

University of Nottingham
Department of Theology and Religious Studies

**MA in Systematic and Philosophical
Theology**

Course Code: V691

Programme Handbook 2011/12

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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.

The Department is the home of the Centre of Theology and Philosophy under the Directorship of Professor John Milbank and Assistant Directorship of Dr Conor Cunningham (<http://www.theologyphilosophycentre.co.uk>).

The Centre is the focus for some of the most exciting and vibrant research currently being undertaken in Christian theology. With three book series (Illuminations, Veritas and Interventions), frequent international conferences which attract the world's leading theologians and philosophers, an extensive Fellowship of international scholars, and large-scale collaborative research projects, the Centre of Theology and Philosophy is widely recognized as world-leading.

Through the establishment of the MA in Systematic and Philosophical Theology by distance learning (together with its sister programme, the MA in Church History 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.

The Structure of the MA in Systematic and Philosophical Theology

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 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 register 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 fees rise slightly in each year.

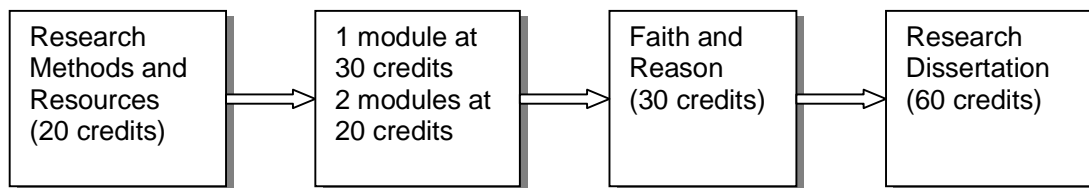
If you have a good deal of time to devote to your studies you may wish to opt for a two year registration. However, if you are busy, perhaps with a demanding job, family responsibilities or church and community commitments (or all three!) you should consider registering for three or four years. Postgraduate study requires time and energy, so before you make your application, you need to plan for 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. Almost all modules (in common with those taught in the Department's other MA programmes) may be taken at **either 20 or 30** credits.

In addition to **Research Methods and Resources**, there is one further compulsory module, **Faith and Reason** worth 30 credits. This will be the last module you take prior to the dissertation. All six specialist faculty in systematic and philosophical theology contribute to this 'capstone' module. It draws together the key themes and issues in the programme through a consideration of the relationship between faith and reason, and theology and philosophy. This module focuses particularly on the latest publications and research in systematic and philosophical theology.

The structure of the programme is therefore as follows:



The difference between 20 and 30 credit modules is partly in the amount of course material that you have to study. A 20 credit module requires 200 hours of study (including the preparation and writing of an essay for assessment), while a 30 credit module requires 300 hours of study. Assessment for each module is usually in the form of 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, for administrative purposes, not the module codes) remain the same. With the exception of Faith and Reason, it is usually possible to study the 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 find 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 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

The field of systematic and philosophical theology concerns the articulation of the meaning and implications of Christian *doctrina* or 'teaching'. This *doctrina* includes claims relating to, for example, God, Christ, creation, salvation, the nature of the Church, human identity and ethics. **Systematic theology** refers to the attempt to relate these areas of doctrine to one another in a coherent and orderly fashion in such a way that the various aspects of doctrine become mutually illuminating.

The practice of systematic theology is undertaken in many and various ways throughout the Christian tradition. From the earliest years of the Church, theologians have deployed philosophical learning as a tool in clarifying Christian teaching. This has given rise to the very closely related field of **philosophical theology**. Here, the particular application of philosophy to the study of Christian doctrine is examined, along with the attendant issues of the relationship between philosophy and theology, and faith and reason. The relationship is complex. On the one hand, both theology and philosophy are concerned with the metaphysical and its relationship to the physical. On the other hand, theology is thought to contain an historical revelation which perfects and goes beyond the reason exhibited in philosophical learning. Meanwhile, philosophy has tended to set the intellectual climate in which the study of Christian doctrine is undertaken. However, in recent years, and in the wake of the theological liberalism which dominated the post-war period, Christian theology has undergone a revival of nerve in the face of the demands of philosophical reason. This has renewed the encounter between theology and philosophy in new and exciting ways that challenge the sufficiency – or even legitimacy – of purely secular modes of reason.

The MA in Systematic and Philosophical Theology is therefore concerned with a field at the heart of the task of Christian theology, and therefore at the heart of human intellectual endeavour. Students may pursue an interest in theologies of many kinds, although always critically and rigorously. The course is particularly concerned with the historical tradition of Christian theology, its engagement with philosophy, the relationship between faith and reason, the critique of secular reason, and the nature of the theological task in the contemporary world.

Our students pursue a Masters degree for a range of reasons: in preparation for doctoral research, as part of their professional development (teachers, clergy, academics in other disciplines, Church workers) or simply for the good of learning.

The educational aims of the MA in Systematic and Philosophical Theology are to:

- foster in students the ability to understand and critically analyse texts in systematic and philosophical theology at a level appropriate to post-graduate study;
- enable students to make the transition from undergraduate study to study based on research so that those students who wish to proceed to a research degree are suitably equipped to do so;
- provide training and experience in research methods in systematic and philosophical theology;
- use the research interests of staff to inform and enhance student learning.

The MA programme seeks to enable students to acquire a sophisticated and critical understanding of Christian theology and philosophy alongside a certain set of intellectual and practical skills. Upon successful completion of the programme, you should be able to:

- demonstrate an intelligent engagement with, and critical comprehension of, (i) ancient (ii) patristic (iii) mediaeval and/ or (iv) modern theological and/ or philosophical texts and themes;
- demonstrate a critical comprehension and sophisticated analysis of current debates and issues, both substantive and methodological, within the areas of systematic and philosophical theology with particular reference to the relationship between theology and philosophy, and faith and reason;
- analyse critically a range of primary and secondary sources, including materials from diverse disciplines.

Regarding more general skills, upon successful completion of the programme you should be able to:

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

The Modules

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.

Research Methods and Resources

Module convenors: Dr Simon Oliver and Dr Frances Knight with other members of the course team

Status: Compulsory 20 credit module (unless APL is granted)

Module content and aims: This module introduces the skills and resources students will need for academic research, writing and oral presentation 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 may include IT skills, library resources, use of the web, the development of arguments, academic style and sensitivity to language, formatting and referencing, presentation skills, and the relationship between academic research and religious commitment.

Faith and Reason

Module Convenors: Dr Simon Oliver, Dr Conor Cunningham, Professor John Milbank and members of the course team

Status: Compulsory 30 credit module

Module content: This would be your final module prior to commencing the dissertation. All the Department's specialists in systematic and philosophical theology (Simon Oliver, John Milbank, Karen Kilby, Philip Goodchild, Tom O'Loughlin and Conor Cunningham) contribute to the module. It is a 'capstone' module which draws together the key themes of the programme, particularly the relation between theology and philosophy.

Module aims: This module seeks to familiarise students with the most important current issues in systematic and philosophical theology, with a particular focus on the relationship between faith and reason. Students will gain an understanding of the blending of faith and reason in patristic and

high medieval theology, the separation of faith and reason in modernity, the nature of theology in relation to other disciplines, and the varieties of reason at play in contemporary theological, philosophical and cultural debates.

Systematic and Philosophical Theology for Newcomers

Module Convenor: Dr Simon Oliver

Status: optional 30 credit module; may be a requirement for certain students

Module content: This module is particularly intended for students who are entering the programme from disciplines other than theology and/ or philosophy. It may be a requirement of your admission that you take this module. *Systematic and Philosophical Theology for Newcomers* will introduce students to the language and method of systematic theology and philosophical theology through a study of key themes and texts. These will include portions of Plato's 'Republic', Aristotle's 'Metaphysics', St. Thomas Aquinas on theological language, John Calvin on the sacrament of the Eucharist, Karl Barth on revelation and the Trinity, and Hans Urs von Balthasar on the paschal mystery.

Module aims: This module has one core aim: to introduce students entering the programme with academic experience in other disciplines to the nature and methods of systematic and philosophical theology. Progress will be accelerated and therefore this module will move from basic material to more complex themes very rapidly. As such, it will be particularly demanding in scope and depth.

Christology

Module Convenor: Dr Aaron Riches and Dr Simon Oliver

Status: May be taken at 20 or 30 credits

Module content: This module concerns the development of Christological doctrine from the Apostolic Age to the present. Through a close reading of a range of thinkers (including Irenaeus of Lyon, Cyril of Alexandria, Leo the Great, Maximus the Confessor, Thomas Aquinas, Anselm of Canterbury, John Duns Scotus, John Calvin, Karl Barth and Sergei Bulgakov) we will examine

some of the key issues of Christology including the doctrines of the hypostatic union and the 'communication idioms', the nature of what is 'revealed' in Christ, different theories of 'soteriology' (how the work of Christ 'saves'), among others.

Module aims: This module has two aims. First, the module will develop students' understanding of the development of Christological doctrine through the study of primary texts from across the history of Christianity. Secondly, the module will enable students to apply the 'tools' of Christological doctrine in the exploration of fresh questions or new constructive issues in Christology.

Aquinas and Thomisms

Module Convenor: Dr Simon Oliver

Status: May be taken at 20 or 30 credits

Module content: This module concerns the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas (c.1225-1274) and the associated theological and philosophical school known as Thomism. Through a close reading of a range of primary texts, we will examine some key themes in Aquinas's work including the relationship between theology and philosophy, the doctrine of creation, Christology and the sacraments. This will lead to an examination of the most significant moments in the history of the interpretation of Aquinas, from Suárez (1548-1617) to the present day.

Module aims: This module has two aims. First, the module will develop students' understanding of the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas through the study of primary texts from across his body of work. Secondly, the module will enable students to study the reception of Aquinas's theology and philosophy and the varieties of interpretation in Thomist thought.

La Nouvelle Théologie

Module Convenor: Dr Simon Oliver with Professor John Milbank

Available from: January 2012

Status: May be taken at 20 or 30 credits

Module content: 'The New Theology' is a pejorative term coined by the French Dominican theologian Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange (1877-1964) to describe a new wave of twentieth century Catholic theology which offered a fresh interpretation of Aquinas and called for a return to the Church's patristic and high mediaeval resources. This movement, which was a reaction against nineteenth century neoscholasticism, is also known as '*ressourcement*' theology – a theology which looks to the depths of the Church's traditional theological *resources* to meet the intellectual and cultural challenges of late modernity. Particularly influential figures in '*La Nouvelle Théologie*' include Henri de Lubac (1896-1991), Yves Congar (1904-1995), Marie-Dominique Chenu (1895-1990) and Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905-1988). They were deeply influential at the Second Vatican Council and form a core element of the theological vision of the current Pope. This module will introduce students to the origins of '*La Nouvelle Théologie*', its revival of the tradition, the understanding of theology's position in the context of late modernity, and the very recent indication of a renewal of neoscholastic priorities, particularly in the US.

Module aims: This module seeks to familiarise students with the key aspects of twentieth century Catholic theology with particular reference to the *ressourcement* movement. This will involve a consideration of themes which lie at the heart of this degree programme, particularly the relation between nature and grace. The module also aims to advance students' understanding of current debates in theology and philosophy with reference to the confrontation between neoscholasticism and *la nouvelle théologie*. A greater understanding of this crucial theological movement will also enable the fulfilment of this module's final aim: to enhance students' understanding of the current Papacy and wider ecclesial relations.

Kant, Hegel and Kierkegaard for Theologians

Module convenor: Dr Karen Kilby

Status: May be taken at 20 or 30 credits

Module content: The background to modern (i.e. nineteenth and twentieth century) theology is dominated by German idealism and its detractors. Key figures are Kant and Hegel, while Kierkegaard offered a radical critique of Hegelianism. This module will introduce students to the thought of these great eighteenth and nineteenth century philosophers in order better to understand modern theology, particularly German protestant thought in the 20th century (Barth, Moltmann, Pannenberg).

Module aims: This module seeks to enhance students' understanding of modern philosophy, particularly in the continental European tradition. Through the analysis of particularly complex texts which represent a very significant break from pre-modern philosophy, students' will gain a deeper sense of the peculiar priorities and tasks of modern, Enlightenment thought.

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 Clement)</i>	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

Status: 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.

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.

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 systematic and/ or philosophical 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.

The course team

Nottingham boasts one of the world's strongest teams of systematic theologians.

Dr Simon Oliver, Associate Professor of Systematic and Philosophical Theology, is the Course Director. His research interests focus particularly on the doctrine of creation, the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas (c.1225-1274), the relationship between theology and philosophy, and theology's engagement with science. He is the author of *Philosophy, God and Motion* (2005) and recently edited, with John Milbank, *The Radical Orthodoxy Reader* (2009). His forthcoming book is entitled *Creation's Ends: Teleology, Ethics and the Natural*.

Dr Conor Cunningham, Lecturer in Theology and Philosophy, is Assistant Director of the Centre of Theology and Philosophy and a leading expert on theology and postmodernism. His recent book *Genealogy of Nihilism* (2002) is a celebrated and widely-discussed critique of any philosophy which aspires to autonomy from theology. He is a well known broadcaster, having recently written and presented a critically acclaimed BBC documentary on the impact of Darwinism on Christianity. His much awaited book *Evolution: Darwin's Pious Idea* will be published in 2010.

Dr Mary Cunningham, Lecturer in Historical Theology, is an expert on eighth and ninth century Byzantine Christianity. She is a leading researcher on the theology of the Virgin Mary and is involved in a number of international and collaborative research projects in this area. Her recent publications include *Wider than heaven: Eighth-century Greek Sermons on the Mother of God* (2008). She has also edited, with Elizabeth Theokritoff, *The Cambridge Companion to Orthodox Christian Theology* (2008).

Professor Philip Goodchild, Professor of Religion and Philosophy, is an expert on continental philosophy of religion. His research is particularly focussed on religious responses to globalisation, religion and politics, and inter-faith relations. His numerous publications include *Theology of Money* (2007) and *Capitalism and Religion: the Price of Piety* (2002).

Dr Karen Kilby, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, is Head of the Department of Theology and Religious Studies. She is an expert on the thought of the twentieth century Catholic theologian Karl Rahner (1904-1984) and the author of *Karl Rahner: Theology and Philosophy* (2004). Her wider research interests include the theology of the Trinity and the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas (c.1225-1274). She is currently preparing a critical appraisal of the thought of Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905-1988).

Professor John Milbank, Research Professor in Religion, Politics and Ethics, is one of the world's leading and most discussed theologians. Amongst his many publications, he is author of the acclaimed *Theology and Social Theory* (2nd ed. 2005) and *Being Reconciled: Ontology and Pardon* (2003). His research is particularly concerned with political theology, gift and sacrifice, and theology in the context of late modernity.

Professor Thomas O'Loughlin, Professor of Historical Theology, is a leading authority on early Christianity, Latin patristic theology and the theology of the Middle Ages. He is the author of numerous essays on early liturgy, primitive Christian writings, the cult of the Virgin Mary, and Celtic Christian history. Recently he has published *Discovering St. Patrick* (2005) and is currently researching the early Church historian and Bishop, Eusebius of Caesarea (c.263-c.339).

Dr Aaron Riches is Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Centre of Theology and Philosophy at the University of Nottingham. His recently submitted doctoral thesis, entitled *Sequela Christi: Towards a Christological Humanism*, investigates what kind of conception of the human person is tenable in light of that the Christian doctrine that Christ is both fully human and fully divine. He has recently published a number of articles in leading international journals and is preparing the publication of his first book.

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%.

Useful contacts

The Distance Learning Administrator 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 <http://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 Systematic and Philosophical Theology 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 any of the following dates in any year:

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

Anything else?

If you have any questions about the MA in Systematic and Philosophical Theology, or if anything in this Handbook seems unclear, please don't hesitate to contact the Course Director, Dr Simon Oliver (simon.oliver@nottingham.ac.uk).

Further reading

If you are curious about current debates in systematic and philosophical theology and want to know more, many prospective and new students find the following work particularly useful. It is easily available through 'Amazon' or 'The Book Depository' and includes an interview with two members of the course team, John Milbank and Simon Oliver:

Rupert Shortt (ed.), *God's Advocates: Christian Thinkers in Conversation* (London: DLT, 2005)