



ECTS Handbook

Incoming Students

Academic year 2023/24

Theology and Religion

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A: THE DEPARTMENT

The Department of Theology and Religion has flourished at Durham University since its foundation in 1832 and has established an international reputation as one of the leading departments in its field. The Department of Theology and Religion at Durham University is widely considered to be one of the best in the world. We are currently (2020) ranked fourth in the *QS World University Subject rankings*, and second in *The Times Overall Theology rankings*.

Teaching and research within the Department is focused on **three key areas: Biblical studies, Christian theology and the study of religion.**

Biblical studies covers the New Testament, the Old Testament / Hebrew Bible and ancient Judaism, and includes both close engagement with the biblical texts and broader considerations of their historical, cultural and theological contexts and interpretation. We are one of the few universities to offer the full range of biblical and ancient languages (Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, and Middle Egyptian)

Christian theology is divided into: ethical, philosophical and systematic theology; and historical theology and church history. We work within a range of Christian traditions – Catholic, Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Studies are particular strengths – but we aren't confined to any of them: our approach is to let each tradition be itself, but also to bring them all into dialogue.

The study of religion looks at the anthropological, and sociological aspects of religion in the analysis of mainstream traditions and alternative religious movements, and on the practical study of contemporary religion. Specialist staff interests include Mormonism; death, dying and disposal; shamanism; religion and emotion; religion/faith and globalisation; contemporary and post-evangelicalism; religion and generational change; pilgrimage; sacred space; myth analysis; and South Asian Christianities.

The Department is located close to Durham cathedral and castle on Palace Green, which together form a World Heritage Site. The main University lecture halls are a short walk away, the main University Library is at a walking distance of ten to fifteen minutes.

A1: ERASMUS Departmental Coordinator

Dr Krastu Banev
Department of Theology and Religion
Abbey House,
Place Green – DH1 3RS
Email : krastu.banev@durham.ac.uk

Learning and Teaching Administrator
Department of Theology and Religion
Abbey House,
Place Green – DH1 3RS
Email : theo.taught@durham.ac.uk

B: DEGREE PROGRAMMES OFFERED

The Theology Department offers the Honours degree *BA (Hons)*. More specifically, we offer **three** undergraduate courses of study:

- A single honours degree in Theology and Religion
- A single honours degree in Religion, Society and Culture
- A joint honours degree in Philosophy and Theology.

We also offer taught MA programmes in the following subjects: Theology and Religion; Biblical Studies; Christian Theology; Christian Theology (Anglican Studies); Christian Theology (Catholic Studies); and Religion and Society.

B1: Degree Structure

All undergraduate degrees at Durham have a modular structure, consisting of six modules each year for three years. The majority of modules are studied over all three terms of the teaching year. All modules are examined or assessed in the year in which they are taught: this means that at the end of the first year there are preliminary examinations, and that the final degree class is determined by the examinations taken in the second and third year.

C: REQUIREMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS

This section contains important information for setting up your academic programme at Durham University. Please read through this section carefully before considering your modules and filling in the Learning Agreement

C1: General

Choice of Modules

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR STUDENTS: PLEASE READ BEFORE COMPLETING YOUR LEARNING AGREEMENT

At Durham University Erasmus agreements are signed by individual university departments and are not university-wide agreements. This means that, in general, students will have to choose modules (courses) within the Durham University department through which the Erasmus agreement with their home university has been signed (students should check with the Erasmus Coordinator in their university if they are not sure which department this is). Erasmus students can only gain places and modules which still have availability after places have already been awarded to internal students. Also, not all modules run every year (depending on research leave of members of staff). You should find the relevant links to the website below to check which modules are available in any year.

Modules offered by other departments are subject to availability and can only be taken with prior consent from the relevant department. Certain restrictions may also apply to courses in some departments and students need to follow the advice below carefully before completing their Learning Agreements.

Please clearly indicate the modules you wish to take on your Learning Agreement (included in your application package) for approval by the respective department(s). Before completing your Learning Agreement, it is very important that you read carefully the relevant departmental section(s) of the ECTS Handbook to check which modules are available to you and any restrictions which may apply. It is imperative that a properly completed Learning Agreement is submitted as part of the application form. Only complete applications can be processed. When you arrive in Durham you will be invited to a meeting in the Department where you will be asked to sign up to module if you were not able to take the ones requested on your Learning Agreement. This will give you an opportunity to meet with the Erasmus Coordinators and speak to them one-to-one about Durham and the Department.

Section *D: Module Details* provides a list of modules available for Erasmus students in the department where the agreement has been established

(receiving department) as well as a list of modules available for students coming in through other departments (external departments). Please choose from these modules only!

To find out about the details for each module (teaching methods and contact hours, prerequisite academic background, method of assessment, content, etc.) please refer to the module regulations to see which modules will be running when you are here. The regulations for the Theology and Religion programme have all the modules which are running listed:
<https://www.dur.ac.uk/faculty.handbook/>

C2: Departmental Requirements and Restrictions

The Theology and Religion Department admits both Erasmus students coming to Durham through its own links and, **subject to places still being available**, those coming in through other departments. Erasmus students from other departments may take a **maximum** of **two** modules in Theology subject to places still being available.

Please note, however, that the department in principle only accepts Erasmus students on full-year exchanges.

Some of the Theology modules are taught by lecture and seminar throughout the year; some other are taught in a much more concentrated way in just one term (short-fat modules). This intensive form of teaching means that students should not expect to do more than two such courses maximum in a term, since it will otherwise be too intensive.

Erasmus students are mainly encouraged to take level 1 and 2 modules, but if the Erasmus student has a good level of English Language and prior experience of studying Theology (e.g. their home university degree is Theology based) then they can be considered for a level 3 single module too, but these modules are conceptually more challenging.

In Theology we try our very best to match students with their desired courses, but there is pressure on places, and module availability varies according to staff, and so we ask our incoming students to be flexible.

Erasmus students are assessed in the same way as any other Durham undergraduate. Modules will typically consist of a summative essay and an examination but other formats are possible.

D: MODULE DETAILS

This section contains a relevant link to the suite of modules ERASMUS students can choose from.

To find further details for each module (teaching methods and contact hours, prerequisite academic background, method of assessment, content, etc.) please refer to the module regulations using the following link:

<https://www.dur.ac.uk/faculty.handbook/listdeptmodules/> and click on “Theology and Religion”. Modules for years 1-3 are listed. **Please make sure that any module you are interested in does not require having done a prior module** (a second-year *New Testament* module may require having completed a first-year module *Introduction to Greek* for instance). Most modules, however, do not require prior knowledge.

Please note that the list of available modules is provisional and subject to change. We will do our best to allow students onto modules of their choice, but this may not always be possible and cannot be confirmed until registration in October of the year of entry.