

THE COMMON AWARDS

Programme Specification

Graduate Diploma in Theology, Ministry and
Mission

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1. Name of programme

Graduate Diploma in Theology, Ministry and Mission

2. Department

Theology and Religion

AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

3. Educational and Formational Aims

The Graduate Diploma programme aims to offer a programme of study in theology, ministry and mission that enables students with a degree in another subject (or with a Diploma (HE) in a theological discipline) to acquire competence in theology, ministry and mission at HE level 6. Students with a degree will use the skills acquired and demonstrated through their previous degree to access study of theology, ministry and mission at HE level 6. Students with a Diploma (HE) in theology will use both their skills and subject knowledge to access the Graduate Diploma programme.

The educational and formational aims of the programme are described further in terms of the people for whom it is designed, the pedagogy it embodies and the purpose it is intended to fulfil.

People

The aim of this programme is to equip Christian disciples and ministers to develop as competent and faithful reflective practitioners. To this end it provides an education in theology, ministry and mission in and for a variety of contexts.

1. Preparing people for professional ministry and mission within churches:
Many students will be preparing for recognised lay and ordained ministries in the Anglican, Methodist, Baptist and United Reformed churches. Others will be engaging in the programme as part of their professional development. The programmes serve institutions representing Anglican, Methodist, United Reformed, Baptist, Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, as well as being open to students from other denominations.
2. Preparing people for lay ministry and mission in the world:
The programme also serves those who wish to be more fully equipped for Christian life and service in the world, or simply more informed about the Christian faith.

The programme aims to offer education that is accessible to students with a wide range of educational backgrounds and professional and personal circumstances: many will be mature students, many will be employed and therefore studying part time, many will be in active ministry, while still others will be pursuing the programme as full-time residential students. The programme will therefore be available in a variety of modes of learning and teaching, including traditional full time residential learning, part time and part-residential learning, and distance learning supported by online and face to face engagement.

Pedagogy

The aim of this programme is to provide an education in theology, ministry and mission that encompasses the development of character and the nurturing of virtues and spirituality alongside the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the development of cognitive and practical skills. The programme aims to enable students to engage more deeply with themselves, others, the church, the world and God by offering learning and teaching that:

1. form students in various disciplines, but bring those disciplines together to inform and enrich one another;
2. are constantly oriented towards the ministry and mission for which students are being prepared; and
3. by their modes of assessment and methods of learning and teaching enable students to develop as lifelong reflective learners.

Purpose

The purpose of the programme is to offer personal and professional preparation for a range of Christian ministries as well as to satisfy the aspirations of those students who undertake their studies to enhance, broaden and deepen their discipleship and ministry in other contexts.

From a professional point of view, the aim of the programme is to

1. offer pathways of study that contribute to meeting the range of professional and vocational criteria for the public ministries for which students are being prepared;
2. satisfy the aspirations of those students who undertake their studies to enhance, broaden and deepen their discipleship and ministry in other contexts; and
3. provide a firm basis from which to pursue further study in theology, ministry and mission at postgraduate level.

From a personal perspective, the aim of this programme is to develop dispositions that are congruent with, and necessary for, Christian ministry and mission in the church and the world. The aims of the programme are that learners completing the programme will have become:

1. open to the questions, insights and ongoing formation generated by attentive study of Scripture, and be willing to go on being transformed by them;
2. aware of the skills and disposition needed to go on reading themselves, the church and the world in the light of Christian doctrine, and to explore Christian doctrine more deeply in the light of experience and practice;
3. deeply aware that they are heirs to a long and complex history, aware of their place in that history alongside many others, and attuned to the work of the Holy Spirit in the church and the world through history and in the present;
4. passionate and prayerful advocates for the mission of God;
5. clearer about their vocation in the church and the world and therefore more determined to pursue personal and corporate lifelong learning as disciples of Christ;
6. open to the insights and challenges that emerge from serious engagement and cooperation with others, in and beyond the church.

4. Programme Learning Outcomes

Subject Specific Knowledge (SSK)

On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to

1. describe and analyse theological, ecclesial and contextual understandings of the nature and practices of Christian discipleship, critically evaluating such practices in relation to a range of new contexts in and beyond the church.
2. demonstrate a systematic understanding of key concepts and processes of inquiry involved in the study of one or more chosen areas of theological study, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is informed by methodologies and findings of recent research.

Subject Specific Skills (SSS)

On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:

1. communicate their chosen focus / foci of study appropriately and with relevance, rigour, creativity and sensitivity to a variety of audiences and contexts.
2. apply knowledge and understanding of the chosen disciplines of theology, ministry and mission to new and complex contexts, reflecting critically on their impact on the life and ministry of the church, and showing sensitivity to the problems of religious language, experience, and the limits of knowledge.

Key Skills (KS)

On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:

1. identify, gather, analyse and evaluate textual source materials, including material from primary sources and scholarly research, for a range of purposes, and communicate their findings with clarity and fairness using a variety of media to both specialist and non-specialist audiences;
2. critically evaluate ideas, arguments and assumptions, using them to construct and communicate coherent and well-reasoned arguments that signal a recognition of, and respect for, the differences between beliefs, commitments and prejudices, to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.
3. take responsibility for an extended project that involves the exercise of initiative, independent inquiry and the effective management of time, resources and use of IT; engaging with others in planning and decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts; meeting deadlines; evaluating the project and learning from it.
4. take responsibility for their own personal and professional development.

DELIVERY OF THE PROGRAMME

5. Learning and Teaching Methods

Teaching methods are to be specified by each TEI using the published guidance on modes of teaching and learning.

6. Summative Assessment Methods

Summative assessment to be specified by each TEI using the published guidance on assessment patterns for undergraduate modules.

7. Formative Assessment Policy

Formative assessment to be specified by each TEI using the published guidance on assessment patterns for undergraduate modules.

8. Assessment criteria

TEIs are required to use to the published Common Awards Assessment Criteria for all Common Awards programmes. The Common Awards specific assessment criteria is aligned to Durham University's generic assessment criteria and Level Descriptors.

STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAMME

9. Outline syllabus for the programme

Total credits overall:	Minimum credits at Level 6:	Maximum credits at Levels 4 and 5:
120 credits	80 credits	40 credits

At Level 6
At least 20 credits from either of these categories: Theological Reflection and Reflective Practice Ministry and Mission

This programme may be studied full time over one year or part time over two or three years.

Each TEI will be responsible for developing pathways that ensure all students have the opportunity to achieve the programme learning outcomes.

The programme structure ensures that students are equipped with, and build on, the skills of critical theological reflection which they will apply to the subject areas in which they choose to specialise within the remainder of the programme.

At Level 6 a range of more specialist subjects are available for study. A dissertation or project offers students an opportunity to demonstrate independent learning at this level. The project may be directly related to the practical element of the student's programme or may involve research in practical theology.

10. Indicate which modules are pre- / co-requisites within the programme

In order to achieve the flexibility required by TEIs to construct their own pathways through the programme, very few co-requisites have been stipulated centrally. Instead, these co-requisites will be defined and decided by each TEI in relation to their individual pathways and will take the form of supplementary regulations that will be approved as part of the TEI validation process.

TEIs are required to refer to the Common Awards core list of pre and co-requisites, and details of excluded module combinations, when designing their pathways.

11. Typical Admissions Requirements

Normally an upper second class Honours degree. Graduates in other subjects and students who have completed a Diploma (HE) in theology successfully may enter the Graduate Diploma

programme. For non-theology graduates, normally students should have an upper second class honours degree. However, especially for mature students, prior professional experience will be taken into account as well as educational qualifications.

In general, up to a maximum of 40 credits of accredited prior learning may be granted to students who have evidence of, or can demonstrate learning that fulfils, the relevant learning outcomes of the Graduate Diploma programme (by completing a portfolio of work, for example).

Students offered admission to the Graduate Diploma will be given a reading list in advance of the first term to help them acquire preparatory familiarity with the subjects they have chosen as their focus. This will enable them to proceed to a more comprehensive, critical and in-depth understanding of the selected subject areas and the key methodologies associated with them. For modules at Level 6, students will be expected to engage in some independent study of primary and secondary sources, applying their knowledge to new contexts and appreciating the limits and uncertainty of the subject areas studied.

Students for whom English is their second language should have achieved a score of 6.5 with no component under 6.0 in an IELTS examination, or equivalent.

Each TEI has an Admissions Policy and is responsible for proposing its own specific entry requirements, in line with the generic entry requirements for Common Awards.

12. Field trips, placement and related opportunities

TEIs should refer to the published guidance on field trips, placements and other related opportunities.