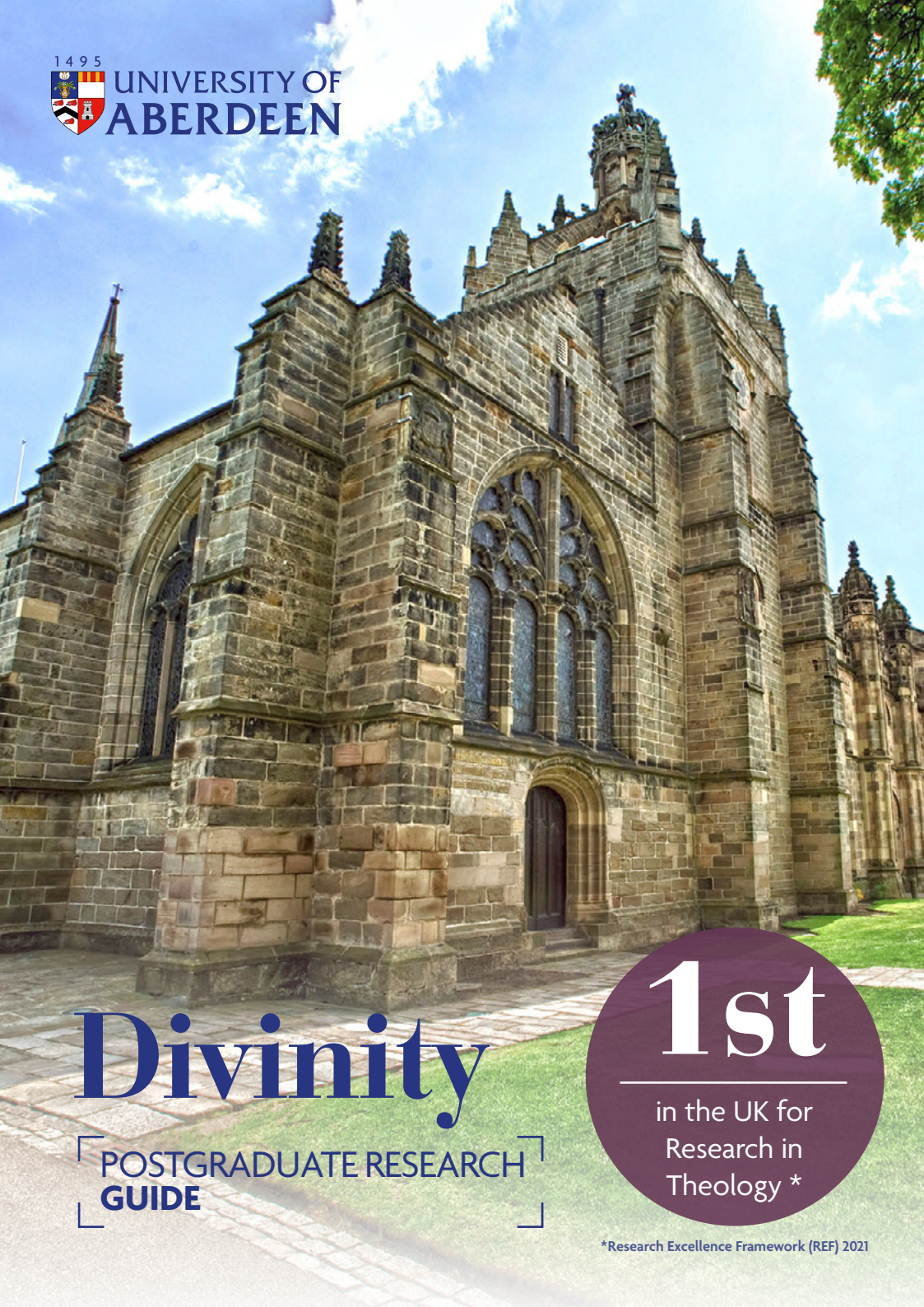


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UNIVERSITY OF
ABERDEEN



Divinity

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH
GUIDE

1st

in the UK for
Research in
Theology *

*Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021



Theology and Religion has been taught at the University of Aberdeen since 1495. Like other ancient universities, our students are taught in a Divinity department and are affectionately known as 'Divines'. Students can study with outstanding scholars for a PhD or MTh by research either full-time or part-time, on campus or at distance.



Why is Theology and Religion at the University of Aberdeen the best choice for me?

You'll join an international community of students and world-leading academics carrying forward over 500 years of tradition. Through the highest-quality teaching and research, you can explore your chosen field of research in a supportive and friendly community. Whether you want to study theology for personal, vocational or intellectual reasons, the University of Aberdeen is the place for you.



Explore your interests

Doing a research degree at Aberdeen is an apprenticeship, and you will work together with an experienced supervisor who will tailor a programme to your needs, and support you as you write your thesis.

At the University of Aberdeen we have designed a programme that ensures our post-graduate students have an enriched learning experience. You can choose from a range of research specialisms including: Christian Ethics, Practical Theology, Systematic Theology, Old Testament, New Testament, Church History, Historical Theology, Patristics, Ministry Studies and Religious Studies. Alongside research supervision, we offer a rich offering of lectures, seminars and workshops designed for our postgraduate community.



University shouldn't
just prepare you for
your first job, but for
the rest of your life.

Nicky Campbell OBE

TV and radio presenter and Aberdeen alumnus



Research Areas

Our faculty each offers supervision to research students in a range of areas. The department is arranged into sub-disciplinary areas which each offer weekly seminars. We also have several research centres which students can engage with: The Aberdeen Centre for Protestant Theology, the Centre for Ministry Studies, The Centre for Spirituality Health and Healing, and the Centre for Autism and Theology.

OLD TESTAMENT / HEBREW BIBLE

Faculty in this area supervise across a wide range of Old Testament/Hebrew Bible and related ancient Near Eastern topics. A special feature of Old Testament studies at the University of Aberdeen is the attention that is given, both in research and teaching, to the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, and related writings.

NEW TESTAMENT

Studying the New Testament in Aberdeen offers notable advantages, including supervisor expertise in the subject area. Our academics are specialists in many aspects of New Testament studies, including the theological study of the New Testament; Second Temple Judaism; the transmission of Jewish apocalyptic texts in Christian tradition; textual connections with Christian origins (including canon formation); Hellenistic philosophies and the New Testament; rhetoric; and emotion studies.

CHURCH HISTORY / HISTORICAL THEOLOGY

Expertise is offered in the areas of the early church, Patristics, the history of Western Christian thought, the Medieval Church, Reformation, Reformation theology and Protestant scholasticism, Methodist history and theology, modern Church History, Evangelicalism, Missionary History and Revivals.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

The department has one of the largest groups of post-graduate research students in the field in the UK, attracted by the publications of its teachers and by its positive ethos; many students come to study topics in constructive Christian doctrine or the theologies of classical and modern Christian thinkers. Students can expect rigorous training in the history and contemporary articulation of Christian doctrine through attentive supervision and an extensive programme of seminars.



Sharing our treasures

Students carry forward the vibrant 500 year old tradition in their own subject specific library hosted in the historic surrounds of the King's Quadrangle. They also enjoy spectacular views from the top floor of our state of the art new university library.

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

Our discipline begins and ends with inquiries focused on practices. Our task is to think through faith not as 'mere belief' but as lived, purposeful and transformative. Practical Theology at the University of Aberdeen is creatively and rigorously interdisciplinary and deeply theological.

THEOLOGICAL ETHICS

The Theological Ethics team at the University of Aberdeen cooperate closely with colleagues in the two related subject areas of Systematic and Practical Theology, as well as having a sympathetic relationship to a range of other disciplines in the wider university.

MINISTRY STUDIES

Aberdeen University has been committed to Ministry Studies since its creation by Bishop Elphinstone in 1495. This area is both practical and theological, as it wrestles with robust research into themes and subjects that are related to Christian ministry.

RELIGION

Whether you are interested in theories of religion, Gnosticism, ancient Greek religions, or the social scientific study of religion, Aberdeen offers the opportunity to make use of our exceptional resources as you work on your thesis.

PATRISTICS

Supervision is offered in a wide range of Eastern, Oriental, and Western Patristics, especially in the early centuries, focusing on particular figures (from Irenaeus of Lyons to Isaac of Nineveh), diverse fields (from exegesis to monasticism), texts and their traditions, and theological themes. Interdisciplinary research in collaboration with the renowned research areas of New Testament and Systematic Theology is also encouraged.

A day in the life of a Divinity postgraduate

Here's an example of a typical day as a 'Divine' studying towards a PhD on campus full-time.



LIBRARY - 14.00

It's off to the library to grab some books to research for the next chapter of the dissertation. The Theology and Religion books are on the top floor and the views are great out across the city and the North Sea, so working here is always really pleasant; plus, there's a great coffee shop on the ground floor.



INTER-DISCIPLINARY SEMINAR ON MONOTHEISM - 9.15

After breakfast with faculty and some fellow students, there is a seminar for all research students who are interested. The seminar involves reading both classical works and recent texts written by members of faculty on monotheism, and is an inter-disciplinary discussion around a major area of interest across theology, biblical studies, philosophy and religion. We meet in the beautiful surroundings of the Divinity Library.

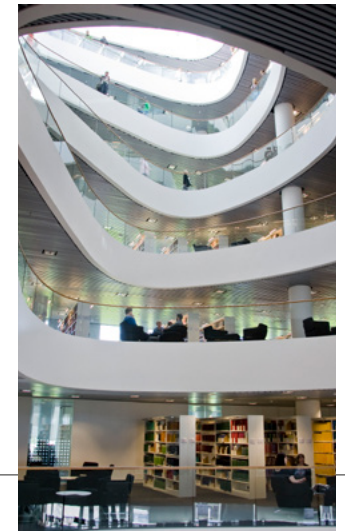


RESEARCH SUPERVISION- 11:00

Having turned in a chapter last week, there is a supervision with a member of faculty for just over an hour or so, with extensive feedback on the draft and agreed steps forward.

LANGUAGE READING GROUP - 13.00

The course will introduce students to the form of Greek found in the New Testament and help students to begin to read and write in ancient Greek.



The Department of Divinity

In addition to academic excellence in teaching and learning, the Department of Divinity is a very vibrant, supportive community, offering pastoral support, careers guidance and opportunities to engage in a range of extra curricular activities.



'The supervision I received for my research pushed me to grow academically and professionally beyond what I expected. I experienced continuous support along the way from my supervisor and the PGR community at King's College, Aberdeen. My Ph.D. was a rigorous, stretching, and rewarding experience - everything I hoped it to be.'

Sean McGever, Recent PhD Graduate

'I'm thankful to have ended up studying here at Aberdeen. The kind of interdisciplinary work I'm engaged in has been greatly helped by collaborative relationships among faculty members and the constructive atmosphere in which work can be shared. It is such a pleasure to have a theologically acute New Testament advisor work alongside a biblically-attuned Systematic Theology advisor. This is a great example of the kind of cross-discipline conversation and cooperation called for in so many quarters. What enables much of this is a common commitment among many faculty members of doing theology in service to the Church in society.'

Daniel Robbins

Graduating Class



Dr DJ Konz, Full time, on campus student (now Associate Dean and Head of Theology, Alphacrucis College, Australia)

'Doctoral research at Aberdeen was a profoundly rewarding, deeply enriching, and immensely formative experience—personally, and academically. The Divinity Faculty at Aberdeen, while world leaders in their fields, are genuinely dedicated to the success of those they supervise. I simply can't imagine a better place to find the knowledge, tools and support for success in your research—and future!'



Melissa Tan, full time on campus PhD in New Testament:

'The divinity dept at Aberdeen fosters a strong sense of collegiality and humility among its doctoral candidates. Given that we are all on different stages of the same journey of this degree, I know I can turn to my fellow colleagues for support. In particular, I've seen a willingness among my colleagues to share about their own experiences—both the rewarding and the challenging—with each other in order to show solidarity and encouragement.'

What sort of career could I enter?

'Lots of our students (especially those who study on campus) go on to careers in academia. We run workshops and career development events, addressing everything from publishing a journal article to securing a book contract to preparing a letter of application. There are lots of opportunities to gain experience of teaching and research support, and faculty are always willing to offer advice.

Many of our postgraduates also go on to work in third sector areas, such as church and parachurch ministry, charity work, and development work. There is an outstanding careers service which can help with all careers advice.

Was your degree at Aberdeen essential for getting to where you are now?

'My studies at the University of Aberdeen as a part-time distance student in systematic theology have afforded me the opportunity to pursue doctoral studies while working full-time in academia. With supportive, first-rate faculty, the University of Aberdeen offers a unique space to learn how to research and think critically about various theological questions related to my research.'

Kait Duggan, Managing Director for the Center for Barth Studies at Princeton Theological Seminary



The Ph.D. study at Aberdeen was a tremendous blessing for me. It allowed me to gain a solid theological understanding of the belonging of people with profound autism to the church. This knowledge is helpful for my work as the national coordinator for disability ministries for my denomination. My learning enables me to advocate theologically for the belonging of people with disabilities to the church.

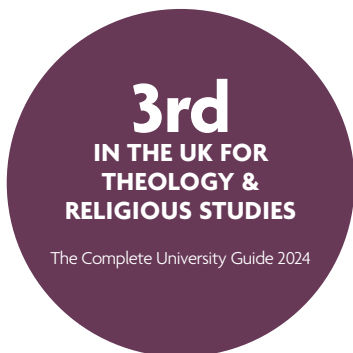
Dr Cynthia Tam, Canada National Coordinator for Disability Ministries

I quickly found that the training I'd had at Aberdeen ... was an excellent preparation: skills in researching a subject, analysing it, and explaining conclusions orally and in writing.

Civil servant in the Scottish Office

'Our programmes in Divinity and Religious Studies provide vital skills that prepare our students for the job market: independence, critical reading, communication, writings skills, and empathy.'

Dr Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer



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