

THE COMMON AWARDS

Programme Specification

MA in Church Law

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1. Name of Programme

MA in Church Law

2. Department

Theology and Religion

AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

3. Educational and Formational Aims

The educational and formational aims of the programme are described in terms of the people for whom it is designed, the pedagogy it embodies, and the purpose it is intended to fulfil.

'Church Law' refers to the systems of regulation that churches use to order their life (although in some church traditions other expressions are commonly used). Church law has been described as 'the domestic law of the Church – the code of faith, morals and discipline' and as 'applied ecclesiology.' The word 'law' in this document is generally to be understood as referring to church law.

People

The aim of this programme is to offer postgraduate education in church law:

1. for candidates for authorised ministry who have already studied theology to degree level
2. as continuing professional development at an advanced level for individuals whose ministry involves ecclesiastical administration and governance (such as archdeacons and elected synodical representatives)
3. for individuals wishing to pursue church law studies at postgraduate level.

The programme aims to offer education that is accessible to students with a wide range of professional and personal circumstances: many will be mature students, many will be employed and therefore studying part time, and many will be in active ministry. The programme will therefore be available in a variety of modes of learning and teaching, including traditional full-time learning, part-time learning, and distance learning supported by online and face-to-face engagement.

Successful completion of this degree does not qualify the recipient to practise law.

Pedagogy

The aim of this programme is to offer learning and teaching that:

1. enable students to pursue academic study and/or professional development in church law at postgraduate level

2. facilitate academically rigorous and research-oriented engagement with a range of disciplines and/or specialisms within church law that is oriented towards the life of the church and wider society in the twenty-first century
3. by their modes of assessment and methods of learning and teaching enable students to develop as lifelong reflective learners.

Purpose

The purpose of the programme is to offer personal and professional development for those whose ministry involves ecclesiastical administration and governance, as well as to satisfy the aspirations of those students who undertake their studies to enhance, broaden, and deepen their discipleship and ministry in other contexts.

From a professional point of view, the aim of the programme is to:

1. offer pathways of study that support the ministry and development of those engaged in ecclesiastical administration and governance (e.g. archdeacons or elected synodical representatives)
2. satisfy the aspirations of those students who undertake their studies to enhance, broaden, and deepen their discipleship and ministry in other contexts
3. provide a firm basis from which to pursue postgraduate research in church law.

From a personal perspective, the aim of this programme is to develop dispositions that contribute to the Church's reflective self-understanding and the effectiveness of its mission and ministry.

The aims of the programme are that learners completing the programme will have become:

1. open to the questions, insights and ongoing formation generated by engagement with research and thinking at the forefront of the discipline of church law, and willing to go on being transformed by them
2. aware of the critical skills and disposition needed to go on reading independently in the field of church law, understood as applied ecclesiology
3. more passionate, articulate, and prayerful advocates for the mission and ministry of the Church
4. more generous, open, and empathetic in engaging and cooperating with others in their own church communities, in ecumenical contexts, and in wider society, while, as appropriate, expressing their own identity with integrity and sensitivity.

4. Programme Learning Outcomes

Subject Specific Knowledge (SSK)

On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a systematic understanding and depth of knowledge of areas of study or of professional practice in church law that is informed by research and original thinking at current boundaries of the subject.
2. Understand, assimilate, and evaluate critically methodologies and findings of advanced scholarship and research in church law.

3. Demonstrate an understanding of a range of methods of analysis and inquiry in church law and an in-depth engagement with methods applicable to their chosen field of research or enquiry.
4. Give a critical and comprehensive account of a range of methods for relating issues in church law to aspects of faith, church, and society.

Subject Specific Skills (SSS)

On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:

1. Apply their knowledge to undertake independent investigation of areas of study or of professional practice, reaching valid conclusions, some of which may be original, and report these findings effectively within the conventions of the relevant academic or professional community.
2. Evaluate and apply methodologies, develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, propose new hypotheses.
3. Reflect theologically in a sophisticated and rigorous manner, exercising sound judgement when engaging systematically and creatively with complex, unpredictable, and ambiguous realities in the world today.
4. Contribute to the debates at the forefront of church law.

Key Skills (KS)

On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:

1. Carry out systematic and creative research into complex issues and communicate their findings with clarity, sensitivity, fairness, and imagination to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
2. Demonstrate initiative, self-direction, and independence in tackling and solving problems, and in planning and implementing tasks.
3. Exercise their independent learning skills to pursue further professional development or academic study.

DELIVERY OF THE PROGRAMME

5. Learning and Teaching Methods

Teaching methods are to be specified by each TEI using the published guidance on modes of teaching and learning.

6. Summative Assessment Methods

Summative assessment to be specified by each TEI using the published guidance on assessment patterns for postgraduate modules.

7. Formative Assessment Policy

Formative assessment to be specified by each TEI using the published guidance on assessment patterns for postgraduate modules.

8. Assessment criteria

TEIs are required to use to the published Common Awards Assessment Criteria for all Common Awards programmes. The Common Awards specific assessment criteria are aligned to Durham University's generic assessment criteria and Level Descriptors.

STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAMME

9. Outline syllabus for the programme

Total credits overall:	Minimum credits at Level 7:	Maximum credits at Level 6 , or language modules at levels 4 and 5:
180 credits	150 credits	30 credits

The programme may be studied full time over 12 months or part time over 2, 3, or 4 years.

Each TEI will be responsible for developing pathways that ensure all students have the opportunity to achieve the programme learning outcomes.

Compulsory Modules All students will study the following modules (80 credits): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TMM42220: Research and Reflection: Resources and Methods TMM48760: Dissertation in Church Law
List A All students will study 3 modules (60 credits) from List A: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TMM48420: The Law of Church Governance TMM48520: The Law of Doctrine and Liturgy TMM48620: The Law of Church-State Relations TMM48320: The Law of Rites and Sacraments TMM48220: The Law of Ministry TMM43720: Reflective Practice: Law and the Public Minister
Other Modules All students will study a further 40 credits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Either</i> 2 further modules from list A <i>Or</i> 1 further module from list A and 20 credits of other Common Awards modules <i>Or</i> 40 credits of other Common Awards modules.

10. Research training element of the programme

All students will undertake the core Research and Reflection: Resources and Methods module that will focus on appropriate methodologies for the field of study that the student wishes to pursue in their Dissertation. In addition, the module will equip students to understand and observe appropriate professional and academic codes of conduct and enable them to recognise and act on ethical issues related to their research.

For their Dissertations, students may choose from discipline-based research or a research project with a professional development focus. The institution's Board of Examiners must approve dissertation proposals and students must be allocated supervisors with the appropriate expertise

for the students' chosen fields of research. In some cases, where the student is sponsored for postgraduate study by the church, the appropriate scrutiny body must approve the student's research proposal. In general, however, students on these programmes are unlikely to be supported through national research councils.

11. Indicate which modules are pre- / co-requisites within the programme

There are no pre- or co-requisites for modules in this programme.

12. Typical Admissions Requirements

Normally an upper second class Honours degree or equivalent in a subject relevant to the proposed course of study. Normally students will need a good degree (or other level 6 qualification, such as a Graduate Diploma) in theology, although graduates (classed as first-class or 2:1 honours) in other disciplines with experience of Theology or Religious Studies to at least undergraduate Certificate level (awarded with credit or distinction, or with an overall mark of at least 60%) may also be admitted to the programme. Students are likely to be preparing for a ministerial or related vocation or be actively engaged in such a profession.

In general, up to a maximum of 60 credits of accredited prior learning may be granted to students who have evidence of, or can demonstrate learning that fulfils, the relevant learning outcomes of the Master's programme (by completing a portfolio of work, for example).

Students for whom English is their second language should have achieved a score of 7.0 in an IELTS examination, or equivalent.

Each TEI has an Admissions Policy and is responsible for proposing its own specific entry requirements, in line with the generic entry requirements for Common Awards.

13. Field trips, placement and related opportunities

TEIs should refer to the published guidance on field trips, placements and other related opportunities.