Faculty of Divinity

Theology and Religious Studies

Religion is central to world history, society and human life. It is a major force in making the world we live in what it is.

Top Theology and Religious Studies degree in the Guardian University Guide 2014
Welcome

As Chair of the Faculty of Divinity I am delighted that you are considering studying Theology and Religious Studies.

There is much more to such a choice than "Religion is important in contemporary society" - although that is true. I am confident that as you explore further you will find why teachers and students in the Faculty are so enthusiastic about what they are doing. If you are visiting us, or are planning to do so, you will also receive from us a warm welcome.

Professor Judith Lieu
Lady Margaret's Professor of Divinity and Chair of the Faculty Board

Why study Theology and Religious Studies?

Highly relevant
Religion is playing an increasingly important role in state politics, international relations, financial markets and social actions. The fostering of religious understanding has immense implications for individual, national and international well-being.

Develop your thinking
Whether your focus is an individual search for meaning, or fundamental issues of war and peace, freedom and bondage, good and evil, this degree is about the relentless pursuit of a deeper, truer understanding. You do not have to be religious to study for this degree: our undergraduates belong to all religions and none. What you do need is to be passionate about the importance of religion in the world and by studying it you have the opportunity to develop your thinking in this area and express your views.

Interdisciplinary programme
Religion intersects with numerous other disciplines across the academic spectrum. You can combine an interest in Theology and Religious Studies with History, Sociology, Philosophy, Literature, Politics, Psychology or Science.

Why study at the University of Cambridge?

Broad degree programme
Our undergraduate degree allows you the freedom to sample the full range of teaching across the Theology and Religious Studies programme or to choose papers which focus on particular elements of our teaching. Such tracks could include Philosophy and Ethics, Islamic Studies, Jewish Studies, Religious Traditions of India, Biblical Studies, History of Christianity or Christian Doctrine.

From the outset this course prioritises choice in terms of subject areas and world religions.

Faculty community
The international teaching staff includes specialists in a variety of faith traditions and in the study of religion and religious practice. These world-class academics, along with students and researchers, comprise a supportive and enriching Faculty community. On weekdays we provide coffee for the whole Faculty to give you the opportunity to learn from peers and scholars in a relaxed setting.

At Cambridge you will receive a great deal of individual attention through the supervision system. This means that in addition to lectures and classes you will spend dedicated time with an expert in small groups of one or two to develop your ideas, critical thinking, and writing skills.
Wide-ranging course

Theology and Religious Studies develops a variety of skills by covering a broad range of intellectual pursuits including the study of scripture, critical analysis of the works of great thinkers, the history of particular periods of human civilisation and reflecting on the latest scientific theories.

The course allows you the freedom to choose from a range of religious traditions and allows you to pursue multiple interests from an historical, philosophical or comparative perspective.

Teaching is provided through lectures, classes and supervisions. You can expect up to nine hours of classes and lectures a week as well as a weekly supervision.

Assessment is mainly by three-hour written examinations, but some papers are assessed on the basis of coursework essays.

The course is broken down into three years of study:

**Year One**
This is known as Part I and is a foundation year. All students study a scriptural language, usually from scratch. You can choose from Hebrew, New Testament Greek, Sanskrit or Qur'anic Arabic. You take four other papers from a choice of seven.

**Year Two**
Part IIA builds on the knowledge and skills acquired in Part I. You take four papers from 16, covering a wide choice so that you can tailor the course to your interests.

**Year Three**
Part IIB offers an even wider range of papers and allows you to develop a detailed knowledge of one or more of the specialised areas within the subject. You can also choose to be assessed for a dissertation and/or extended essays for up to 50% of your work.

Detailed information on each paper is available at [www.divinity.cam.ac.uk/courses/paper-descriptions](http://www.divinity.cam.ac.uk/courses/paper-descriptions)

**Exceptional resources**

The award-winning Faculty building has lecture and seminar rooms and is fully equipped with state-of-the-art audio visual facilities. As a student here you will benefit from exceptional resources including access to Faculty, College and University libraries. These contain specialist texts and manuscripts including the Codex Bezae, an important early version of the Gospel, and the Genizah collection, a globally significant source for medieval Judaism.

More information is available at [www.divinity.cam.ac.uk/library](http://www.divinity.cam.ac.uk/library)

“It has been a challenging, stimulating and mind-broadening experience, in which I have been helped and encouraged to develop my own ideas and skills and pursue my own interests, and which I have absolutely loved!”

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3rd year student
Diverse career options

Over the duration of the course you will develop a range of skills highly valued by employers. These include critical thinking and analysis, independent study, confidence in expressing your developed ideas and a breadth of writing skills honed through weekly supervisions, exams and, if you choose, a dissertation. It is skills such as these that will enable you to succeed after you graduate.

Graduates go on to a range of careers and options in further study. Over the last five years an average of 93% of our students have gone on to employment or further study within six months of graduating. Their destinations were diverse including business, charities, education, health, the IT sector, law, media, and the public sector as well as those which are explicitly religious. Our degree is an excellent foundation for which ever career you choose.

The Careers Service has more information on the following subject pages www.careers.cam.ac.uk/subjects/TheologyReligiousStudies.asp

“[I hope to do either conflict resolution or international aid/ development work and use the Arabic I have learnt here. The degree has greatly improved my self-discipline, confidence to pursue my ambitions and developed my linguistic/ essay writing skills.”

2nd year student

Information in brief

Typical offers require
A Level A*AA
IB 40-41 points, 776 at Higher Level
Other qualifications Contact the Admissions Office admissions@cam.ac.uk

No specific subjects are required to study Theology and Religious Studies but it is useful to have AS/IB Standard Level or above in some of the following English, Religious Studies, Classics, History, Modern Languages, Philosophy and Ethics.

Available at all colleges except Churchill.

2012 entry
Applications/place: 2
Number admitted: 43

Cambridge Bursaries
No UK or EU student studying for their first degree should be prevented from applying here by cost alone. More information is available at www.cam.ac.uk/cambridgebursary

Contact us

Please get in touch if you have any questions about applying to study Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Cambridge.

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