

University of Nottingham
Department of Theology and Religious Studies

MA in Church History

Course Code: V690

Programme Handbook 2011/12

Contents

About the University of Nottingham and the Department of Theology and Religious Studies	3
How the MA in Church History is structured	4
The Dissertation.....	6
Studying for the MA: course materials and libraries.....	6
Studying for the MA: WebCT and the internet.....	7
Studying for the MA: the annual residential seminar.....	8
The academic aims of the MA	9
The modules	12
Early Christian Writings (outside the canonical collection)	12
The Developing Tradition: Theologians of the Second Century	13
The Emergence of the New Testament Canon	14
Reading Medieval Theologians from Anselm to Ockham	14
The Virgin Mary in Christian Tradition	15
Dante, Religion and Culture.....	16
Richard Hooker: Prophet of Anglicanism?	16
Revivalism and Reform in Britain and America, 1730-1850.....	17
The Churches and the Social Question in Britain 1815-1900	17
Christianity in Twentieth-century Britain	18
Research Methods and Resources.....	18
Directed Reading	19
The course team	20
Fees	22
Exit points.....	23
Marking standards and degree classification	24
Academic dress.....	24
Useful contacts	25
Application and registration	25
Anything else?	26

About the University of Nottingham and the Department of Theology and Religious Studies

The University of Nottingham is consistently ranked within the top ten universities in the United Kingdom and within the top one hundred worldwide. It is a member of the Russell Group of research-intensive universities. Its priorities are therefore world-leading research, excellence in teaching, and the highest quality of support for students and staff. In 2009, the *Sunday Times Good University Guide* stated that:

'.....a place to study at Nottingham remains among the most sought-after in higher education. Teaching and research excellence spans all disciplines with only Cambridge and Manchester boasting more than Nottingham's 33 top-rated teaching subjects.'

The University has grown exponentially since 1877, when W.E. Gladstone laid the first foundation stone in the city centre. Generously funded in the early-twentieth century by the chemist-philanthropist (and committed Wesleyan) Sir Jesse Boot, the University was granted its Royal Charter in 1948. It now has four sites in the city of Nottingham and in the last ten years new campuses have been established in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and Ningbo, China. But despite its size, the University still operates very much on a human scale. Enquiries to the central administration are dealt with promptly and efficiently. There is a dedicated Distance Learning Administrator within the School of Humanities, and a dedicated subject librarian based at the Hallward Library.

With a permanent academic staff of seventeen, the Department of Theology and Religious Studies is large enough to be able to offer an exciting range of modules and research opportunities, but small enough for staff and students to get to know each other, and enjoy friendly and productive relationships. Established over fifty years ago, the Department is now particularly strong in church history and historical theology, and in systematic and philosophical theology. It is located in the Humanities Building on the University Park Campus.

Now, through the establishment of the MA in Church History by distance learning (together with its sister programme, the MA in Systematic and Philosophical Theology by distance learning) the University is making it possible for students who are unable to take advantage of a period of full-time residence in Nottingham to enjoy the benefits of studying for a Nottingham Master's degree.

How the MA in Church History is structured

The structure of the distance learning degree is exactly the same as the structure of Nottingham's other Master's degrees in Theology and Religious Studies. Indeed, it is possible for you to interchange modules from the distance learning courses and the on-campus courses, if it is practical for you to do so. The major differences are that you study for the qualification over a period of from two to four years (rather than over one year full-time) and you study in your own home, without the need to attend the University regularly for classes. When you apply for the degree, you will be asked to decide whether you wish to study over two, three or four years. The fee that you pay will then be divided over the period of your proposed registration, but the overall amount that you pay remains virtually the same. The only financial penalty for studying over a longer rather than a shorter period is that you will be paying a proportion of the annual fee in any particular year, and in common with other universities, the expectation is that the fee will rise slightly in each year.

If you have a good deal of time to devote to your studies you may wish to opt for a two year registration. However, if you are busy, perhaps with a demanding job, family responsibilities or church and community commitments (or all three!) you should consider registering for three or four years. Postgraduate study requires time and energy, so before you make your application, you need to plan how you will fit it in. Realistically, **you need to have time to study for at least two modules per calendar year.**

In common with most universities in the United Kingdom, Nottingham operates a modular system in which all modules are credit bearing. In US parlance, a 'module' is known as a 'class'. You have to pass a certain number of credits, at the appropriate level (for example, Masters level), in order to qualify for an award. The MA degree comprises 180 credits in total: 120 credits worth of modules, and a 15,000 word dissertation which is worth 60 credits.

Unless you are granted an exemption one module that you must take either as your first or second module is **Research Methods and Resources**, worth 20 credits. The Church History modules (in common with those taught in the Department's other MA programmes) may be taken at **either 20 or 30 credits**. This means you can decide whether to study five modules, or to focus more intensively on just four. The choice is yours.

You can study:

either

- 5 modules x 20 credits = 100 credits

or

- 2 modules x 20 credits + 2 modules x 30 credits = 100 credits

The difference between 20 and 30 credit modules is partly in the amount of course material that you have to study. It is usually 4 units for 20 credits and 6 units for 30 credits. The assessment is also more taxing, usually one 5,000 word essay for 20 credits and one 7,000 word essay for 30 credits, with the 30 credit essay titles intended to be more challenging. The titles of the modules (although not the module codes) remain the same. It is usually possible to study the Church History modules in any order that you wish. Particular modules are not tied to particular semesters.

There are no written examinations for the MA.

The Dissertation

For most students, one of the most satisfying aspects of the Master's degree is researching and writing the dissertation. At a suitable point in the course, you will be expected to start work on a dissertation proposal. The Course Director will advise you on how to do this, and on which member of staff can most appropriately act as your dissertation supervisor. It is very important that you come up with a topic which is genuinely interesting to you, and which can be sensibly treated in the space of 15,000 words.

Studying for the MA: course materials and libraries

Studying for the degree requires you to engage with a mixture of printed and electronic resources. Some of these may be originally printed materials, now available to you in electronic format – for example, downloads of journal articles, or books printed before 1800 (the University of Nottingham Library has electronic versions of all books that were printed in Britain before 1800).

Where possible we have arranged that most of the library resources you will need for a module – article and chapters from books – will be available to you on your computer at home via the University's 'e-library' gateway. This allows you to access the digitized resources of the University of Nottingham.

The degree is not, however, simply e.learning, in the sense that all the learning and activities take place as you sit at your computer. You will also be expected to visit libraries to research topics, and to obtain books, either through your local university library, through the University's postal loan scheme (which is available to students in the United Kingdom) or through purchasing your own copy of key texts. The library at Nottingham offers a photocopying service which is subject to a small charge. Part-time post-graduate students are entitled to £25.00 a year of free photocopying in the library, and £20.00 a year of inter-library loan vouchers.

It is also worth remembering that there are sometimes good theological libraries in seminaries, theological colleges and cathedrals, and they often warmly welcome new readers! The residential library at St Deiniol's

Hawarden, Flint's www.st-deiniols.com is very good for our subject area, and can be an excellent retreat for people who need a quiet focus on study for a few days. County library services can also be very helpful in obtaining books for students. Experience has shown that obtaining good printed resources is rarely a problem for distance learners based in the UK, and with sufficient planning, difficulties can usually be overcome by those who are living abroad.

Studying for the MA: Moodle and the internet

We make use of a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) called Moodle. To access Moodle you will need to log into the Student Portal with your username and password. Moodle is used for several purposes, for example downloading the forms that you will need as you study, and keeping up with developments. You will also be able to use it to contact other distance learners through the student forum. Although your modules will be sent to you in a printed form, they will also be accessible to you via Moodle. This allows you to choose the way in which you prefer to work with them, and to access links to texts immediately. Moodle is also the format used to enable you to access film or sound clips or to view images relevant to the module you are studying. The tutors will be developing and updating the Moodle resources as an on-going part of the programme development.

You can use email or telephone to keep in touch with your tutors, although in practice email is usually the most efficient way of tracking people down. We hope to hear from you regularly, and particularly at the point when you are deciding which essay to write.

Studying for the MA: the annual residential seminar

Experience has shown that distance learners make the best progress when they have some opportunity to get together face-to-face with other students and with their tutors, even if this is limited to a few days in the year. The pay-off for what often seems like a very brief contact period is considerable: it helps you to feel part of a community of fellow learners, and getting to know your course director and other staff can help immeasurably when you make contact subsequently by email or phone. Equally, we like to get to know you, and to keep on track with how you are enjoying the course.

For this reason, we hold an annual residential seminar each Spring. You are strongly encouraged to come every year if you can, and at least once during your studies. In addition to meeting with other distance learning students, you will have the opportunity to meet full-time, campus-based students, and academic and administrative members of staff. A programme of seminars and lectures is provided, and there is time to use the library, and to soak up the atmosphere of the University of Nottingham. All this helps to make the University feel real to you. Inexpensive accommodation is provided on campus. Nottingham is conveniently located in the English East Midlands with good transport links, and the beautifully landscaped University Park is a very pleasant place to stay for a few days.

The dates of forthcoming residential seminar are:

- **Tuesday 24 April to Thursday 26 April 2012**

The academic aims of the MA

People decide to study Church History for many different reasons. Some have studied Theology or History at some point in the past, and remember that religious history was the part of the syllabus that gripped them most; they want to re-engage with it later to keep their brains ticking over.

Some find that studying the historical background of their faith helps them to understand who they are as Christians; they seek a firmer grip on the Christian past, in order to make sense of the Christian present. Others may have no particular church links, but have become fascinated by earlier Christian communities, or particular historical figures.

Still others are primarily motivated by the need to articulate well-grounded theology in the contemporary world; they realise that the study of historical theology empowers the theologian to challenge contemporary assumptions and recover older insights.

Whether you see yourself as primarily interested in historical theology, or in the social history of Christianity, or are simply not sure what your focus will be, this degree will have something to offer you. The academics who have created it happily embrace various different perspectives, and we have no particular orthodoxy of methodological approach. We are endeavouring to use the vast richness of the historical resources of the Christian tradition to explore the interface between history, culture and theology, and we will do our best to help you to do the same.

All degree courses at the University of Nottingham (and elsewhere) have their aims and learning outcomes formulated in a document known as a Programme Specification. We have reproduced part of this document below, so that you can see for yourself what we hope you will achieve.

The educational aims of the MA in Church History are to:

- Foster in students the ability to explore and reflect critically upon Christian practice and expression in its historical context at a level appropriate to post-graduate study.
- Attract students from a variety of ages, locations and academic backgrounds to develop and expand their range of knowledge in the field of the history of Christianity.

- Enable students to make the transition from undergraduate study to postgraduate study based on research so that those who wish to proceed to a research degree are suitably equipped to do so.
- Provide training and experience in research methods in Church History, and in studying a broad historical framework.
- Use the research interests of staff to inform and enhance student learning.

The learning outcomes for every Nottingham degree are arranged under four headings, and indicate the various different skills and competencies that we hope you will have achieved once you have completed the degree. For the MA in Church History they are described as follows:

Knowledge and Understanding

You will be

- Able to demonstrate a critical understanding and competence in the history of Christianity, and to evaluate the contribution of major religious thinkers and movements, in the (i) ancient (ii) patristic (iii) medieval and/or (iv) modern period.
- Able to demonstrate a critical comprehension and sophisticated analysis of current debates in the area of the history of Christianity.
- Able to critically and empathetically analyse a diversity of primary and secondary sources.

Intellectual Skills

You will be

- Able to interpret and critically reflect upon classic or contemporary texts, combining independence of judgement with appropriate recognition of existing scholarship.
- Able to think critically and independently about the way in which people have thought and acted in the past.
- Able to engage in significant independent research in a systematic manner.
- Able to present the results of research in a written form, offering arguments and marshalling evidence to support them.

Professional/Practical Skills

These comprise

- Use of word-processing packages for producing long documents.
- Use of information technology and the internet for effective communication, learning and/or research.

- The exercise of initiative and personal responsibility.
- Research skills.
- Ability to motivate oneself.
- Ability to work autonomously.

Transferable/Key skills

You will be

- Able to deal with complex issues systematically and creatively.
- Able to engage in independent learning.
- Able to communicate effectively with varied audiences both orally and in writing.
- Able to make discriminating use of a range of library and information resources in order to identify appropriate source material, compile bibliographies, inform research.
- Able to communicate ideas, arguments, principles, theories and develop sophisticated arguments.

We have included the educational aims and the learning outcomes so that you can see clearly what our purposes are in teaching this degree, and so that you can decide whether this is the right approach for you. If you need to persuade your employer (or even your partner!) to give you time for study, you might find it helpful to show them the educational aims and learning outcomes. Hopefully, this should help them to understand that you will gain more from studying than just 'a load of esoteric information'.

The modules

For most people, the decision about which MA programme is right for them is governed by the choice of modules, rather than by the formally-articulated learning outcomes! All our modules are written and tutored by subject experts, who are also engaged in teaching, researching and/or supervising postgraduates at the University of Nottingham.

The following modules should be available for study from the dates indicated below (subject to the normal caveats concerning continued staff availability).

Early Christian Writings (outside the canonical collection)

Module convenor: Professor Thomas O'Loughlin

Status: May be taken at 20 or 30 credits

Module content: The module will be a close reading of four or six of the earliest Christian documents of various lengths in their entirety. The concerns of each text will be given priority rather than viewing them as sources for other thematic concerns. This will lead to an examination of how these documents bring before us the history of the earliest churches, and exhibit both their theological concerns and styles of theology. There will be close attention throughout the module to how these texts have been used in theology in the past and how they can be used in theological understanding today.

Module aims: This module has three aims. First, to enable students to develop a thorough familiarity with documents which they will have already heard much about but which are rarely given the direct attention they need if they are to be used competently and confidently within theological investigations or historical research. Second, to provide training in the academic discipline of patristics and historical theology such that other early documents (not read as part of this module) can be used effectively by the student. Third, to introduce the student to the problematic of boundaries within early Christianity between the documents commonly known as the 'New Testament' and other texts, and the relationship between all these texts and the communities in which they arose.

The Developing Tradition: Theologians of the Second Century

Module convenor: Professor Thomas O'Loughlin

Status: May be taken at 20 or 30 credits

Module content: The module will be a close reading of four or six second-century Christian documents of various lengths in their entirety. The concerns of each text will be given priority rather than viewing them as sources for other thematic concerns. This will lead to an examination of how these documents bring before us some of central questions of Christian theology. There will be close attention throughout the module to how these texts have been used in theology in the past and how they can be used in theological understanding today.

Module aims: This module has three aims. First, to develop in the student a thorough familiarity with theological texts from the time when Christian theology was acquiring its distinctive form and to use these texts competently and confidently within theological investigations or historical research. Second, to provide the student with advanced training in the academic disciplines of patristics and historical theology. Third, to introduce the student to the problematic of how Christian doctrine developed.

Pre-requisite: Successful completion of **Early Christian Writings (outside the canonical collection)**. It is assumed that a student taking **The Developing Tradition** has an established skill-set for working with ancient documents resulting from having already completed **Early Christian Writings**. That skill-set will enable the student to undertake a more sophisticated examination of the texts treated in **The Developing Tradition** and to work with texts that are more problematic both historically and theologically.

Early Christian Writings will examine these texts:	The Developing Tradition will examine these texts:
<i>The Didache</i>	Hermas, <i>The Shepherd</i>
<i>The Letter of 'Clement' to the Corinthians</i> (I Clement)	The Homily known as <i>II Clement</i>
<i>The Letters of Ignatius of Antioch</i>	<i>The Epistle to Diognetus</i>
<i>The Letter of Polycarp</i>	The fragments of Papias
<i>The Martyrdom of Polycarp</i>	<i>The Protoevangelium of James</i>
<i>The Letter of Barnabas</i>	Fragments of lost gospels, and the <i>agrapha</i>

The Emergence of the New Testament Canon

Module convenor: Professor Thomas O'Loughlin

Available from: October 2011

Status: optional. May be taken at 20 or 30 credits

Module content: This module will examine those factors in early Christianity which led to certain documents being given special status within the communities' worship, memory, and theological perception; how this collection of documents expanded and evolved in theological significance until it became generally accepted to be a body of 'sacred scripture' which was the Christian analogue of the inherited 'scriptures'. The module will also explore the impact of the emergence of a Christian canon of theology and its significance for Christianity as a 'lawful religion' within the Roman empire.

Module aims: This module has four aims. First, to enable the students to appreciate how the 'New Testament' (as a book), as such, came into existence within a very specific church-setting. Second, to enable students to acknowledge and understand the impact of the development of the 'New Testament' on how its contents were viewed as objects by Christians and read within theology. Third, to enable students to appreciate how canonical status had long term implications for church law. Fourth, to provide students with the critical base for reviewing the notion of canonicity within theology and its implications for particular debates.

Reading Medieval Theologians from Anselm to Ockham

Module convenor: Professor Thomas O'Loughlin

Status: May be taken at 20 or 30 credits

Module content: This module will examine a range of primary texts, in translation, that extend in time from Anselm (c.1033-1109) to William of Ockham (c.1285-1347). Moreover, the texts will also vary in genre from formal academic works to liturgical texts composed in the period. Through a close reading of these texts students will come to understand how Anselm's theological method marked a break with the past; how the rise of the university affected theology; how the recovery of Aristotle and reception of Islamic thought affected theology; and how some texts looked at exhibit the characteristics of 'scholasticism.'

Module aims: This module has two aims. First, to develop the students' ability to read and use a variety of medieval theological styles as sources for

their own theological speculation using the medieval authors competently, appropriately, and contextually. Second, to provide a thorough survey of a critical period in the development of the western church and its theology with an appreciation of how the issues that first appeared in the scholastic period continued to shape western Christianity at the time of the Reformation and later, and still exercise influence today.

The Virgin Mary in Christian Tradition

Module convenor: Dr Mary Cunningham

Status: May be taken at 20 or 30 credits

Module content: This module seeks to develop core skills in historical and systematic theology with reference to a particular topic: namely, Christian doctrine and devotion concerning the Virgin Mary. The module will study the historical development of the Marian cult in Eastern and Western Christian traditions, with emphasis on its spiritual, doctrinal, and liturgical importance. It will show how Christian interest in the Virgin Mary increased in the course of the first five centuries of the Church, especially with regard to three main aspects: her central role in the incarnation of Christ, her status as a model of virginal asceticism, and her capacity to act as protector or intercessor for Christians. Moving to the medieval period, the module will then explore scholastic theologians' interest in the Virgin Mary's relationship both to God and to the human race; in other words, was she free from original sin, or 'immaculately conceived', in view of her special role as 'birth-giver of Christ' or 'Mother of God'? The final unit of the module will investigate differences in modern perceptions of Mary, e.g. between Eastern and Western Christianity, Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, and Feminist and more traditional theologians.

Module aims: The aim of this module is to introduce students to a subject which spans doctrinal, spiritual and liturgical aspects of Christian tradition. Students will be invited to explore the cult of the Virgin Mary from a variety of perspectives and within all of the main Christian Churches, including Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant. The main focus of the module will be on reading primary sources which date from the 1st through 21st centuries and learning to assess their importance within the Marian tradition as a whole.

Dante, Religion and Culture

Module convenor: Dr Alison Milbank

Status: May be taken at 20 or 30 credits

Module content: This module offers students the opportunity to read most of the important Italian poet and lay-theologian Dante Alighieri's works in translation, as well as his sources in medieval theology, philosophy and mystical writings. The cultural background in music, art and politics of the period will also be addressed. Primary texts will include the *Vita Nuova* (his poetic autobiography) *Convivio* (invitation to a philosophic banquet), *Commedia* (his journey to hell, purgatory and heaven) and *Monarchia* (political theory), and writings by Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, Hugh of St Victor, Bernard of Clairvaux, Mechtild, Aristotle and Dionysius the Areopagite, as well as contemporary scholarship.

Module aims: To gain an understanding of an important poet and lay theologian, an overall general knowledge of medieval Christianity of this period and the relation of religious thought and practice at that time.

Richard Hooker: Prophet of Anglicanism?

Module convenor: Dr Andrea Russell

Available from: January 2012

Status: May be taken at 20 or 30 credits

Module content: Richard Hooker (1554-1600) is the great theologian of English Anglicanism. This module considers how he has helped shape the development of the Church of England's self-understanding over the centuries. Particular attention will be paid to Hooker's own writing – not simply the *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* – but also his sermons, and to the many and varied ways in which these have been interpreted. The module will conclude by offering a reading of the ways in which Hooker's work speaks directly to modern theology.

Module aims: This module has two aims. Firstly, the module will develop students' understanding of the Elizabethan Church and Richard Hooker's role within it together with a broader appreciation of the emergence of a distinct Anglican identity and Hooker's contribution to that. Secondly, through a close examination of Hooker's own writing students will be encouraged and enabled to make their own assessment of Hooker's theological and ecclesiastical beliefs.

Revivalism and Reform in Britain and America, 1730-1850

Module convenor: Dr Frances Knight

Status: May be taken at 20 or 30 credits

Module content: This module investigates the twin themes of revivalism and institutional ecclesiastical reform in Britain and America, with some reference to European parallels. The period covered is from the outbreak of evangelical revival in the 1730s, to the last major transatlantic revival of 1859-60. Topics include: the roots of global evangelical revival; consolidation, development and renewal within the evangelical tradition; national variations of evangelicalism, with particular reference to England, America and Wales and Catholic revivalist movements. The final units of the module are concerned with the institutional reform of the established Churches in Britain from 1730 to 1860, with a consideration of the extent to which this can be viewed as a process of revival.

Module aims: The module has three main aims. First, to develop an understanding of the way in which Christianity was transformed gradually and steadily from its early-eighteenth century form to the high Victorian years; secondly, by focusing on the twin themes of revivalism (both evangelical and catholic) and institutional ecclesiastical reform to illuminate two highly significant topics for understanding this period, and to develop international perspectives upon them; thirdly to develop a critical appreciation of a variety of primary sources, and the flavour and content of Christian writing at different points during the period being studied.

The Churches and the Social Question in Britain 1815-1900

Module convenor: Dr Frances Knight

Status: optional. May be taken at 20 or 30 credits

Module content: This module investigates differing Christian perspectives on social questions in Britain from the end of the Napoleonic Wars to the beginning of the twentieth century. The structure is chronological, and topics include: the legacy of Malthus: Sumner, Chalmers and other political economy theologians; mid-nineteenth century crises and responses: Chartism, Irish Famine, early Christian Socialism and the Condition-of-England question; Jesus as a social reformer: nineteenth century perspectives; Christian social critique and action: Andrew Mearns, Charles

Booth, William Booth; *Lux Mundi* and its legacy; *Fin de siècle* social Christianity: Cardinal Manning and the Nonconformist Conscience.

Module aims: The module has three main aims. First, to develop an understanding of the way in which Christianity in the post-Napoleonic period was transformed gradually and steadily into its late nineteenth century counterpart; secondly, by focusing on the 'social question', to illuminate a very significant topic for understanding this period, when Christians expressed strongly-held and changing views on society, politics and theology; thirdly to develop a critical appreciation of a variety of primary sources, and the flavour and content of Christian writing in different decades.

Christianity in Twentieth-century Britain

Module convenor: Dr Frances Knight

Status: May be taken at 20 or 30 credits

Module content: This module investigates mainland British Christianity over the course of the twentieth century. The structure is chronological, and topics include: new century, old faith: 1900-1914; the First World War and beyond: 1914-1939; disruption and revival: 1939-59; reinvention and renewal?: 1960-1975; the millennium ends: 1975-2000; There is an emphasis on attempting to understand religion's regional varieties in England, Scotland and Wales, but this module does not include Ireland.

Module aims: The module has three main aims. First, to develop an understanding of the way in which Edwardian Christianity was transformed gradually and steadily into its 1990s counterpart; secondly, insight into some of the social, political, theological and cultural themes which appear and re-appear in the life and thought of British Christians; thirdly to develop a critical appreciation of a variety of primary sources, and the flavour and content of Christian writing in different decades.

Research Methods and Resources

Module convenor: Dr Frances Knight and Dr Simon Oliver (with other members of the course team)

Available from: January 2010

Status: Compulsory 20 credit module (unless an exemption is granted)

Module content and aims: This module introduces the skills and resources students will need for academic work at postgraduate level, and introduces students to methodological and theoretical issues which arise in many areas of theology and religious history. Topics to be covered include the critical use of sources, academic presentation, essay writing and research methods approaches. The assignment will require students to discuss developments in scholarship in one particular time period of church history over the last 30 years.

Directed Reading

Module convenor: An appropriate member of the course team

Available from: Students may take this module as their final or penultimate module with the approval of the Course Director

Status: May be taken at 20 or 30 credits

Module aims: This module provides considerable flexibility for students wishing to pursue a particular academic interest. A student, in consultation with an appropriate supervisor, pursues a plan of guided reading in an area of Church History or Historical Theology. The area of study must normally be different from any of those covered by other MA modules, and also distinct from the student's dissertation. The Course Director can offer initial advice on topics and supervisors. A Directed Reading module will only be pursued in the final stages of the course.

The course team

Dr Frances Knight, Associate Professor in the History of Modern Christianity, is the Course Director, and the first port of call for all general academic enquiries about the course, as well as for all matters relating to her own modules. Frances studied at King's College London and the University of Cambridge, and previously taught distance learners at the Open University and University of Wales Lampeter. Her area of expertise is Christianity from 1800, with a particular interest in England and Wales. She has written several books on the Church in the nineteenth century, and is currently working on two more.

In 2011/12 Dr Knight will be on study leave during Semester 1

Professor Thomas O'Loughlin is Professor of Historical Theology. A specialist in theology written in Latin in the early medieval west, in numerous books and dozens of articles Tom has attempted to re-new the relationship between speculative theology and the historical experience of Christians. He considers that experience and believing are not simply a context of theology, but are formative – sometimes for better and sometimes for worse – for theology; and that they contribute to a genetic understanding of where Christianity is today. He taught in Dublin and Lampeter before his move to Nottingham; he is editor of the book-series *Studia Traditionis Theologiae*; and takes a keen interest in how faith is expressed in churches' liturgy.

In 2011/12 Prof O'Loughlin will be acting Course Director during Semester 1

Dr Mary Cunningham is Lecturer in Historical Theology. Mary studied at Harvard University and at Birmingham (England). She has taught in several universities in the United Kingdom. She is a Byzantinist with a particular interest in Eastern Christianity. She has completed research on sermons as sources of theological discussion, and also writes about Byzantine monasticism, and the Virgin Mary.

Professor Alan Ford is Dean of the Faculty of Arts, and also Professor of Church History. Alan studied at Trinity College Dublin and the University of Cambridge. He taught at Durham before moving to Nottingham. He is particularly interested in Irish religious history and in the theology of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. In recent times his research has focussed on the seventeenth-century Archbishop James Ussher of Armagh, and on religious conflict in Northern Ireland.

Dr Alison Milbank is Associate Professor in Religion and Literature. Alison studied at the Universities of Cambridge and Lancaster, and has taught at several institutions in England and the United States. She is particularly interested in the Gothic, and has written about G.K. Chesterton and J.R.R. Tolkien as theologians, as well as on nineteenth-century figures as diverse as John Ruskin and Josephine Butler.

Dr Andrea Russell originally studied Law at King's College London, and has completed BA, MA and PhD degrees in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Nottingham, the latter funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Her research interests are mainly focussed on Richard Hooker and sixteenth-century theology, and she is particularly interested in seeing how sixteenth-century arguments work out in the twenty-first century Anglican Church.

You can find out more about all of the staff in the department by consulting the Staff Look-up on the departmental web pages:

www.nottingham.ac.uk/Theology/People

Fees

Current fee information may be obtained from the University of Nottingham website:

www.nottingham.ac.uk/fees

As has been explained, the current advertised fee is based on **one year of full time study**. Part-time students pay a proportion of the annual fee, divided over two, three or four years of study.

There is no additional fee for tuition at the annual residential seminar, although you will be expected to pay a modest charge for campus accommodation and meals.

There are no examination fees.

How to pay:

- Fees can be paid in different ways: in person at your bank, online through the student portal, over the phone, in person at the Student Services Centre, through bank transfer or by cheque. Full details are available on: http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/finance/tuition_fees.html
- You can pay in advance.
- The pro-rata fee for each year varies according to fee status, course duration and APL and ELQ if applicable. Each year this yearly fee will be divided into two and two invoices are raised.
- Students will have to pay the full amount outstanding by each due date. In practice this means that a lump sum will need to be paid within the first month of the course. After this, it is possible to pay in separate instalments as long as the full amount outstanding is paid by each due date as stated on the invoice.
- Fees can be paid at any time through the student portal.

Students need to re-register in August each year so if any fees remain outstanding, they won't be permitted to re-register until they have been settled.

Payment dates:

October 2011 (Year 1)

2011/12 session

31 October 2011

31 January 2012

2011/12 session (year 2) and future sessions (years 3 & 4)

Fees will be billed in October each year with 50% due in October and 50% due in January.

Exit points

Most students will take all 180 credits and proceed to the MA. You can, however, exit from the programme with either a Postgraduate Certificate (60 credits of modules) or a Postgraduate Diploma (120 credits of modules). If it appears that you will be unable to complete the Master's degree within the permitted time allocation (four years) the Course Director will recommend that you exit from the programme with a Postgraduate Certificate, or Diploma, as appropriate.

Marking standards and degree classification

Your work will be assessed by being given a percentage, where 0 is the lowest possible mark, and by convention, 85 is the highest possible. To pass, it must be rated 50 or above. The standard for passing in the Diploma is 40. Work marked 70 or above merits a distinction. To achieve a distinction for the MA, you must have an overall average of 70 or above. A detailed guide to the assessment criteria will be available to you on Moodle when you have registered for the course.

Postgraduate Masters, Diploma and Certificates will be awarded with Merit to students who achieve a final credit-weighted mark of at least 60% and with Distinction to students who achieve a final credit-weighted mark of 70%.

Academic dress

On the award of your degree, you are naturally entitled to wear the academic dress of the University of Nottingham.

For a full description, see:

www.nottingham.ac.uk/current/graduation/regalia-colour.phtml?menu=regalia&sub=colour

Useful contacts

The Distance Learning Administrator for Theology in the School of Humanities is Laura Jarvis: Laura.Jarvis@nottingham.ac.uk

The subject librarian is Neil Smyth: Neil.Smyth@nottingham.ac.uk

Details of other useful contact people can be found on the University website www.nottingham.ac.uk

Application and registration

The normal admissions requirement for the degree is a 2.1 (upper second class honours degree or international equivalent) in a relevant subject (for example, Theology, History, Philosophy, Classics etc). Applications will be considered from prospective students who, while not possessing a first degree in a cognate discipline, can demonstrate a work or voluntary commitment to the subjects included within this programme.

You apply for the MA in Church History by completing the application on-line. Go to: <https://pgapps.nottingham.ac.uk>

The University will usually begin processing your application on the day that it is received.

You may begin the degree on either of the following dates in any year:

- **1st October**
- **1st February**

Anything else?

If you have any questions about the MA in Church History, or if anything in this Handbook seems unclear, please don't hesitate to contact the

Course Director, Dr Frances Knight: Frances.Knight@nottingham.ac.uk