



## Programme Specification 2024-25

### MTh Old Testament

Awarding Body	Presbyterian Theological Faculty Ireland (PTFI)
Teaching Body	Union Theological College, 108 Botanic Avenue, Belfast BT7 1JT
Type of Collab. Arrangement	N/A
Award Title	MTh Old Testament
Final Award	MTh Old Testament
Exit Award(s)	PG Cert Old Testament (60 CATS), PG Cert Old Testament (120 CATS)
Department	Department of Biblical Studies
Language of Study	English
FHEQ Level	Level 7
JACS Code	V610
QAA Subject Benchmark	QAA Benchmark Theology and Religious Studies (2022)
Normal Completion Time & Max Duration of Study	Part-time study - all taught modules must be completed within three years of enrolment. The dissertation is to be written in no more than a 12-month period. The earliest submission date for the dissertation is 24 months after enrolment and the latest submission date is four years after enrolment.
Mode of Study	Part-time
Mode of Delivery	Online
Date Approved and Name of Authorised Body	11 June 2021, PTFI
Applies to Students Commencing Study in (month/year)	September 2023, January 2024



## Summary of the Programme

The MTh is a specialised, advanced study Master's degree that is designed to enhance prior exegetical and theological training/study by providing a rigorous grounding in all core aspects of Old Testament Studies.

## Aims of the Programme

### Main Educational Aims

- To enable students to build upon prior theological study through a programme focused on advanced engagement with the Old Testament, particularly as competent and confident interpreters of Biblical texts for the contemporary context.
- To provide opportunity for students to reflect upon and integrate their prior theological study (and usually their experience of Christian ministry) with new learning that is informed by research-led and research-focused scholarship.
- To foster a community of immersive digital engagement in which students may conduct informed and respectful dialogue, recognising the strengths and weaknesses of other points of view.
- To provide the knowledge and skills necessary to produce original research through sustained interaction with Old Testament texts and their interpreters and reflection on their reception and impact both within and beyond the Church.
- To develop an appreciation of the vocation of a Christian exegete and theologian and to strengthen and sharpen the intellectual habits and practical skills necessary for such a calling.

## Criteria for Admission

### Programme Entrance Requirements

Typically, admission requires a 2.1 honours degree or above or equivalent qualification acceptable to PTFI, where Theology and/or Divinity is the main subject area OR where it is one of the joint subjects in an honours degree. In the case of the latter, the modules in Theology and/or Divinity must be of 2.1 level or above, OR a 2.1 honours degree or equivalent qualification acceptable to PTFI in a subject other than Theology/Divinity, and a Graduate Diploma in Theology with normally at least 5 out of the 6 modules with a mark of 60% or above.

For overseas students, a 2.1 honours degree is normally equivalent to a Cumulative Grade Point Average of 3.3 or higher from an accredited institution.

Union Theological College requires all applicants whose first language is not English to have one of the following qualifications as evidence of their English language ability:

- An undergraduate or master's degree that was taught and assessed in English in a majority English-speaking country as defined by UK Visas and Immigration.
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Academic module (not General Training): overall score of 7.0 with at least 6.5 in each category.



- Pearson Test of English, Academic: PTE(A) total 67 (at least 61 in each of the 'communicative skills' sections).
- Cambridge Proficiency (CPE) or Cambridge Advanced (CAE): total 186 (at least 176 in each module).
- Degrees taught and assessed in English must be no more than three years old at the beginning of the MTh programme. Language tests must be no more than two years old at the beginning of the degree programme.

In addition to the requirement of a 2:1 undergraduate UK honours degree (or above) in Theology, or an equivalent award from universities in other countries, entry to an MTh in the area of Old Testament Studies involves proficiency in Biblical Hebrew.

#### **MTh in Old Testament - Proficiency in Hebrew**

Prior to admission on the course, a student must have completed a comprehensive introduction to Biblical Hebrew, equivalent to a full academic year of study. This must be current.

Where appropriate, an informal language interview or short written test may be used to confirm that a student's Hebrew proficiency is current.

It is the responsibility of students to provide, where necessary, evidence of relevant courses/modules they have completed, in the form of transcripts or similar information.

#### **Credit Accumulation & Transfer, and Accreditation of Prior Learning**

The College's RPL Policy allows prospective students who do not meet the criteria for admission to demonstrate relevant prior experiential and certificated learning through the production of a portfolio of learning.

#### **Programme Outcomes**

The programme provides opportunities for students to achieve and demonstrate the following learning and educational outcomes.

##### **Knowledge and Understanding**

By completion of this MTh programme, a successful student should have demonstrated:

1. An advanced understanding of the Biblical texts, with higher-level knowledge appropriate for interpreting them competently and confidently, including in their original language.
2. An advanced and systematic understanding of hermeneutical methodologies and their relevance and application to the interpretation of Biblical texts, with a particular focus on christological hermeneutics.
3. An advanced understanding of the Old Testament Canon in its unity and diversity and of its place within the Biblical Canon.
4. An advanced understanding of the methodological and hermeneutical models and assumptions used in the application of Biblical texts to contemporary contexts, including ministry and mission.



## Skills

By completion of this MTh programme, a successful student should have demonstrated:

1. An advanced ability to interpret Biblical texts, especially Old Testament texts, rigorously applying appropriate scholarly resources and critical tools from across the methodological spectrum (author-, text-, and reader-centred), with regard to the history of their reception and study and their social, theological or pastoral ramifications for contemporary contexts, including mission and ministry.
2. An advanced capacity for adopting a critical distance from both primary sources and from secondary literature and for their evaluation.
3. A high level of critical awareness and currency in exegetical and theological research, with competence for making original applications of knowledge and the potential for original thinking in the subject.
4. High-level mastery of the range of techniques of research and enquiry necessary to access, organise, create and interpret knowledge within the discipline and deal systematically and creatively with interpretative issues arising.
5. A high level of presentational and communication skills in the construction and articulation of cogent, well-informed, critically-engaged, and sustained arguments as practised within Biblical Studies.
6. Advanced competency in postgraduate research skills, including self-direction, initiative, independence, and originality in the planning and production of a substantial dissertation.
7. A strong capacity to articulate, and reflect critically upon, one's own theological tradition, notably its view of Scripture, as well as to engage in informed and respectful dialogue, concerning controversial interpretative issues, with other points of view.

## Programme Structure and Module Requirements

A student will take a total of 180 CATS of modules as outlined below:

Title	CATS	2024 - 25			2025-26		
		Autumn 2024	Spring 2025	Summer 2025	Autumn 2025	Spring 2026	Summer 2026
Hebrew Texts	30	•					
Old Testament Hermeneutics	30				•		
The Law - Genesis	20		•				
The Prophets - Isaiah	20						
The Writings - Chronicles	20					•	
Dissertation (15,000 words)	60	•	•	•	•	•	•



The schedule of modules is provisional as the programme is currently under review and changes may be made.

## Vocational Opportunities

### Employability

- This postgraduate programme provides students with those skills required for undertaking doctoral research in the field of Old Testament studies.
- The course is particularly tailored to provide further training and ongoing development for ministers.
- Enhanced skills of analytical thinking or the ability to express oneself clearly and cogently in writing are highly sought after by a diverse range of employers.
- The nature of this digital offering enhances a spectrum of digital capabilities especially relevant for contemporary employment.

## Programme Awards

This programme conforms to the Union Theological College PGT Regulations.

## Programme Teaching and Learning Strategies

The programme teaching and learning strategy aligns with the College's teaching and learning strategy 2020-25. It has been designed to enable students to fulfil the learning outcomes outlined above.

### Knowledge and Understanding

In co-ordination with their tutor, students will gain knowledge and understanding through:

- Video introductions, overviews and lectures that provide information for each module's core curricular content and that exemplify scholarly discussion on the topics in question, especially by considering and assessing different methods within the discipline and differing readings of primary texts
- Instruction in the nature of the module assessment.
- Guided independent study designed to provide breadth and depth in their expanding understanding of exegetical-theological methodologies.
- Engaging with others in the digital discussion boards in order to discuss and consolidate knowledge.
- Completing interpretative exercises that promote and enable sustained engagement with relevant primary and secondary texts.
- The formative nature of all other written assessment tasks.
- Individual written (and at times oral) feedback on written submissions.
- Dissertation supervision to help students develop and assess their progress.



## Skills

In coordination with their tutor, students develop skills through the following:

- Exposure to on-going debate and to authors whose research and writing model requisite interpretative skills through guided independent reading on primary and secondary texts.
- Various assessment tasks on Biblical texts – in the original language and in English – and on secondary literature that enable students to demonstrate these skills.
- Assessment packages and seminars that offer breadth and depth to the learning experience.
- One-to-one dissertation supervision, from those with subject-specific expertise in Old Testament interpretation, prioritises training in research and writing skills.

## Programme Assessment Strategy

The College's Assessment Policy includes principles which are fully aligned with the UK Quality Code. Assessment methods on the programme enable the student to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes outlined above. A wide variety of methods are used to enable the student to have every opportunity to demonstrate their competence. Assessment methods include the following:

### Knowledge and Understanding

- Student knowledge and understanding are assessed by a combination of these assessment elements: Testing proficiency in Biblical Hebrew through a range of linguistic exercises.
- Requiring students to post to discussion boards on a certain number of occasions (this requirement is on a pass/fail basis and does not contribute to the summative grade).
- Testing breadth of knowledge and understanding of primary texts or secondary literature through shorter pieces of writing.
- Testing depth of knowledge and understanding of primary texts or secondary literature through longer pieces of writing.
- Ascertaining whether a student displays most, if not all, the programme-level learning outcomes for knowledge and understanding through a 15,000-word capstone dissertation.

## Skills

- Written assignments provide a vehicle for demonstrating skills
- Various grammatical and linguistic skills, permitting students to demonstrate independent analysis and translation of Biblical Hebrew.
- Exegetical or theological writing allow students to demonstrate the depth of their skills.

## Student Support and Guidance



Each student is allocated a Personal Tutor who can assist with academic advice and support with personal issues. The College has a Disability Officer and Disability Support policy.