



Master of Arts in Theology

Handbook

April 2026

Introduction

Master of Arts in Theology

The course is suited for individuals who desire to enhance their knowledge of theology and its various applications used in different fields of employment, and provides the needed professional skills for those pursuing career paths related to religion and philosophy. The course also prepares students for engaging with studies at the doctoral level in theology or other related fields.

The Master of Arts in Theology qualifies students for leadership positions in faith-based organisations, higher education, non-profit organisations, volunteer and community services. It also provides general qualifications in domains that use the transferable skills and competences developed in this course, including conducting rigorous research, collecting and analysing data, making evidence-based judgments, developing theories, writing and presenting reports, and effective oral communication.

Entry requirements

Education Requirements

Standard admission to the MA in Theology normally requires a degree at EQF level 6 in any subject area.

Language Requirements

English language competency at an IELTS 6.5 or equivalent is required of all applicants. Native speakers, and students that have completed their education up to the EQF 4 level in English are not required to take a language test.

Instructional design

Teaching: The Master of Arts in Theology combines asynchronous components (lecture videos, readings, and assignments) and synchronous meetings attended by students and a teacher during a video call. Asynchronous components support the schedule of students from diverse work-life situations, and synchronous meetings provide accountability and motivation for students. Students have direct access to their teacher and their peers at all times through the use of direct message and group chat; teachers are also able to initiate voice and video calls with students outside the regularly scheduled synchronous sessions. The programme is composed of taught modules and a dissertation, and the overall programme must creditably be 2250 hours (90 ECTS).

Assessment: For the Master of Arts in Theology, assessment is of two kinds: regular and cumulative. Each module consists of both regular units where new material is taught and learned and cumulative units devoted to summative examination where learning and retention are assessed. The overall mark on the course is composed of the grades on the taught modules weighted according to their ECTS. Each of the taught modules are internally weighted as follows: 60% of the mark derives from the average of the assignments, and 40% of the mark derives from the cumulative examination.

Cumulative assessment(s) may consist of a final project, written examination, or oral examination. For graduate-level dissertations and final projects: both the supervising instructor and another faculty member

of Woolf grade the work independently of each other. Their grades are averaged, but any spread greater than ten points that cannot be immediately resolved by the two graders will trigger a review by a third faculty member for final decision. Masters-level dissertations are recommended to be additionally examined by viva voce, and the examiner will be a faculty member different from the supervising instructor.

Degree structure

All modules are compulsory. Students must complete 90 ECTS total.

Module	ECTS	Level
Radical Theology	6	EQF 7
Historical Perspectives on Philosophical Theology	6	EQF 7
Critical Paradigms in Theology	6	EQF 7
Further Studies in Theology I	6	EQF 7
Further Studies in Theology II	6	EQF 7
Epistemology and Theology	6	EQF 7
Independent Study in Theology	6	EQF 7
Theology Dissertation	30	EQF 7

Module Descriptions

1. Radical Theology

This module will introduce students to the key concepts and ideas that have given rise to Radical Theology, offering a historical and contextual overview of the various streams in radical theological thought. The module will also address the potentials and possibilities Radical Theology offers to those who are interested in redefining faith and community life in the 21st century.

Learning Outcomes

1. Create synthetic contextualised discussions of key issues related to historical views of Radical Theology.
2. Apply a professional and scholarly approach to research problems pertaining to Radical Theology.
3. Efficiently manage interdisciplinary issues that arise in connection to key concepts and ideas of Radical Theology.
4. Demonstrate self-direction in research and originality in solutions when assessing the various streams of radical theological ideas.
5. Act autonomously in identifying research problems and solutions related to at least one view of Radical Theology.
6. Solve problems and be prepared to take leadership decisions related to the methods and principles of research.

2. Historical Perspectives on Philosophical Theology

This module will move from the scholastic mode of dialectical reasoning to the foundational mode established through the French figure René Descartes. The module will carefully examine Descartes' method of thinking and reasoning. Students will further relate this "method" of thinking to the foundations of the European Enlightenment.

Learning Outcomes

1. Create contextualised discussions of key philosophical issues relative to theology within different historical periods.
2. Apply a professional and scholarly approach to research the philosophical problems pertaining to theology.
3. Efficiently manage interdisciplinary issues that arise in connection to each of the phases of philosophical theology.
4. Demonstrate self-direction in research and originality in solutions when engaging the phases of Philosophical Theology.
5. Act autonomously in identifying research problems and solutions related to at least one Philosophical Theology phase.
6. Solve problems and be prepared to take leadership decisions related to the methods and principles of research.

3. Critical Paradigms in Theology

The genealogical method in philosophy, in the version studied in this course, was created by Nietzsche, developed by Foucault, and is implied in the works of Deleuze and Guattari. It consists of a history of ideas, not focused on original intent, but on the problems and questions that make ideas possible. Key to this notion of genealogy is the idea of "episteme" — each era has a limit of what is thinkable. Certain elements from a previous era will carry over to the next, but with a different significance. By using the genealogical method, philosophers can detect these shifts in meaning, thereby creating a way to think beyond the present-day limits of thought to presage the emergence of a future set of problems and questions.

Learning Outcomes

1. Create synthetic contextualised discussions of key issues related to each critical paradigm.

2. Apply a professional and scholarly approach to research theological problems.
3. Manage interdisciplinary issues that arise in connection to each theological paradigm.
4. Demonstrate self-direction in research and originality in solutions when engaging theological paradigms.
5. Act autonomously in identifying research problems and solutions related to at least one theological paradigm in the course.
6. Solve problems and be prepared to take independent decisions related to the methods and principles of research.

4. Further Studies in Theology I

This module covers advanced theological paradigms, leading students through the key ideas and advanced texts associated with them, over topics such as Critical Theory, Semiology and Semiotics, Hermeneutics, Psychoanalysis and Deconstruction, duplicity, modernity, and liberalism.

Learning Outcomes

1. Create contextualised discussions of key issues relative to the ideas and life of a unique theological figure.
2. Apply a professional and scholarly approach to research problems pertaining to the ideas and life of a unique theological figure.
3. Efficiently manage interdisciplinary issues that arise in connection to the ideas and life of a unique theological figure.
4. Demonstrate self-direction in research and originality in solutions developed for analysing the ideas and life of a unique theological figure.
5. Act autonomously in identifying research problems and solutions related to the ideas of a unique theological figure.
6. Solve problems and be prepared to take leadership decisions related to the methods and principles of research.

5. Further Studies in Theology II

This advanced graduate-level module in Theology addresses a unique theological figure on a rotating basis in order to keep the programme at the forefront of scholarly research and to reflect the faculty's research expertise. Every year the academic staff member in charge of the course will approve of a new theologian to be examined. The bibliography will contain not less than 8 peer-reviewed articles or scholarly publications reflecting the current topic.

Learning Outcomes

1. Create contextualised discussions of key theological issues relative to various ideas or movements.
2. Apply a professional and scholarly approach to research problems pertaining to Philosophy and Theology.
3. Efficiently manage interdisciplinary issues that arise in connection to philosophical movements or theories and theology.
4. Demonstrate self-direction in research and originality in solutions when engaging different theological theories or movements.

5. Act autonomously in identifying research problems and solutions related to at least one philosophical and theological theory or movement.
6. Solve problems and be prepared to take leadership decisions related to the methods and principles of research.

6. Epistemology and Theology

Structuralism and phenomenology are the two great competing philosophical movements of the twentieth century starting with Saussure and Husserl. Both begin with different assumptions: one takes the givens of immediate experience; the other casts it aside in favour of the hidden structures of thought. One begins with thinking as consciousness; the other with thought as language. A few phenomenologists have tried to bridge the difference. This module explores these tensions and their implications for theological enquiry.

Learning Outcomes

1. Create synthetic contextualised discussions of key issues related to Epistemology.
2. Apply a professional and scholarly approach to research problems pertaining to Epistemology.
3. Efficiently manage interdisciplinary issues that arise in connection to Epistemology.
4. Demonstrate self-direction in research and originality in solutions developed for evaluations of Epistemology.
5. Act autonomously in identifying research problems and solutions related to evaluations of Epistemology.
6. Solve problems and be prepared to take leadership decisions related to the methods and principles of Epistemology.

7. Independent Study in Theology

This module will examine the history of justified beliefs from the ancient Athenian context through the middle ages, the European Enlightenment, and up through the postmodern turn and "Post-Truth" in the 20th century. As students examine each historical epoch they will examine how and why beliefs were acquired, held, justified, and rejected. Students will then compare and contrast the different historical epochs and attempt to make some authoritative claims about the nature of beliefs and truth.

Learning Outcomes

1. Expand current knowledge in a specific area of interest related to theology.
2. Remediate deficient areas of knowledge, behaviour, or skills.
3. Develop or enhance skills in analysing, synthesising, and integrating theological information or experiences.
4. Develop or enhance skills in project identification, development, and management, implementation, evaluation, communication, and/or dissemination.

8. Theology Dissertation

The Theology Dissertation prepares students to embark upon a substantial, sustained, unified piece of research at the EQF 7 level.

The Research Plan: The Research Plan for the Theology Dissertation is taught by the proposed dissertation supervisor as a form of preparation specific to the dissertation and the requirements of its subject matter. This module marks the end of the taught portion of the degree and the transition to the research portion. It is expected that the topic of research, which is refined during the planning phase, will have arisen out of one of the taught modules' assignments, projects, or essays. In order to complete the Research Plan, students must: propose their dissertation topic, identify a provisional title, evaluate research methods and select a strategy, write an abstract of the proposed research, compose a provisional table of contents, write a literary survey covering the primary and secondary sources, schedule a timeline to completion, and compose an annotated bibliography.

Dissertation Writing: Upon completion and approval of the Research Plan, students will have a well-defined research topic, a clear structure to organise their proposed research, a firm grasp of the relevant literature, and a practical timeline in which to conduct their research. The dissertation will constitute a substantial, original, independent piece of research, which is clearly articulated in relation to the primary evidence and secondary literature. Regular supervision meetings keep the student on-course with the timeline agreed in the Research Plan. After the completion of the first draft, meetings focus on the harmonisation of the parts, adjustments to the overall argument, and the supervisor seeks to ensure that the student guides the dissertation with a single, coherent line of enquiry.

Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate practical skills in gathering information from a variety of primary and secondary sources and in applying it to specific theological questions.
2. Grasp the theoretical issues that affect the proposed field of enquiry and the relative strengths and weaknesses of alternative approaches in the secondary literature.
3. Display the competence to manage complex, sustained research on a problem in theology, and develop new interpretive strategies.
4. Demonstrate the capacity for independent responsibility for a programme of research that contributes to professional knowledge.
- 5.

Internships policy

Internships must be a genuine extension of the student's academic programme, providing opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge to substantive projects directly related to their field of study. Internships consisting primarily of administrative or routine tasks will not be approved.

Every internship must have a defined start date, end date, and formal learning plan with objectives agreed in advance by the student, the host organisation, and the relevant college. Responsibilities and task complexity should increase over time. Each student must be assigned a named supervisor within the host organisation who holds relevant expertise and is responsible for providing regular guidance and feedback.

Woolf prioritises paid internships to ensure equitable access regardless of socioeconomic background. Unpaid internships may only be approved where they constitute a genuine learning opportunity and do not displace the work of a paid employee.

Programmatic standards

Day-to-day management sits with the relevant college. Each college must have a designated Woolf contact responsible for vetting and approving all host organisations and placements before any internship may proceed. Colleges are responsible for matching students to approved positions.

Students must complete pre-internship preparation before commencing a placement, which may include CV writing, interview support, and other instruction as necessary. Virtual internships are encouraged to widen access beyond geographical constraints; support systems must address the challenges of remote work, including cross-timezone communication and fostering professional belonging.

Programme effectiveness must be evaluated on an ongoing basis. Formal evaluations will be collected from students, host supervisors, and academic advisors, and will inform curriculum design and programme improvement.

Grading Scheme

General Marking Criteria and Classification

Marking of student work keeps in view the scale of work that the student can reasonably be expected to have undertaken in order to complete the task.

The assessment of work for the course is defined according to the following rubric of general criteria:

1. **Engagement:**
 - Directness of engagement with the question or task
 - Range of issues addressed or problems solved
 - Depth, complexity, and sophistication of comprehension of issues and implications of the questions or task
 - Effective and appropriate use of imagination and intellectual curiosity
2. **Argument or solution:**
 - Coherence, mastery, control, and independence of work
 - Conceptual and analytical precision
 - Flexibility, i.e., discussion of a variety of views, ability to navigate through challenges in creative ways
 - Completion leading to a conclusion or outcome
 - Performance and success of the solution, where relevant
3. **Evidence (as relevant):**
 - Depth, precision, detail, range and relevance of evidence cited
 - Accuracy of facts
 - Knowledge of first principles and demonstrated ability to reason from them
 - Understanding of theoretical principles and/or historical debate
 - Critical engagement with primary and/or secondary sources
4. **Organisation & Presentation:**
 - Clarity and coherence of structure
 - Clarity and fluency of writing, code, prose, or presentation (as relevant)
 - Correctness of conformity to conventions (code, grammar, spelling, punctuation, or similar relevant conventions)

Definition of marks

Work will be so outstanding that it could not be better within the scope of the assignment. These grades will be used for work that shows exceptional excellence in the relevant domain; including (as relevant): remarkable sophistication and mastery, originality or creativity, persuasive and well-grounded new methods or ideas, or making unexpected connections or solutions to problems.

94-96

Work will excel against each of the General Criteria. In at least one area, the work will be merely highly competent.

90-93

Work will excel in more than one area, and be at least highly competent in other respects. It must be excellent and contain: a combination of sophisticated engagement with the issues; analytical precision and independence of solution; go beyond paraphrasing or boilerplate code techniques; demonstrating quality of awareness and analysis of both first principles or primary evidence and scholarly debate or practical tradeoffs; and clarity and coherence of presentation. Truly outstanding work measured against some of these criteria may compensate for mere high competence against others.

87-89

Work will be at least very highly competent across the board, and excel in at least one group of the General Criteria. Relative weaknesses in some areas may be compensated by conspicuous strengths in others.

84-86

Work will demonstrate considerable competence across the General Criteria. They must exhibit some essential features of addressing the issue directly and relevantly across a good range of aspects; offer a coherent solution or argument involving (where relevant) consideration of alternative approaches; be substantiated with accurate use of resources (including if relevant, primary evidence) and contextualisation in debate (if relevant); and be clearly presented. Nevertheless, additional strengths (for instance, the range of problems addressed, the sophistication of the arguments or solutions, or the use of first principles) may compensate for other weaknesses.

80-83

Work will be competent and should manifest the essential features described above, in that they must offer direct, coherent, substantiated and clear arguments; but they will do so with less range, depth, precision and perhaps clarity. Again, qualities of a higher order may compensate for some weaknesses.

77-79

Work will show solid competence in solving problems or providing analysis. But it will be marred by weakness under one or more criteria: failure to fully solve the problem or discuss the question directly; some irrelevant use of technologies or citing of information; factual error, or error in selection of technologies; narrowness in the scope of solution or range of issues addressed or evidence adduced; shortage of detailed evidence or engagement with the problem; technical performance issues (but not so much as to prevent operation); poor organisation or presentation, including incorrect conformity to convention or written formatting.

74-76

Work will show evidence of some competence in solving problems or providing analysis. It will also be clearly marred by weakness in multiple General Criteria, including: failure to solve the problem or discuss the question directly; irrelevant use of technologies or citing of information; factual errors or multiple errors in selection of technologies; narrowness in the scope of solution or range of issues addressed or evidence adduced; shortage of detailed evidence or engagement with the problem; significant technical performance issues (but not so much as to prevent operation); poor organisation or presentation, including incorrect conformity to convention or written formatting. They may be characterised by unsubstantiated assertion rather than argument, or by unresolved contradictions in the argument or solution.

70-73

Work will show evidence of competence in solving problems or providing analysis, but this evidence will be limited. It will be clearly marred by weakness in multiple General Criteria. It will still make substantive progress in addressing the primary task or question, but the work will lack a full solution or directly address the task; the work will contain irrelevant material; the work will show multiple errors of fact or judgment; and the work may fail to conform to conventions.

67-69

Work will fall down on a number of criteria, but will exhibit some of the qualities required, such as the ability to grasp the purpose of the assignment, to deploy substantive information or solutions in an effort to complete the assignment; or to offer some coherent analysis or work towards the assignment. Such qualities will not be displayed at a high level, and may be marred by irrelevance, incoherence, major technical performance issues, error and poor organisation and presentation.

64-66

Work will fall down on a multiple General Criteria, but will exhibit some vestiges of the qualities required, such as the ability to see the point of the question, to deploy information, or to offer some coherent work. Such qualities will be substantially marred by irrelevance, incoherence, error and poor organisation and presentation.

60-63

Work will display a modicum of knowledge or understanding of some points, but will display almost none of the higher qualities described in the criteria. They will be marred by high levels of factual or technology error and irrelevance, generalisation or boilerplate code and lack of information, and poor organisation and presentation.

0-60

Work will fail to exhibit any of the required qualities. Candidates who fail to observe rubrics and rules beyond what the grading schemes allow for may also be failed.

Indicative equivalence table

US GPA	US Grade	US Percent	UK Mark	UK UG Classification	UK PG Classification	Malta Grade	Malta Mark	Malta Classification	Swiss Grade
4	A+	97 - 100	70+	First	Distinction	A	80-100%	First class honours	6.0
3.9	A	94-96				B	70-79%	Upper-second class honours	
3.7	A-	90-93							5.5
3.3	B+	87-89	65-69	Upper Second	Merit	C	55-69%	Lower-second class honours	
3	B	84-86	60-64						
2.7	B-	80-83	55-59	Lower Second	Pass				5
2.3	C+	77-79	50-54			D	50-54%	Third-class honours	
2	C	74-76	45-49	Third	Pass				
1.7	C-	70-73	40-44						
1.3	D+	67-69	39-	Fail	Fail				
1	D	64-66							
0.7	D-	60-63							
0	F	Below 60				F			

Synchronous Adjustments Template

Synch discussions may affect the mark on submitted assignments: written work is submitted in advance, and a discussion follows. This provides students an opportunity to clarify and explain their written claims, and it also tests whether the work is a product of the student's own research or has been plagiarised.

The synchronous discussion acts to shift the recorded mark on the submitted assignment according to the following rubric:

+3

Up to three points are added for excellent performance; the student displays a high degree of competence across a range of questions, and excels in at least one group of criteria. Relative weaknesses in some areas may be compensated by conspicuous strengths in others.

+/- 0

The marked assignment is unchanged for fair performance. Answers to questions must show evidence of some solid competence in expounding evidence and analysis. But they will be marred by weakness under one or more criteria: failure to discuss the question directly; appeal to irrelevant information; factual error; narrowness in the range of issues addressed or evidence adduced; shortage of detailed evidence; or poor organisation and presentation, including consistently incorrect grammar. Answers may be characterised by unsubstantiated assertion rather than argument, or by unresolved contradictions in the argument.

- 3 (up to three points)

Up to three are subtracted points for an inability to answer multiple basic questions about themes in the written work. Answers to questions will fall down on a number of criteria, but will exhibit some vestiges of the qualities required, such as the ability to see the point of the question, to deploy information, or to

offer some coherent analysis towards an argument. Such qualities will not be displayed at a high level or consistently, and will be marred by irrelevance, incoherence, error and poor organisation and presentation.

0 (fail)

Written work and the oral examination will both be failed if the oral examination clearly demonstrates that the work was plagiarised. The student is unfamiliar with the arguments of the assignment or the sources used for those arguments.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the use of someone else's work without correct referencing. The consequence of plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as your own work. Plagiarism violates Woolf policy and will result in disciplinary action, but the context and seriousness of plagiarism varies widely. Intentional or reckless plagiarism will result in a penalty grade of zero, and may also entail disciplinary penalties.

Plagiarism can be avoided by citing the works that inform or that are quoted in a written submission. Many students find that it is essential to keep their notes organised in relation to the sources which they summarise or quote. Course instructors will help you to cultivate professional scholarly habits in your academic writing.

Depending on the course, short assignment essays may not require students to submit a bibliography or to use extensive footnotes, and students are encouraged to write their assignments entirely in their own words. However, all essays must acknowledge the sources on which they rely and must provide quotation marks and citation information for verbatim quotes.

There are several forms of plagiarism. They all result in the presentation of someone's prior work as your new creation. Examples include:

- Cutting and pasting (verbatim copying)
- Paraphrasing or rewording
- Unauthorised Collaboration
- Collaboration with other students can result in pervasive similarities – it is important to determine in advance whether group collaboration is allowed, and to acknowledge the contributions or influence of the group members.
- False Authorship (Essay Mills, Friends, and Language Help)
- Paying an essay writing service, or allowing a generous friend to compose your essay, is cheating. Assistance that contributes substantially to the ideas or content of your work must be acknowledged.

Complaints and appeals

Students and faculty should always seek an amicable resolution to matters arising by addressing the issue with the person immediately related to the issue. Students should handle minor misunderstandings or disagreements within a regular teaching session or by direct message, or with their College. If a simple resolution is not possible, or the matter remains unresolved for one party, the steps outlined in this section apply to all groups, colleges, and units of Woolf.

The Red Flag system

An issue with a red flag should be submitted in the case that a member of Woolf seeks to make an allegation of serious misconduct about another member, including matters of cheating, plagiarism, and unfair discrimination or intolerance.

Any member of Woolf, seeking to raise a matter of serious concern, should submit a red flag by emailing redflag@woolf.education. Provide a short, clear description of the issue.

If a student submits an issue with a red flag, or if a faculty member submits an issue about a student, it will trigger a meeting with the student's College Advisor. If the issue is not resolved, the matter will be escalated to the College Dean, or to a committee designated by the College Dean, which will have the power to clear the flag.

If an issue is submitted with a red flag by a faculty member about another faculty member, then the issue is reported directly to the College Dean.

For both students and faculty members, after the Dean's decision, the one who submits the complaint is provided the opportunity to accept or appeal the decision; if the one submitting the issue appeals the decision, it will be assigned to the Quality Assurance, Enhancement, and Technology Alignment Committee, which is a subcommittee of the Faculty Council.

Mitigating circumstances

When serious circumstances ('Mitigating Circumstances'), beyond the control of a student or faculty member, adversely affect academic performance or teaching support, a Mitigating Circumstances report must be submitted using Woolf's red flagging system. Mitigating Circumstances may include but are not limited to serious medical problems, domestic and personal circumstances, major accidents or interruptions of public services, disturbances during examination, or serious administrative or procedural errors with a material effect on outcomes.

Mitigating circumstances do not normally include a member's personal technology problems, including software, hardware, or personal internet connection failures; employment obligations or changes in employment obligations; permanent or sustained medical conditions (unless there is a sudden change of condition); or circumstances where no official evidence has been submitted.

Mitigating circumstances are normally only considered when a red flag has been submitted for the issue before the deadline of an affected written project or assignment, or within one week of a cumulative examination. Proof of mitigating circumstances may result in an extended deadline or examination period, or the possibility to retake an examination; it will not result in any regrading of existing submissions or exams.

Grade appeals

Students who dissent from the grades they have received should follow the normal procedure for submitting a red flag.