

# [[MA THEOLOGY](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/courses/courses.aspx)](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/courses/courses.aspx)

## PART 1 – PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

### Awarding institution

St Mary’s University, Twickenham

### Partner institution and location of teaching (if applicable)

N/A

### Type of collaborative arrangement (if applicable)

N/A

### Name and level of final award title(s) including sub-awards

* Theology MA (Master of Arts)

### Interim/Exit award(s) with award titles (if specific titles have been designated)

* Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) as interim award of MA
* Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) as interim award of MA

### Faculty or Institute with responsibility for the programme

Institute of Theology and Liberal Arts

### Language of study and assessment

English

### UCAS code

N/A

### JACS and HeCos codes

V600 – Theology and Religious Studies

### Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation / recognition

N/A

### QAA subject benchmarks or other relevant external reference points

* Theology and Religious Studies (Oct 2014) - Appendix A concerns Master’s degrees.
* QAA Master’s degree characteristics statement and descriptor for an HE qualification at level 7 FHEQ (UK Quality Code part A).

### Normal completion time and maximum duration of study

Normal completion time for MA:

* Full-time study: 1 calendar year.
* Part-time study: 3 academic years (6 semesters).

Normal completion time for PGDip:

* Full-time study: 1 academic year. (2 semesters).
* Part-time study: 2 academic years (4 semesters).

Normal completion time for PGCert:

* Full-time study: 1 academic year (2 semesters).
* Part-time study: 1 academic year (2 semesters).

### Mode of study and normal start month

Full-time, Part-time

### Mode of delivery

Face to face/blended.

### Date approved and name of authorised body

Academic Board, April 2022

### Valid cohorts, commencing study in (month/year)

From September 2023

### Additional Programme Costs

Please visit the following link for information on Additional Programme Costs:

<https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/additional-costs.>

## PART 2 – CURRICULUM SPECIFIC DETAILS

### Summary of the programme

Based on a balance of academic study and practical application of the insights of scholarship, the MA in Theology offers students education in the central areas of Christian theology. After a foundation offering a grounding in Systematic Theology and Ecclesiology, students have a choice of two further optional modules. A dissertation completes the programme. The programme is suitable for teachers of Religious Education at secondary level, those engaged in Christian ministry and priesthood, and those who want to enrich their understanding of the ongoing theological tradition which accompanies Christian faith and life.

### Programme Aims

**Main educational aims of programme**

The programme aims to provide students with a thorough grounding in knowledge of key areas of Systematic Theology and cognate subjects. In addition, it aims to provide a conceptual understanding so that students are more able to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship within these theological disciplines. Furthermore, the programme aims to enable students to deal with complex issues systematically and creativity so as to be able to engage in contemporary debates on them.

The programme also seeks to enhance the employability of students in the context of employers’ expectations of subject knowledge and practical experience. In addition, it aligns with the University Mission to offer exceptional student learning opportunities to maximise student engagement and to deliver a distinctive approach that develops a broad and balanced education embracing a formation of the whole character through full membership of a learning community (Vision 2025). Finally, it aims to encourage a high standard of teaching, learning and scholarship among both its staff and students in order to provide a balanced, stimulating and academically sound education within the fields of theological study.

### Criteria for admission

#### Programme entrance requirements

Candidates must satisfy the general admission requirements of St Mary’s University as outlined in the [Admissions Policy](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/policies/admissions-policy.aspx).

In addition, candidates are expected to have:

* A good first degree (normally 2.1 or higher) in Theology (or similar);
* Or a good first degree in another discipline and a DipHE in Theology (or similar), normally with grades in DipHE at 2.1 level or higher;
* Or (exceptionally) other relevant experience and study with evidence of the ability to engage with such a programme (subject to approval by the Academic Registrar on the advice of the Programme Director).

Candidates whose first language is not English are also required to satisfy the UK Visas and Immigration and the University’s English Language requirement, which is normally an IELTS score of 6.0 overall with no less than 5.5 in any section (or equivalent on other tests).

**Credit Accumulation and Transfer, and Accreditation of Prior Learning**

Students who have undertaken study or learning elsewhere may apply for exemption from a proportion of a University programme of study and be given entry with advanced standing (e.g. at a point beyond the beginning of FHEQ Level 4) and exemption from parts of their programme. The learning which may merit advanced standing is as follows:

* Relevant credits, i.e. credits at an appropriate level and in an appropriate subject, earned in another institution or in other institutions;
* Relevant certificated prior learning.

The relevance, status and currency of the prior learning will be considered by the Head of Registry on the advice of the Programme Director. The University will accept applications for accreditation of prior experiential or uncertificated learning for entry to Masters or other professional programmes as determined by the Programme Director on the advice of the Registrar. The University will accept applications for the accreditation of prior uncertificated learning for particular modules as outlined in the regulations for programmes of study.

The maximum number of credits for which exemption may be given are: PGCert – up to 30 credits; PGDip – up to 60 credits; Master’s Degree – up to 90 credits.

For further details, please refer to the [University Academic Regulations](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/policies/academic-regulations.aspx)

### Scheduled learning time

(The number of guided learning hours (GLH) is 10 hours per 1 credit)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Type of learning time | Number of hours | Expressed as % |
| Contact time | 177 | 10% |
| Placement/work-based learning hours | 0 (150 hours if SPJ7001 is chosen- replacing equivalent independent study time) | 0% (8%) |
| Guided learning hours | 522 | 29% |
| Independent study time | 1101 | 61% |
| TOTAL | **1800** | **100%** |

A typical 1-year Masters level programme has a total of 1800 hours.

### Programme learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These are threshold statements of achievement.

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

1. Demonstrate a systematic and critical understanding of knowledge of theological study in the context of its practical application;
2. Work at and with advanced levels of theoretical and/or research knowledge in the areas of Systematic Theology and Ecclesiology;
3. Work at and with advanced levels of theoretical and/or research knowledge in areas such as Biblical Studies, Catholic Social Teaching and Christian Ethics;
4. Critically analyse a diversity of primary and secondary sources;
5. Demonstrate comprehension and critically analysis of a range of themes, debates and methods in the discipline of Systematic Theology and cognate subjects and undertake analysis of complex, incomplete or contradictory areas of knowledge;
6. Undertake synthesis of information or ideas and create responses to problems in terms of advanced states of knowledge which may involve the development of new approaches in new situations;
7. Evaluate alternative approaches and accurately, and with justification, assess, or report on, their own or others’ work;
8. Demonstrate confidence and autonomy in problem solving;
9. Reflect habitually on their own, and possibly others’, functioning in order to improve their own, and possibly others’, practice.

### Programme structure and module requirements

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Programme structures can be subject to change each academic year following feedback from a variety of sources.

* To gain the MA in Theology, students must pass modules totalling 180 credits
* To gain the PGDip in Theology, students must pass modules totalling 120 credits
* To gain the PGCert in Theology, students must pass modules totalling 60 credits

**MA Theology**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Module code | Module Title | No. of credits | Sem of delivery | Module status |
| CORE MODULES (select all 60 credits) | | | | |
| MIN7001 | Pastoral Theology and Scripture | 20 | 1 | Core |
| THY7021 | Systematic Theology and Contemporary Themes | 20 | 1 | Core |
| THY7022 | Ecclesiology in Contemporary Perspective | 20 | 2 | Core |
| Core Options (select one module totalling 60 credits) | | | | |
| THY7020 | Dissertation | 60 | 1 and 2 | Core Option |
| SJP7001 | Service-Learning Based Research | 60 | 1 and 2 | Core Option |
| OPTIONAL MODULES (select 3 x 20 credit modules totalling 60 credits) | | | | |
| BML7021 | Human Beings and Human Action | 20 | 1 | Option |
| CST7010 | Basic Principles and History of Catholic Social Teaching | 20 | 1 | Option |
| CST7012 | Theologies of Liberation and Political Theology | 20 | 1 | Option |
| CSP7009 | Foundations of Christian Spirituality | 20 | 1 | Option |
| CSP7010 | Contemplative and Monastic Spirituality | 20 | 2 | Option |
| CST7011 | Catholic Social Teaching Applied | 20 | 2 | Option |
| CST7013 | Global Development, the Environment and the Market | 20 | 2 | Option |
| CSP7012 | Spiritual Direction Psychology and Spiritual Formation | 20 | 2 | Option |
| CSP7011 | Mystical Theology | 20 | 1 | Option |

### Work placements or study abroad

There will be no work placement or study abroad opportunities on this programme.

### Links to industry and employability

It is anticipated that many students will study part-time as continuing professional development, alongside various forms of Christian ministry and leadership, or for personal interest; for such people, the programme will enhance their future employability, including in more senior roles.

Those taking the MA as a ‘way in’ to doctoral study will progress in that direction. Others will have an enhanced education in Theology which would open specific opportunities in school teaching, and work with Christian or other charities and agencies. The programme will also provide an education which sensitises students to engaging with religious and ethical ideas from other times, cultures and places, and thus will equip them for work engaging with cross-cultural situations, such as non-governmental organisations in the UK and overseas, international relations, and the Civil Service in the Foreign Office.

The primary focus of the programme is on developing knowledge and skills in engaging with key theological ideas and their reception through history, including in today’s world. Christian ministers taking the MA part-time are likely to be engaged already in service in particular contexts, and will be encouraged and supported to make explicit connections between their studies and their ministries—the programme team do not anticipate that a specific ‘placement’ would be helpful or desirable (or, for that matter, practical) for such students. Many full-time students will be pursuing the MA in order to open the door for doctoral studies, and they too will be encouraged and supported to make explicit connections with today’s world and issues. A specific placement alongside the programme would not help in doing this; since the majority of students taking such an MA are more mature, they will have experience of life and the world to draw upon in making these connections.

To engage in reflection on theological ideas in relation to today’s world will necessarily involve students being critically self-reflective about their worldview, mind-set, and approach to life and society, and features of modules, both core and optional will encourage such critical self-reflection. These skills have enhanced the work of many previous graduates of the degree who were already involved in teaching, chaplaincy and other part-time or full-time ministries within their ecclesial communities.

### Programme awards and regulations

This programme conforms to the [University Academic Regulations](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/policies/academic-regulations.aspx).

In order to qualify for the award of MA students must have successfully achieved 180 credits.

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The promotion of equality and diversity and the inclusion of students is central to the learning and teaching on this programme and all students irrespective of their background or previous experiences, will be respected and valued and will be encouraged to engage and fulfil their potential.

In accordance with QAA guidance and the University’s commitment to equality and diversity, the programme has adopted an EDI strategy which will be reflected in the curriculum content, the approaches to learning and the assessment methods. These will enable the celebration of a diversity of experience and interests and will fulfil the objective of removing barriers to learning, wherever possible. The programme is structured in such a way that all students will have the opportunity to address issues of equality, diversity and inclusion pertinent to the field of study within the curriculum and in assessments, wherever relevant.

### Widening Access and Participation

### As part of the university’s regulatory commitment with the OfS, through our approved [Access and Participation Plan](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/about/corporate-information/docs/access-and-participation-plan-2020-24.pdf) , we are required to address the access, success, retention, financial support and progression for all students from traditionally disadvantaged or under-represented populations. This might include (but are not limited to) students from low socio-economic backgrounds, students of particular ethnicities or genders, students with disabilities, mature students etc. This programme will address the APP targets and commitments by:

* Increasing access to this programme for a diverse range of students, including mature students, students from areas of traditionally low participation and students of different ethnicities
* Monitoring and addressing any differences in retention rates between different student groups
* Ensuring equality of awarding outcomes (grades and final degree) across different student demographic groups
* Offering opportunities for increasing the skills required for graduate employability or further study for all students, especially those from groups under-represented in post-graduate programmes or graduate level employment.

## PART 3 – TEACHING, LEARNING & ASSESSMENT

### Programme teaching and learning strategies

Student learning will be supported by a variety of strategies across the programme, which will include:

* Lectures, to give overviews or detailed considerations of areas of knowledge or methods;
* Seminar discussion based on prior reading or study tasks, to facilitate students growing in critical engagement with the Bible and its interpretation;
* Debates on particular issues, with students presenting different sides of a topic, to enable students to get ‘inside’ scholars’ arguments and use of evidence;
* Student oral presentations on particular topics or texts, to enable students to develop in articulating their understanding and application of knowledge and approaches to Systematic Theology and cognate subjects;
* Multimedia platforms such as videos and podcasts;
* Individual supervision for dissertation work, to facilitate students’ own research and growth in ability to pursue independent study.

Each student will be provided with a personal tutor who will meet with the student at least once per semester to review the student’s progress and experience of the programme. The personal tutor will also be available at other times if students have concerns, questions or issues in relation to the programme which they would like to discuss.

### Programme assessment strategy

The programme aims to use assessment as part of the learning process for students, rather than simply a means of assessing learning. This means that assessment tasks are designed to help students achieve the desired learning outcomes, rather than only measuring their achievements (although that will, necessarily, take place too). Forms of formative and summative assessment will vary, and include:

* Shorter and longer essays and written reports which enable students to develop skills in research and reflection, and (for longer pieces of writing) the sustained application of methods, approaches and texts which they are studying. Typically such assessment will total 7500 words per module;
* Case studies, where students are asked to identify the problems in a particular scenario and offer solutions, which enables them to apply theory to practice;
* Article reviews, where students provide a summary and evaluation of a piece of writing to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of that particular issue, together with other relevant knowledge in the field.
* The dissertation, which is an enhanced form of essay for which students will receive individual supervision, normally 15000 words.
* Class oral presentations by individuals in a variety of formats (e.g. talk, debate, introducing a seminar discussion, question and answer) which enable students to research and communicate their learning in particular areas. For these purposes, projectors and computer facilities are available for student use. Students receive oral feedback on their presentations.

The programme affirms the University’s stated aim that feedback be available to students within three weeks of submission/presentation.

## PART 4 – UNIVERSITY SUPPORT

### Student support and guidance

We have a dedicated Student Centre located in the heart of the University in the Student Square. Student Services are situated on the 2nd floor of the Student Centre and our aim is to assist, guide and support students throughout their period of study.

Our Student Life and Guidance team includes; the Accommodation Services, Student Funding Service, Pastoral Care and Advice & Guidance. Within the Wellbeing Service, the Disability Service supports students with both physical disabilities and learning differences such as Dyslexia. In addition, we have a Mental Health Advisor and Counselling team.

Our students can also access support on line via [**Togetherall**](https://togetherall.com/en-gb/) which is a great platform of peer and professional support with trained counsellors. This completely anonymous service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. It is a safe on-line space for students to explore their feelings and learn how to improve and self-manage their own mental health and wellbeing. Each student is also allocated a Personal Tutor within their academic programme who can assist with any academic advice and support students with any personal issues.

Students can expect Employability support throughout their programme. A dedicated careers consultant will work with the programme lecturers to provided tailored careers sessions. Students can then access one to one support through the Careers Service in person or remotely. Employability will be built through programme and student will have further opportunities to develop their employability throughout their student experience. Employability Service support this by providing job fairs and webinars for students to engage with employers as well as an online jobs board CareerConnect, to enable students to access part-time jobs, internships, volunteering and graduate opportunities. There are also specific programmes to enable employability skills to be developed e.g. the entrepreneurship programme Start Up St Mary’s. These services are also available to St Mary’s alumni.

Other levels of support include:

* personal tutor for academic matters, including extenuating circumstances and leave of absence;
* programme director, for wider matters in relation to the programme;
* student services teams, for support in relation to disability or learning support, mental and physical health, accommodation, funding, and personal pastoral concerns.

### Quality management arrangements

This programme aligns with the quality assurance requirements of St Mary’s University through the following processes:

* Five yearly cycle of revalidation
* Interim review for collaborative provision
* System of Moderators for collaborative provision
* Ongoing monitoring through the Programme Review process
* Programme Boards
* Consideration of marks and graduate profiles at Exam Boards
* Engagement with programme student representatives.