

Master of Theology

Reformed Theology

Pastoral Theology

Theological Studies

Student Programme Handbook

October 2011



University of the
Highlands and Islands
Highland Theological
College

Oilthigh na Gàidhealtachd
agus nan Eilean
Colaiste Dhiadhachd
na Gàidhealtachd

CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Programme Information	1
Module Summary.....	3
Programme Organisation & Management.....	5
Assessment Procedures & Regulations	6
Student Appeals (Academic) & Complaints	9
Student Support.....	9
Appendix 1: Plagiarism.....	11

Introduction

Welcome to your Programme of study at the Highland Theological College, which is a partner college of the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI). As a student pursuing a course in theological studies you will be registered as a UHI student. Please familiarise yourself with the UHI web-site which can be found at the following address: www.uhi.ac.uk/en. Information for students can be found on the UHI site at www.uhi.ac.uk/en/students.

In this Student Programme Handbook, you will find everything that you need to know about the MTh, including the academic calendar, details of modules, academic regulations and so on. This Student Programme Handbook is also available in the HTC Library. An electronic copy of this Student Programme Handbook can be found on the HTC website: www.htc.uhi.ac.uk.

The policies and practices of the MTh are governed by the relevant sections of the UHI Academic Standards and Quality Regulations (ASQR). Regular reference will be made to this document in the following information. Students should consult it for fuller details regarding the regulations for taught post-graduate degrees (available at <http://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/about-uhi/governance/policies-and-regulations/regulations>).

Programme Information

Programme Title: Masters of Theology
Duration: 1 year full time, 2 years part time
SCQF level: 11

HTC has, since 1998, been the academic partner responsible for theological studies within UHI. Dr Jason Maston, New Testament Tutor at Highland Theological College, is the Programme Leader.

The members of the programme team are: Dr Jason Maston, Dr Jamie Grant, Dr Innes Visagie, Dr Nick Needham, Professor Andrew McGowan, Professor Paul Helm, Professor Gerald Bray, Rev. Dominic Smart, and Dr Iain MacRitchie.

Programme Aims and Intended Learning Outcomes

This taught MTh is intended to provide students who (normally) already have a degree in theology with an opportunity to study theology to a deeper and greater extent than is possible at undergraduate level. The general aims of the programme are:

1. To enable eligible students to develop and deepen, in more specialized areas of study, the knowledge already acquired through successful completion of an honours degree in theology;
2. To provide students with opportunities to develop the PG skills required in the theological disciplines being studied;
3. To enable students to engage critically with particular theological ideas and practices, and to develop their mastery of these;
4. To help students to further develop their research skills and methods, particularly in the context of preparing a dissertation.

The intended learning outcomes of the programme are:

1. Demonstrate a comfortable familiarity at PG level with the themes, debates, methods and skills in the chosen subject areas;
2. Demonstrate autonomy and intellectual flexibility in learning and research capabilities;
3. Give evidence of an ability to engage critically with theological ideas and practices at PG level and to develop skills which would be transferable to other areas;
4. Produce work that has the potential to satisfy criteria for publication in academic or professional journals;
5. Reach the level of competence in research which would enable a transition to PhD study.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

The MTh has three tracks from which a student can choose: Reformed Theology; Pastoral Theology; or Theological Studies. The Reformed Theology track will focus on the development, methodology and content of the Reformed tradition. The Pastoral Theology track focuses on the reciprocal interaction between theory and practice in various contexts of experiences, such as in the life of the church, society, and the individual. The Theological Studies track consists of a combination of the other two tracks.

All three tracks follow the same basic structure. Students will take six modules of 20 credits plus a 15,000 word dissertation (worth 60 credits). Which modules a student actually takes will be determined by the chosen track. All students are required to take the following core module:

Research Methods and Dissertation Colloquium

Ideally this module will be taken at the beginning of one's studies.

The following modules fall under the Reformed Theology track:

History of Reformed Theology
Scottish Covenant Theology
Calvin & Calvinism
Reformed Theology & Pastoral Ministry
Method in Reformed Theology
Zwingli and the Swiss Reformation
Romans in the Reformed Tradition

The following modules fall under the Pastoral Theology track:

Reformed Theology and Pastoral Ministry
The Study of Spirituality in its Christian Context
Counselling and Pastoral Care
Communication in a Post-modern World
Chaplaincy Ministry
Preaching

Regardless of which track a student chooses, each student may choose one elective module from another programme within the Faculty. Alternatively, a student enrolled in either MTh

(Reformed Theology) or MTh (Pastoral Theology) may take a single module from the other named track and still exit with the chosen named award.

Not every module will run every year. Partly this will depend on availability of tutors (sabbaticals etc.) and partly on the number of students who register for each module.

Exit Points

Students who successfully complete 60 credit points (comprising the core modules) will be eligible to graduate with a Postgraduate Certificate in their chosen track.

Students who successfully complete 120 credit points of course work, but forego or fail the dissertation, can graduate with a Postgraduate Diploma in their chosen track.

Students who complete 120 credit points of course work and 60 credit points of dissertation will graduate with a MTh in their chosen track.

Part-Time Students

Students studying part-time should aim to complete the core module before taking any others. If, however, this is not possible then it is strenuously urged that it be taken at the first available opportunity. PT students will not be permitted to commence work on their dissertation until they have successfully completed the core module Research Methods and Dissertation Colloquium.

Module Summary

Research Methods with Dissertation Colloquium

Jason Maston

This module instructs students in the basic methods and tools for research in theology appropriate for the postgraduate level. We will address the question of how to do research. This will consist of an introduction to practical issues such as locating resources, using appropriate software programmes. We will also deal with the theoretical questions of theological research. Students will be introduced to the various types of research used in theological, historical and practical fields. The module will also explain the nature and structure of an appropriate dissertation for MTh level. It will explain the various administrative procedures. It will help the students to identify a suitable topic and assist them in identifying the necessary resources to support the topic. It will include discussion about process, about time management and about completion procedures. It will explain what can be expected from supervisors.

History of Reformed Theology

Gerald Bray

The module studies how Reformed theology came into being in the sixteenth century and then looks at the way it has developed in each century since then. Attention is given to both conservative and liberal trends, as well as to ecumenical initiatives in recent times.

Calvin & Calvinism

Paul Helm

The module examines leading features of the theology of Calvin, and the development of 'Calvinism' as a distinctive Protestant theology. Issues of continuity and discontinuity are explored, as well as factors that led to the distinctive shape of 'Calvinism'. Some attention is paid to the later influence of Schleiermacher and Barth.

Method in Reformed Theology

Paul Helm

The module examines issues of theological method in Calvinism, beginning with his *Institutes*, and contrasting it with the Loci method of theological organisation, and with later covenant theology. The presuppositions, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of these, will be appraised. The module also looks at modern developments, notably those associated with Kevin Vanhoozer, Michael Horton and John Franke, and the contrast between systematic and biblical theology.

Scottish Covenant Theology

A.T.B. McGowan

We look at the origins of covenant theology (CT) in the 16th century and the developments in the 17th century, especially the confessional codification of CT. We will also discuss the impact of CT on the Scottish church in the 18th century, especially the Marrow Controversy, and consider the Disruption and other 19th century developments. We look at 20th century modifications to CT especially the work of Professor John Murray and then look forward to emerging 21st century developments.

Zwingli and the Swiss Reformation

Nick Needham

Often neglected as the “third man” of the Reformation, more recent scholarship has moved towards a greater appreciation of Zwingli as one of the primary architects of the Reformed tradition within Protestantism. This course seeks to engage with and be part of that re-evaluation, and to enable the student to study at close quarters the life and writings of Zwingli as a once forgotten but increasingly reinstated giant of the Protestant Reformation.

Reformed Theology & Pastoral Ministry

Gerald Bray

The module examines the application of Reformed theology to pastoral ministry by looking at the practice of great Reformed pastors and seeking to apply their insights to the needs and circumstances of today.

Romans in the Reformed Tradition

Jason Maston

In this module we provide an outline of the major Reformed interpreters of Romans noting in particular the development in exegesis through various periods from Calvin to Cranfield and traversing various periods such as the Reformation, early Reformed scholastics, the Puritans, and 20th century Reformed scholars. We will then show how Reformed interpreters of Romans have significantly impacted Reformed theology and church life more broadly.

The Study of Spirituality in its Christian Context

Innes Visagie

The module sets out to assess the current trends in the studying of Spirituality, and to explore and compare a number of different contexts in which the study of Spirituality is being conducted. The module will look at how Scripture, as the sacred text of Christians, informs the idea of Spirituality, but it also looks at the history of Spirituality in the Christian traditions. Finally, the module will attempt to focus on a reformed view of Spirituality.

Counselling and Pastoral Care

Innes Visagie

The module is design to look at the existential, relational and contextual challenges people are facing, and how an understanding of God and an understanding of these situations can effectively be integrated in a person’s life.

Communication in a Post-modern World

Dominic Smart

This module pursues a biblical theology of communication in a postmodern world. Students will be provided with an overview of the history and development of communication theory ranging from ideas about communication in the Biblical text to a presentation of classical formations of the problem of communication. The rise of postmodern literary theory and the complexities and issues it poses will be addressed.

Chaplaincy Ministry

Iain MacRitchie

This module introduces the student to the idea of chaplaincy and how this is practiced. Recent developments have widened the role of chaplains beyond just religious care to meeting the spiritual needs of all patients and their carers. This module explores how these changes impact the role of the chaplain as a professional within the healthcare system. Beyond the formal changes that have taken place, this module introduces students to the basic roles that a chaplain performs in order to provide the necessary spiritual care to patients and carers.

Homiletics

Jason Maston

The module is designed to take an advanced look at the art of preaching, inclusive of the art of exegesis, interpretation and communication. The module includes elements of critical analyses of existing sermons and preaching styles. Finally, the module will explore the congregation's engagement with and contribution to the preaching event.

Dissertation

Jason Maston

The student will produce a dissertation on a chosen topic and with the guidance of a supervisor.

Programme Organisation & Management

Delivery

Each module will be delivered in a face-to-face week-long block teaching session. These will be supported by use of VLE before in order to assure that the student has prepared properly for the teaching block and after to assist in the production of the assessment. It is necessary for students to attend classes on-site and for the full week. Alternative arrangements, such as the use of VC, will only be considered in extreme circumstances.

Programme Committee

The delivery of the programme will be overseen by the Programme Committee. The Programme Committee is responsible, through the UHI Learning Teaching and Quality Committee, to the UHI Academic Council. It is also responsible to the Academic Board of HTC. It reports regularly to these bodies.

All staff who are teaching modules of the MTh are members of the Programme Committee. The Programme Leader is Jason Maston who also acts as the Chair of the Programme Committee.

There will be a student representative on the MTh Programme Committee and MTh students will vote for the postgraduate representative on the HTC Academic Board. Students on this programme, along with students on other UHI programmes, will have the opportunity of electing UHI student representatives to serve on a variety of UHI committees. For information on the UHI Student Association see www.uhisa.org.uk.

All student representatives are encouraged to bring issues concerning students to the appropriate committee or board, and to provide the student body which they represent with feedback from these committees and boards.

Assessment Procedures & Regulations

Assessments for the MTh programme consist of a mixture of formative and summative elements. Formative assessment is module specific and determined by each tutor. Pre-course readings will be provided prior to the beginning of the module and you should familiarize yourself with those works before the commencement of the module. Summative assessment (i.e., that which counts for your final result) will ordinarily comprise a written assessment of 5000 word written in good academic style.

Submission

Assignments will normally be due on the fifth Thursday after the module has run.

All assignments have to be submitted electronically by email to mth.assignments@htc.uhi.ac.uk. (Note this does not include theses which are submitted in a soft bound copy). The submission of the essay is only completed when the student has received confirmation from the academic office that the essay/assignment has safely arrived with the necessary attachments. Students should keep a copy of this confirmation email stating that their essay/assignment has been received.

Performance Criteria

HTC follows the assessment regulations set by UHI. These can be found in section 14: Taught Postgraduate Regulations and section 17B: Assessment regulations (20-credit framework) of the ASQR. The following summarises and highlights the most important points.

All assessed work will be marked according to the following performance criteria and conventions:

Description	Mark	Grade
Distinction: outstanding	80+	A*
Distinction: excellent	70–79	A
Pass: merit	60–69	B
Pass: adequate	50–59	C
Marginal failure	40–49	D
Fail: deficient	0–39	F

Assessment Criteria

In determining the mark/grade to be awarded, markers will pay close attention to the following criteria which summarise the distinctives expected of work at the following grades. (A full breakdown of criteria can be found in ASQR 14.24.)

Grade A

- Sophisticated critical and conceptual analysis of issues.
- Individuality of exposition or treatment of material.
- Innovative thinking applied to problem solving

- Incorporates a comprehensive review of relevant issues in arriving at a conclusion.
- Extensive research or investigation incorporated effectively into product.
- Clarity of argument, expression or presentation that demonstrates a subtle understanding of the chosen medium.

Grade B

- Demonstrates a critical and conceptual analysis of the issue.
- Accurate and well-informed exposition or treatment of material.
- Coherent critical thinking applied to problem solving.
- Reviews most of the relevant issues in reaching a conclusion.
- Assiduous, but not especially broad or deep research or investigation informs the product.
- Well-organised and structured presentation shows understanding of the chosen medium.

Grade C

- Limited critical and conceptual analysis of issues, with tendency to rely on others' arguments or solutions.
- Generally accurate exposition or treatment of material, with some omissions or errors.
- Partial review of relevant issues in reaching a conclusion.
- Careful but limited research or investigation incorporated in the product.
- Clear presentation, but showing very limited recognition of the potential of the chosen medium.

Grade D

- Little critical and conceptual analysis of subject matter, with considerable reliance on easy and readily available solutions or arguments.
- Few of the relevant issues used as a basis for reaching a conclusion.
- Very limited research or investigation incorporated in the product.
- Non-engagement with relevant literature.
- Does not answer the question.
- Omits important information, or contains important inaccuracies.
- Asserts without supporting evidence.
- Presentation has minimal organisation and exploits chosen medium superficially.

Grade F

- No critical and conceptual analysis of subject matter, with total reliance on others' work.
- Only basic issues used in reaching a conclusion, and those are insufficient.
- Inappropriate material.
- Research or investigation incorporated in the product is very restricted and inadequate.
- Presentation is flawed and uncertain.

Minimum Passing Requirements

The minimum overall pass mark on each module is 50%.

Penalties

Late penalty

Any assignment submitted after the due date will be capped at 50%.

Word Count

Assessments will have a word limit. Word limits should be adhered to closely although a deviation of no more than 10% in either direction is acceptable. The following penalty will be applied to those who ignore the limit: 10% of the final mark will be deducted for every further 10% over the word count.

Footnote requirement

All references to secondary literature should use footnotes. Your footnotes should never exceed 30% of the essay word limit. You should not abuse the footnoting system and, by doing so, seek to circumvent the essay (or other assignment) word limit. Do not use the footnotes to develop your argument in any new or substantial way. Such abuse will be penalised as indicated in what follows. Any student who abuses the footnoting system will be asked to re-submit the essay and an automatic penalty of 10% will be applied. The need for resubmission will be agreed by the tutor and the Programme Leader and then explained to the student.

Tutor Feedback

Generally speaking, you should receive your grades for your essays four to five weeks after you submit them. There can be some minor delays due to the very active itineraries of our adjunct faculty.

Mitigating Circumstances

In the event that a situation arises that prevents a student from completing an assignment or demonstrating his or her real level of performance, a student may apply for mitigating circumstances. The student should in the first instance consult Appendix K of the ASQR in order to determine if the circumstances meet the criteria. If the situation meets the criteria, the student should apply using the application form found at www.studentjourney.uhi.ac.uk. If you have any questions, please contact the Programme Leader.

Plagiarism & Academic Misconduct

Plagiarism is one of the most serious forms of academic cheating. It is theft. Plagiarism can be defined as:

1. copying the exact words of another author without using quotation marks and/ or without referencing the source
2. copying the exact words of another author without referencing the source
3. using the ideas of another author without referencing the source (even when you do not directly quote the author's words)
4. copying another student's work (current or previous) in written, word-processed or electronic form

UHI, like all universities and colleges, has strict rules on plagiarism. It is absolutely essential that you familiarise yourself thoroughly with the UHI regulations regarding plagiarism and with the penalties which those who plagiarise will face. These can be found in Section 19: Academic Disciplinary Policy and Procedure of the ASQR (specifically paragraphs 31–33).

Appendix 1 below provides guidelines on how to avoid plagiarism.

Referencing system

Students will use Tyndale Bulletin referencing style since this is in line with discipline practices. The style is available on RefWorks to which students will have access. Additionally, it can be found on other bibliography database programmes such as Nota Bene.

Student Appeals (Academic) & Complaints

If a student wishes to appeal against an academic result notified to him or her by a member of lecturing staff or against a decision of an Exam Board, it will normally only be considered on the following grounds:

- that a student's performance was adversely affected by illness or other factors which he/she was unable or, with valid reason, unwilling to divulge to their lecturer prior to attempting an assessment, or not made known to a Course Assessment and Progression Board when it made its decision. The student's appeal must be accompanied by documentary evidence acceptable to the senior manager (namely the Vice-Principle) who considers the appeal in the first instance.
- that evidence is produced that there was material administrative error or that an assessment was not subject to appropriate internal moderation or otherwise not conducted in accordance with the course regulations
- that evidence is produced that some other material irregularity has occurred.

Appeals which question the academic judgement of individual members of staff or the Course Assessment and Progression Board will not be entertained.

Detailed instructions and regulations for academic appeals can be found in section 18: Assessment Appeals Procedure of the ASQR.

In the instance that a student wishes to register a non-academic complaint, he or she should consult Appendix H: Student Complaints Policy and Procedure of the ASQR for explanation and instructions.

Student Support

Overall Student Support Strategy

The overall strategy employed by the programme committee is to identify and provide the student support services and activities which will facilitate student learning and enable students to progress towards successful completion of their programme.

These student support services and activities fall into two broad categories, academic and non-academic, which are reflected, for example, in the provision of both module tutors and student advisors.

Further information about HTC and its facilities can be found in the College Handbook which can be found on the HTC website: www.htc.uhi.ac.uk/htcdocs.htm.

Tutor Support

Student Adviser

At the beginning of the session (or semester for second semester intake) you will be assigned a Student Adviser for the duration of your programme. The Student Adviser will deal with general academic matters, learning skills, programme guidance, as well as any personal problems which you may have.

Normally a relationship of trust is quickly built up between student and adviser. In situations where the student and adviser are not able to work together, however, provision will be made for a change of adviser.

Module Leader

Even where team-teaching occurs, each module will have one designated module leader who will have overall responsibility for all aspects of the delivery, assessment and monitoring of that module and of the progress of students taking it. For issues concerning a specific module, this person will be the first point of contact.

On-going Guidance

Students on the programme may at any time arrange, through the office or by e-mail, to speak to the Programme Leader, to their Student Adviser or to any of their module tutors.

Where and when appropriate, module tutors will give advice to students on their performance and study problems. In particular, tutors will advise students who have failed in one or more components of a module on the courses of action open to them.

Library and ICT Support

In addition to the support provided by the academic staff, students are also supported by the Librarian, Martin Cameron, and the ICT Technician, Fraser Jackson.

The Librarian manages all aspects of the library work on a daily basis and is willing to help students with their library needs at all times. In particular he helps to manage the availability of books on assignment indicative reading lists and requirements for photocopying. From time to time, he is helped by a number of volunteers.

HTC provides ICT support for the maintenance of the college's electronic systems, including the networked PCs, the telephone system, and video-conferencing. This includes the provision of induction to ICT for students, and also continuing support to students requiring help with ICT.

Student E-mail and Web Access

All students are issued with an e-mail address and much communication between staff and students operates using this system. It is imperative that you regularly check your UHI email account for updates about your modules and other information related to this programme. While on campus all students also have access to the web.

Special Needs

Students with special needs, such as dyslexia, are asked to make these needs known to the college administration at the outset of their programme so that appropriate arrangements can be put in place. There is also a special website available dedicated to assisting students with mental health issues (www.ssmh.ac.uk).

Careers' Guidance

For general careers guidance, please see Angela Spence. Also, UHI has a website offering advice: www.ccwa.uhi.ac.uk.

Appendix 1: Plagiarism

Introduction

What is Plagiarism? Failure to acknowledge your sources of ideas, quotes or illustrations, etc is likely to lead to a suspicion of **plagiarism**.

Plagiarism is taking and using another person's thoughts, ideas, arguments, writings or creations and passing them off as your own. In the case of copyright material (e.g. web content) plagiarism is illegal. Plagiarism is theft of another person's intellectual property and in the academic environment it is taken very seriously. All assignments and essays are checked for plagiarism and it can lead to you being failed from your course.

It is very easy to avoid being suspected of plagiarism – simply *cite* and *reference* correctly!

What are the Causes of Plagiarism?

Students who are fully aware that their actions constitute plagiarism (for example, copying published information into a paper without source attribution for the purpose of claiming the information as their own, or turning in material written by another student) *are guilty of academic misconduct*. Some common causes for plagiarism are:

- Students may fear failure or fear taking risks in their own work.
- Students may have poor time-management skills or they may plan poorly for the time and effort required for research-based writing, and believe they have no choice but to plagiarize.
- Students may view the course, the assignment, the conventions of academic documentation, or the consequences of cheating as unimportant.

Students are not guilty of plagiarism when they try in good faith to acknowledge others' work but fail to do so accurately or fully. These failures are largely the result of failures in prior teaching and learning: students lack the knowledge of and/or the ability to use the conventions of authorial attribution. The following conditions and practices may result in texts that falsely appear to represent plagiarism as it has been defined:

- Students may not know how to integrate the ideas of others and document the sources of those ideas appropriately in their texts.
- Students may not know how to take careful and fully documented notes during their research.
- Tutors may define plagiarism differently or more stringently than have instructors or administrators in students' earlier education or in other writing situations.
- In some settings, using other people's words or ideas as their own is an acceptable practice for writers of certain kinds of texts (for example, organizational documents), making the concepts of plagiarism and documentation less clear cut than academics often acknowledge and thereby confusing students who have not learned that the conventions of source attribution vary in different contexts.

How Can You Avoid Plagiarism?

To avoid plagiarism, you must give credit whenever you use

- another person's idea, opinion, or theory;
- any facts, statistics, graphs, drawings (in fact any pieces of information) that are not common knowledge;
- quotations of another person's actual spoken or written words; or

- paraphrase of another person's spoken or written words.

Strategies for Avoiding Plagiarism

- Put in quotations everything that comes directly from the text especially when taking notes.
- Paraphrase, but be sure you are not just rearranging or replacing a few words.
- Check your paraphrase against the original text to be sure you have not accidentally used the same phrases or words, and that the information is accurate.
- Always acknowledge facts, diagrams and original thought

Further information:

The above information is taken largely from <http://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/students/support/study-skills/skills-for-assessment/plagiarism>.

See also: UHI Academic Standards and Quality Regulations Appendix I: Academic misconduct.