic year.

The Higher Diploma in Theological Studies from St. Patrick's Pontifical University, Maynooth attests to the completion of a substantial and coherent programme of learning. The Higher Diploma allows students to finish an accredited introductory programme in theology and to obtain a credential for it. The programme may, in due course, qualify other students to apply for Masters programmes in Theology or Pastoral Ministry, either at the Pontifical University or elsewhere.\*

As St. Patrick's Pontifical University has the largest faculty of Catholic theology in Great Britain and Ireland, it can offer a complete curriculum of core theological and religious studies courses, as well as a broad offering of electives, which address the specific academic interests and professional needs of the various students. They include:

- *A general introduction to theology*, providing the necessary foundations for an academic engagement with theology in accordance with St. Anselm's maxim of "faith seeking understanding."
- *An introduction to the study of the Bible*, which through the study of particular Old Testament and New Testament books, explores the nature and significance of Jewish and Christian Scripture, the origins of the Bible, its literary forms, as well as its interpretation and significance today.
- *Systematic Theology*, which examines the meaning and implications of the core faith-affirmations of Christianity concerning God, Jesus, Church, and relationship of the human and the divine, and *Foundations of Worship* which presents a critical exploration of the character and history of Christian Liturgy

- *Moral Theology*, which explores the experience of morality and, in particular, the bearing of Christian faith on the moral and ethical living. Specific themes include: conscience, making moral decisions, the Bible and morality, bioethics, justice, morality and law, ethics in public life, peace and war, and ecology.
- The *History of Early Christianity* from the perspectives of both its origins and contemporary experience, as well as *World Religions*, which examines major world religions both in their own terms and their relationship to Christianity, and *Secular Belief Systems* and *Philosophy of Religion* which look at Christian and secular thought engages with the challenges and legitimate questions other belief systems.
- *Foundations in Religious Education*, which provides students with an introduction to the meaning, tradition and contemporary practice of religious education with a particular focus both on the teaching of Religious Education at post-primary level, with particular—but not exclusive—reference to Catholic Education.
- *Prayer and Praxis in East and West* is an academic and practical introduction to the richness of and variety of Christian prayer—the authentic existential engagement with the mystery of God’s embrace of all humanity.

## **Admission Requirements**

- A primary degree or its equivalent is required. Consideration will be given to all applications;
- Applicants whose first language is not English will be required to satisfy the English language requirements. See here for more information: <https://sppu.ie/english-language-requirements>;
- Candidates taking this course in its hybrid mode, in which much of the content being given on-line, are required to have basic academic computer skills and have access both to a computer and to the internet;
- St Patrick’s Pontifical University also accepts applications to its programmes from all prospective students who possess the ability, knowledge and experience through its widening participation schemes. The University operates a *Recognised Prior Learning* (RPL) and *Prior Experiential Learning* (RPEL) scheme which recognises relevant prior learning and experience for admission and/or credit purposes. Full details are available on the University website.

## Timetable

### *Hybrid Mode*

- Online lectures every Wednesday evening during term from 6.30–9.30 p.m.  
*and*
- Six on-campus weekend residentials (*Friday 6pm /Saturday 5pm*) in the course of the academic year; three in first semester, and three in second semester.

### *Daytime Mode*

- Fifteen hours on-campus per week, comprising of lecture and tutorials, over three days, according to the lecture timetables of the Pontifical University and Maynooth University.

## Programme of Study

### Hybrid Mode

Course Code	Title	Lecturer(s)	Semester	Credits
<b>Systematic Theology</b>				
ST 08404	Understanding Jesus Today	Scerri	1	5
ST 08405	Reason, Faith, and Revelation	McLean	1	5
ST 08403	The Church and its Sacraments	O'Donoghue	2	5
ST 08406	Grace and Anthropology	Furnal	2	2.5
<b>Moral Theology</b>				
MR 08405	Introduction to Moral Theology	Winright	1	2.5
MR 08403	Catholic Social Teaching	Hargaden	2	5
<b>Sacred Scripture</b>				
SC 08400	The Bible and its Worlds	O'Connell	1	5
SC 08401	The Old Testament: Moses, David, Isaiah, and Beyond	O'Riordan	1	5
SC 08403	The New Testament	Macnamara	2	5
<b>General Courses</b>				
TS 08112	Church History	Woods	1	2.5
LI 08400	Foundations of Worship	O'Donoghue	2	5

TS 08114	Philosophy of Religion and Secular Thought	Kerr	2	2.5
TS 08111	Introduction to World Religions	Grishin	2	5
<b>Electives</b>				
TS 08109	Foundations of Religious Education	Sheridan	1	5
OR				
MR08404	The Catholic Moral Tradition and Bioethics	Shortall	1	5
OR				
TS 08115	Engaging the Real • Prayer and Praxis in East and West	Mellett and O'Connell	1	5

### Daytime Mode

Candidates on the HDTS (Daytime) register to take 60 ECTS.

Course Code	Title	Lecturer(s)	Semester	Credits
<b>Systematic Theology</b>				
ST 08114	Ecclesiology	<del>McLean</del>	1	5
FC 08101	Revelation, Faith and Culture	Conway	1	5
ST 08109	Christology and Soteriology	<del>Seerri</del>	2	5
<b>Moral Theology</b>				
MR 08121	Introduction to Moral Theology	Corkery	1	5
MR 08340	Contemporary Issues in Bioethics	Corkery	2	2.5
<b>Sacred Scripture</b>				
SC 08139	Introduction to Scripture	Lungu	1	2.5
SC 08135	Risen Lord in a Pagan Empire	Macnamara	1	5
SC 08138	The Beginnings of God's People	Adjunct	2	5
SC 08337	Ecology and the Old Testament	Mellett	2	2.5

<b>General Courses</b>				
EH 08250	History of Early Christianity	Woods	1	5
LI 08151	Introduction to Liturgy	Tracey	2	5
<b>Elective</b>				
Students are required to take electives from the following modules in order to attain the required 60 credits.				
PY 08139	Academic Writing	McFadden	1	5
PY 08140	History of Medieval Philosophy	Kerr	2	5
PY 08142	The Philosophy of Augustine	McNamara	2	5
PY 08135	Phenomenology	Gorevan	2	5
AN 169	Anthropology Matters (MU)	Cervinkova and Maguire	2	7.5

\*Candidates considering application to a Masters programme are advised to explore and clarify the pertinent admission requirements with the Admissions Office before undertaking the *Higher Diploma in Theological Studies*.