

MANCHESTER
1824

The University of Manchester



MASTER OF ARTS IN CHRISTIAN THOUGHT AND PRACTICE

(Full-time and Part-time)

STUDENT HANDBOOK
FOR COURSES IN
2018-2019

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Please note

Descriptions of the units can be found in a document on Moodle in Academic Administration under the Unit Descriptors tab.

Assessment regulations can be found in Part 4 of the General Student Handbook, which is available on Moodle in Academic Administration. (See also 'UoM PG Assessment Regulations' in Academic Administration under the Academic Policies tab).

Any questions you may have concerning this year's programme of study can be raised with the Academic Director, Dr Stephen Wright (s.wright@spurgeons.ac.uk), the Director of Postgraduate Studies, Dr Joshua Searle (j.searle@spurgeons.ac.uk) or the Assistant Director of Postgraduate Studies, Dr Zoltán Schwáb (z.schwab@spurgeons.ac.uk).

Part Five | MA in Christian Thought and Practice

5.1. SUMMARY

Awarding body/institution

The University of Manchester

Teaching institution

Spurgeon's College, London

Name of the final award

Master of Arts in Christian Thought and Practice

Postgraduate Diploma in Christian Thought and Practice

Postgraduate Certificate in Christian Thought and Practice

Exit awards

Postgraduate Certificate in Christian Thought and Practice

Postgraduate Diploma in Christian Thought and Practice

Programme title

Christian Thought and Practice

UCAS code

n/a

Framework for Higher Education Qualifications

Level 7

Role of the programme specification

This document tells prospective and current students about the aims and structure of the programme, and how its units contribute to the overall aims and Intended Learning Outcomes. It also sets out what knowledge, understanding and skills they can expect to have acquired when they graduate.

Further links

- College website: www.spurgeons.ac.uk
- Spurgeon's College Moodle page (including student handbook): <http://spurgeons.moodle.webanywhere.co.uk/>
- University of Manchester website: www.manchester.ac.uk/

5.2. AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Programme aims

5.2.1. The programme aims to build on the students' previous academic and practical experience by developing their understanding of theology and by bridging the gap between the demands of undergraduate study and postgraduate research.

Intended learning outcomes

- 5.2.2. On completion of the Postgraduate Certificate, candidates will begin to be able to:
- engage critically and maturely with primary and secondary sources of theology;
 - give evidence of independent judgment in analysing evidence, producing critical reviews and constructing sustainable hypotheses;
 - reflect theologically at postgraduate level;
 - exercise their personal capacities to contribute to the flourishing of Church and society.
- 5.2.3. At the end of Part One of this programme (the Postgraduate Diploma) it is expected that candidates will be able to:
- engage critically and maturely with the main primary and secondary sources of theology;
 - demonstrate familiarity with major issues in theology and to evaluate them critically and constructively;
 - give evidence of independent judgment in analysing evidence, producing critical reviews and constructing sustainable hypotheses;
 - reflect theologically at postgraduate level;
 - exercise their personal capacities to contribute to the flourishing of Church and society.
- 5.2.4. In addition, on completion of Part Two (the dissertation) students will be able to apply the basic principles and methods of research (as shown in the production of a coherent, cogently argued dissertation).

5.3. TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT METHODS

Teaching and learning

- 5.3.1. The programme is a 'conversion MA' for graduates in other disciplines than Theology who want to study Theology at Master's level. A high degree of independence is expected of students in pursuing their studies, although they are supported by lectures, seminars and tutorials as appropriate to specific programme units. Students are encouraged to consider the application of their studies to their practice and to reflect together on the theological issues raised. During their period of taught study they are also expected to attend the weekly Research Seminar at which papers are presented by College staff, research students and visiting speakers. Teaching for some units may be provided in a blended mode entailing both face-to face tutorials and online study.
- 5.3.2. Articles deemed to be essential reading during the course are made available via Moodle. Bibliographies are provided and further bibliographical support is available on demand. The unit tutors give ample feedback after the production of written work. Sessions on study skills for Master's students are offered throughout the year.

Assessment methods

- 5.3.3. As is customary in a Master's programme in theology, the assessment mainly takes the form of essays. Only if a student opts to learn Greek or Hebrew will they sit a written examination. At the beginning of the programme the specific expectations of an essay on a theological subject will be explained. Details of the assessments can found in the unit descriptors.

Feedback on assessment

- 5.3.4. For all formative assessments and assessed coursework, feedback will normally be provided within 15 working days after the submission deadline. For dissertations, feedback will normally be given within 30 working days after submission. Students may request to see their exam scripts, without charge, but they are not permitted to take the scripts away with them.

Entry requirements

- 5.3.5. Entry to the Masters programme requires a good first degree (i.e. at least second class honours) plus a score of 7 or over on the IELTS test for those who are not native English speakers; there is no specific help with the English language. It is also a requirement that candidates have a good working knowledge of the Christian church and the Bible.
- 5.3.6. Entry to the Postgraduate Certificate is possible for candidates who provide evidence of ample prior learning, either formal or informal. Such candidates can apply for acceptance of Accredited Prior (Experiential) Learning and their cases will be discussed by the College's Admissions Committee in accordance with the College's policy on Applications for Accreditation of Prior Learning.
- 5.3.7. On successful completion of the Postgraduate Certificate, students can register for the Postgraduate Diploma. On successful completion of the Postgraduate Diploma, students can register for Part Two of the programme (the dissertation).

Student support

- 5.3.8. Every year updated handbooks are made available via Moodle.
- 5.3.9. The unit descriptors are likewise available to students via Moodle before the start of the academic year.
- 5.3.10. The Academic Director and the Principal as well as all other tutors are available to see students, confidentially, if necessary without appointment.
- 5.3.11. A chaplain is available to all students, Revd Dotha Blackwood (d.blackwood@spurgeons.ac.uk). Any contacts between the chaplain and a student are confidential unless she is compelled by law to disclose the nature of the problem.
- 5.3.12. The programme begins with the Orientation Week in September which contains all the elements necessary to get students off to a good start including sessions on use of the library, study skills and avoiding plagiarism in coursework.
- 5.3.13. Pastoral tutors are available for any further help on an individual basis.
- 5.3.14. The librarian provides training on issues such as accessing electronic material and is accessible to all students.
- 5.3.15. The College has a Learning Support Department which offers help to those with particular learning needs.
- 5.3.16. The College has a disability policy and two disability officers: Dr Stephen Wright (s.wright@spurgeons.ac.uk) for learning disabilities and Revd Dotha Blackwood (d.blackwood@spurgeons.ac.uk) for physical disabilities.
- 5.3.17. Shared worship in the Chapel on Mondays to Thursdays offers spiritual support and students are encouraged to attend.

5.4. PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

Parts One and Two

- 5.4.1. The programme consists of two parts, the first of which comprises taught units and the second a dissertation of no more than 15,000 words. Students must complete the first part of the programme before proceeding to the dissertation. Those who satisfactorily complete only the first part of the programme (120 credits) will be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma in Christian Thought and Practice. Those who satisfactorily complete 60 credits will be awarded a Postgraduate Certificate in Christian Thought and Practice. Those who satisfactorily complete both parts (180 credits) will be awarded the degree of Master of Arts in Christian Thought and Practice.

Units in Part One

- 5.4.2. Characteristic for this programme is the fact that most units are core units and that only one unit can be freely chosen. The core units need to be taken at the beginning of the study, with the exception of 403 (taught at a residential) which prepares students for writing the dissertation.
- 5.4.3. Two of the core units have 15 credits each. The optional units carry 30 credits each and one can be taken towards the end of Part One. Not all optional units are offered in any one year; students' preferences are taken into consideration in respect of the units offered. Exceptionally and subject to the approval of the Academic Director, and availability, a student may elect to study an optional 30-credit unit from the course units offered on the MTh.

Core units

Number and name	Credits
403 Theological Research	15
409 Reading and Using the Bible	30
430 Studying Christian Theology	30
462 Spirituality	15
490 Dissertation	60

Optional units

Number and name	Credits
404 The Mission of Justice and the Theology of Law	30
405 Theological Aesthetics	30
411 Old Testament Theology	30
414 Hebrew from Scratch	30
416 Jeremiah	30
424 Greek from Scratch	30
426 The Book of Revelation	30
435 The Doctrine of Creation	30
436 Contemporary Issues in Theology	30
449 The History of Evangelicalism	30
456 Worship, Preaching and Pastoral Care	30
474 Church Planting and Pioneer Ministry	30
475 Chaplaincy	30
476 Theology in the Public Sphere	30
477 Multicultural Churches	30
482 Islam	30

Progression

- 5.4.4. Students will be considered for progression against The University of Manchester Degree Regulations.
- 5.4.5. Students will not be permitted to commence work on their dissertation until their research proposal has been formally approved by the programme leader.
- 5.4.6. The dissertation may be in any area of theology covered by the student's units, provided that in other ways it meets the criteria of the programme. The dissertation will be the result of the student's own research and is expected to provide evidence of analytical, evaluative and creative abilities. Dissertation titles will be drafted as part of unit 403 and approved by the programme leader who will make sure that the contents of the dissertation will not overlap with any work previously produced by the candidate. A supervisor will be allocated to each student.
- 5.4.7. Students who have started a unit but submitted no work for over a year, or completed a unit and not started another for over a year, may be deemed to have withdrawn from the programme, unless there are extenuating circumstances. Where there are unforeseen or unavoidable circumstances which are preventing or hindering progress, students should discuss the situation with the unit tutor or the programme leader at the earliest opportunity.
- 5.4.8. Students exiting with a Postgraduate Diploma (or Postgraduate Certificate) may be permitted to rescind this award and 'upgrade' to a Masters (or Postgraduate Diploma) by successfully completing the appropriate further component of the programme providing the following conditions are met:
- The rescinding occurs within five years of the student's initial award, subject to the programme still being available.
 - An overall pass, at the appropriate standard to assure admission to the MA, was obtained for the Postgraduate Diploma (or Postgraduate Certificate) including any capped or compensated grades.

Programme duration

Full-time

- 5.4.9. The full-time mode of the programme lasts for up to two calendar years. Work for Part One of the programme, the taught units, will be completed by the end of May in the first year. Once a student has qualified for Part Two by passing the Part One, they may complete the dissertation either over the summer or over the subsequent year.
- 5.4.10. The full-time Postgraduate Certificate programme lasts for a semester; the full-time Postgraduate Diploma programme lasts for two semesters.

Part-time

- 5.4.11. The part-time mode of the programme lasts for up to four calendar years. Within this maximum limit, it is important that those who are studying part-time progress at a consistent rate throughout the course. For example, if the required 120 credits

of taught units are completed over the course of two years, it is normally expected that the dissertation worth 60 credits will be completed in one further year.

- 5.4.12. Students registered part-time for the Postgraduate Certificate have a year to complete their course; students registered part-time for the Postgraduate Diploma have two years to complete.

Exit awards

- 5.4.13. Students registered for the MA who satisfactorily complete only Part One of the programme (120 credits) are awarded a Postgraduate Diploma in Christian Thought and Practice. Those who satisfactorily complete 60 credits are awarded a Postgraduate Certificate in Christian Thought and Practice.

Interruption of studies

- 5.4.14. A candidature may have their studies suspended, or have a time-limit extended, as laid out in the Interruption of Studies Policy. A student should not assume that an interruption will be granted and should continue their studies under their registration until they are informed in writing of the outcome of the application for interruption.

5.5. PROGRAMME EVALUATION, MONITORING AND REVISION

- 5.5.1. At the end of each unit, students are asked to evaluate the teaching and other aspects of it. The anonymous completed evaluation forms, submitted electronically, are sent to the unit tutors who add their comments; they are subsequently scrutinised by the programme leader and the Quality Assurance Committee which reports to the Academic Board. The students are represented on both committees and any significant outcomes are shared with the Student - Staff Liaison Committee.
- 5.5.2. At the end of each year, students are asked to comment on their experiences on the programme as a whole and the support they received.
- 5.5.3. The programme monitoring procedures form a continual process of review by the teaching staff team, with a rolling action plan in response to data about the quality of teaching, learning and achievement and the student experience.
- 5.5.4. The programme leader [the Director of Postgraduate Studies] provides an annual report to the Academic Board and the University.
- 5.5.5. The programme is part of the College's internal scheme of periodic reviews. Every five years the University carries out a review of the entirety of the validated programmes.
- 5.5.6. Programme revision can be initiated by the College's teaching staff or the Academic Board as well as by the University. Students can address their representatives on the Academic Board.

5.6. WEEKLY RESEARCH SEMINAR

- 5.6.1. In addition to the teaching sessions for their units, students at Part One of the course are required to attend the weekly Research Seminar, which is held on a Wednesday. Papers are presented on a wide range of subjects. Your attendance and participation will greatly enrich your own grasp of Christian thought and practice and enable you to see your in-depth study of particular topics in a wider perspective. Students at Part Two are also strongly encouraged to attend and former students are always welcome.

5.7. PASTORAL CARE

- 5.7.1. A pastoral group for all Master's students meets regularly during term-time on Wednesdays at 1.30 p.m., led by members of the tutorial team. This offers a forum for informal mutual support and building relationships. These meetings include sessions on the development of the study skills appropriate to Master's level theological study.

5.8. SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

- 5.8.1. In addition to the elements of organised teaching and learning described above, you are expected to undertake your own programme of self-directed learning and skills acquisition. This may involve self-directed reading, languages, computer training, attendance at conferences, visits to museums and many other forms of encounter.
- 5.8.2. You are encouraged to record and reflect upon these activities in some form or another. Particular attention can be paid to difficult or stimulating ideas that prompt you to think about your course and your ministry in new, unexpected ways. It will also be useful to produce commentaries on stimulating books, visits to museums etc. Such self-directed learning will help you to develop intellectual independence, confidence and creativity.

5.9. DISSERTATION

- 5.9.1. All students must submit a dissertation of not more than 15,000 words. This word limit includes footnotes and citations but does not include bibliographies, appendices and addenda, or other required pages. The dissertation will be the result of the student's own research and is expected to provide evidence of a person's independent analytical, evaluative and creative abilities. Material used in an essay cannot be included in another essay or in the dissertation.

Starting

- 5.9.2. A student can proceed formally to the dissertation once the following conditions have been met:
- a) The student has received written notification that they have been successful at Part One;

- b) The dissertation proposal has been approved by two tutors;
 - c) A supervisor has been appointed.
- 5.9.3. Students may receive initial guidance on the nature and methods of the dissertation before work for the units has been completed and before the result of their performance at Part One is known. Such guidance is given as part of unit 403 Theological Research, which is taken (at a residential) shortly before the commencement of the dissertation. Preparatory work may only be undertaken on the dissertation at this stage provided a student's performance in other units is not jeopardised and it is recognised that formal approval for the dissertation is still required.
- 5.9.4. A dissertation proposal is submitted as part of the assessment of unit 403 Theological Research. In approving any proposal, the following criteria will be borne in mind:
- a) The subject matter may be in any aspect of Christian theology, mission and ministry. The subject need not be closely related to a unit previously studied on the programme;
 - b) The proposal should demonstrate a student's ability to analyse and evaluate critically a chosen topic;
 - c) The proposal should provide evidence of the student's independent judgment and creative abilities in synthesising and developing their thinking;
 - d) The student should have an adequate body of prior knowledge of the subject which will enable them to engage with the material at the appropriate level;
 - e) The student must have access to appropriate resources, including any requirements for supervision.
- 5.9.5. A supervisor will be allocated to each student when the dissertation proposal is approved. The supervisor will normally be appointed from the full-time staff of the College; a second supervisor may be appointed in appropriate cases.

Supervision

- 5.9.6. The supervisor will have particular concern for the subject matter, bibliography, structure, style and academic level of the dissertation. The final form of the dissertation, however, remains the responsibility of the candidate. As a guideline, each student will normally receive approximately four hours supervision. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that adequate time is allowed in arranging dates for supervisions and in submitting work to their supervisor.

Submission

- 5.9.7. Dissertations should be submitted in the form and under the conditions prescribed by the University of Manchester, for which see <http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=2863>
- 5.9.8. For full-time students, the final date for submission of the dissertation is the 30th September, with graduation the following July, which falls two years after the beginning of the student's registration.

- 5.9.9. Part-time students may submit their dissertation from 1st September of their second year of registration onwards. The final date for submission is the 30th September, with graduation the following July, which falls four years after the beginning of the student's registration.
- 5.9.10. A dissertation which is not submitted on time will be regarded as having failed by non-submission; a candidate may be permitted to submit a dissertation (in the prescribed form and manner) on one occasion only, not more than six months from the date of the meeting of the Board of Examiners. (Resubmission is not an absolute right and in exceptional circumstances examiners may recommend that a student fail without permission to resubmit.) A candidate who has failed by non-submission or undertakes a referral shall not be eligible for the award of the mark of Distinction, irrespective of the level of performance achieved in any dissertation subsequently under the provisions of this regulation.
- 5.9.11. Extensions to the submission date for the dissertation may be sought when circumstances outside of students' control will delay its completion and submission by the published date. Please follow the guidance in the General Student Handbook, Academic Policies and Mitigating Circumstances section of the Academic Administration section on Moodle.
- 5.9.12. If a dissertation is not accepted by the examiners, the candidate may re-present it once only, not more than six calendar months from the date of the official communication to the candidate of their result by the Registry. Fees shall be payable to the College and the University for the supervision and examination of a re-presented dissertation.

Award of MA

- 5.9.13. 180 credits (incorporating both taught and research credits) must be successfully achieved in order to qualify for the degree of Master.
- 5.9.14. The MA with Distinction will be awarded to students who achieve the required level of performance, which is 70% across the overall weighted average of the programme. In order to qualify for the award of distinction, all course units must have been passed at the first attempt without any compensation or referrals.
- 5.9.15. The Master's degree can be awarded with Merit to students who achieve an average mark of 60% based on the weighted programme as a whole.
- 5.9.16. A candidate who produces a dissertation which is deemed by the examiners to have failed will be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma.
- 5.9.17. For further information regarding classification, including regulations regarding 'borderline' classifications, please see the General Student Handbook and Postgraduate Assessment Regulations in the Academic Administration section on Moodle.

5.10. GUIDANCE FOR SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Word counts

- 5.10.1. Students must observe the word limit specified for each assessment. The upper limit is an absolute maximum and must not be exceeded (there is no 10% rule). Where two numbers are given ('a 2000-2500 word project') the actual number of words strictly needs to be within the margin indicated.
- 5.10.2. Word count is here defined as including quotations and footnotes in the essay itself. It does not include the bibliography or any appendices. Appendices are for supporting, illustrative material only; they may not be used to elaborate or extend the argument.
- 5.10.3. Material that exceeds the upper limit will not be read or considered in the marking.
- 5.10.4. Master's dissertations consist of no more than 15,000 words, without an extra margin. Again word counts do not include the bibliography and any appendices. All footnotes should be counted. Lengthy footnotes should be avoided, and all significant material should be included in the main body of the text.

Marking

- 5.10.5. Students submit work electronically via Moodle. Marks and comments are released on a set date, normally about three weeks after the submission date. These are provisional until confirmed at a meeting of the Board of Examiners; these meetings take place each year in June and September. The marking scheme showing the marking criteria used can be found on Moodle in the Academic Administration section under the Academic Policies tab.

Presentation of written work

- 5.10.6. In essays of up to 6000 words there is no need for a separate title page or a contents page, provided the title is repeated at the top of the first text page in bold type.
- All assessed work should be typed or word processed using a font size of 12.
 - Leave a margin of at least 3.0 cm on either side of each page.
 - Quotations of more than 3 lines should be indented by 2.5 cm from the main text.
 - For ease of reference number the pages.
- 5.10.7. Adopt the Spurgeon's house style for footnotes and bibliographies; see Spurgeon's Referencing Guidelines in the Academic Administration section on Moodle. This rule also applies to listing books and articles from the internet.
- 5.10.8. When quoting words in a foreign language, use italics and provide a translation in a footnote; alternatively, put your translation in the running text and the original words in a footnote.
- 5.10.9. Each assignment should contain a bibliography listing all books, articles and other sources used in the preparation of the essay and/or referred to in it.

5.11. RESIDENTIAL STUDY PERIODS

5.11.1. Unit 462 (Spirituality) is taught partly through a residential period, which will take place from the evening of Wednesday 28th November to lunchtime on Friday 30th November. Unit 403 (Theological Research) is taught entirely through a residential period, which will take place from the evening of Wednesday 13th to Friday 15th March 2019.

Accommodation

5.11.2. During residential study periods participants are invited either to stay at the College or to make their own arrangements locally for bed and breakfast.

5.12. TIMETABLE 2018-19

Semester one

	Tuesday	Wednesday
8.30am	435 Doctrine of Creation / 436 Contemporary Issues in Theology – 30 credits	430 Studying Christian Theology – 30 credits
10.20am	Coffee	Coffee
10.40am	Worship hour	Worship
11.15am		Research Seminar
12:45pm	Lunch	Lunch
1.30pm		<i>Pastoral group/Study Skills</i>
2.15pm – 4pm	462 Spirituality – 15 credits*	409 Reading and Using the Bible (until 5pm) – 30 credits

*Classes for 462 will only run on 25/09, 09/10, 16/10, 30/10, 13/11, 20/11. Attendance is also expected at the compulsory residential period from 28 – 30 November.

Semester two

	Tuesday	Wednesday
8.30am	456 Preaching, Worship and Pastoral Care – 30 credits	411 OT Theology / 449 History of Evangelicalism – 30 credits
10.20am	Coffee	Coffee
10.40am	Worship hour	Worship
11.15am		Research Seminar
12:45pm	Lunch	Lunch
1.30pm	<i>Pastoral groups</i>	<i>Pastoral groups/Study Skills</i>
2.15pm – 4pm	448 Baptist History and Principles – 30 credits	426 Revelation / 477 Multicultural Churches – 30 credits

- 5.12.1. *Please note that where options are available these units are only guaranteed to run if there is sufficient take-up.*
- 5.12.2. *Part-time students are expected to complete 120 credits over two years, and are recommended to complete the core units 409 and 430 in their first year.*
- 5.12.3. *Full-time students are expected to complete all 120 credits (including core units 409, 430, 462) in their first year.*
- 5.12.4. *All students must complete unit 403, Theological Research, which is taught via a residential study period from 7 p.m. on 13 March – 12.30 p.m. on 15 March. Part-time students will attend this residential in their second year.*

- 5.12.5. *In addition the following options will be offered: 404 The Mission of Justice and the Theology of Law (by residential, dates t.b.c.); 475 Chaplaincy (not timetabled, but students must consult with Dr Chris Voke before confirming this choice; not available to any who have taken Chaplaincy as an undergraduate unit).*
- 5.12.6. *All students are required to attend the Research Seminar during the year, or years, of their taught part 1 studies. This includes all ministerial Master's students, who are thus expected to be in College on both Tuesdays and Wednesdays of the first two years of their course.*

Document control box			
Title	Master of Arts in Christian Thought and Practice Handbook for Courses in 2018-2019		
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