Postgraduate Admissions Statement

Theology and Religion PhD

Programmes Covered
This admissions statement applies to the following programme(s):

MPhil, PhD Theology and Religion

Applicants should also refer to the relevant prospectus entry for further programme details.

This admissions statement should be read in association with the University Admissions Principles and Procedures for Postgraduate Research Programmes.

Faculty
Faculty of Arts

Admissions team and contact details
Postgraduate Admissions
Faculty of Arts
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Telephone: +44 (0)117 42 82296
Website www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/study/postgraduate/

Admissions cycle
This Admissions Statement applies to applications submitted for entry to the programme between 1st October 2017 and 31st September 2018.

Application deadline
Details of application deadlines for this programme are displayed on the individual programme page within the University course finder.

Admissions criteria

Academic requirements
To be considered for admission to this programme, applicants are required to hold/achieve a minimum of:

MPhil: An upper second-class degree or international equivalent. Please note, acceptance will also depend on evidence of your readiness to pursue a research degree.

PhD: A Masters qualification, or be working towards a Masters qualification, or international equivalent. Applicants without a Masters qualification may be considered on an exceptional basis provided they hold a First-class undergraduate degree (or international equivalent). Applicants with a non-traditional background may be considered provided they can demonstrate substantial equivalent and relevant experience that has prepared them to undertake their proposed course of study.

For information on international equivalent qualifications, please see our International Office website.

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English language requirements for non-native English speakers
For applicants whose first language is not English, and whose full undergraduate degree was not taught in an
English-speaking country, it is necessary to hold/achieve a minimum score in an approved English language
test as specified in Profile C of the University’s English Language Requirements Policy.

Applicants do not need to have reached the required level of English language before submitting an
application. If necessary, English language will be included as a condition of offer.

Applicants have the option to undertake one of the University’s Pre-sessional English courses. You can find
information about the University of Bristol’s Pre-Sessional English courses at the Centre for English Language
and Foundation Studies website.

Additional requirements
There are no additional requirements for this programme.

Application process

Online application form
Applicants should complete the online application form, uploading all required documents directly into the
application form. Guidance on uploading documents can be found in the How to Apply FAQs. Any paper
documents received by post, or electronic documents received by email, will not be considered except in
exceptional circumstances.

Applicants should make every effort to choose the correct programme in the application form by reading the
prospectus entry and admissions statements fully. Applicants should contact the relevant Admissions Team if
clarification is required.

Documents to upload to online application form
The required documents for this programme are listed below. Applications may not be considered until all
required documents have been uploaded to the application form.

Applicants who have already submitted an application can upload additional documents into the ‘Post-
submission uploads’ section of the application form. Information about how to upload documents to an
application form can be found in our How to Apply FAQs.

Required documents for this programme are:

- **Two academic references (minimum)** References should be submitted electronically by the referee,
  using the online reference form. Alternatively, scanned copies of the original reference document(s)
  can be uploaded by the applicant.
  If you graduated more than two years ago, or if professional experience is relevant to the application,
  professional references will be accepted in lieu of one academic reference. At least one referee
  should be familiar with the applicant’s academic work. References must be written, signed and dated
  on official letter headed paper from the referee’s organisation. They must include the referee’s full
  contact details, i.e. postal address, telephone number and organisation email address. A reference
  template is available to show the required format. References supplied with a personal contact email
  address will not be accepted unless under exceptional circumstances, which must be explained within
  the reference. All references must be dated within the last two years.

- **Degree certificate(s)** from first and subsequent degrees. We require colour scans of original
documents and certified translations of documents issued in any language other than English.

- **Academic transcripts** from first and subsequent degrees. We require colour scans of original
documents and certified translations of documents issued in any language other than English.
  Transcripts must list all subjects taken and grades achieved to date, with the grade scale clearly
displayed in the transcript. Applicants must clearly state their current average grade in the online
application form.

- **Research Statement:** The primary requirement for the research statement is to define and situate your research within an academic/disciplinary context. You should remember that people in the academic community are the primary audience/readership for postgraduate research. This means that you will need to identify:
  1. The research questions or problems that you intend to address;
  2. The research context for your project/programme of work;
  3. The methods you think you will use to pursue the key questions.

Please ensure that you follow the research statement template provided when writing your research statement.

- **Personal statement:** Personal statements should highlight the motivation for applying for the course, and any relevant experience and/or skills.

- **Evidence of English language** is required from all students whose native language is not English, in accordance with the English requirement for the programme. A colour scan of the original document or certificate is required.

Optional documents for this programme are:

- **Curriculum Vitae (CV):** A CV is not required but can help an application. CVs might include details of other relevant qualifications or work experience to support an application. Please do not include any school (pre-university) certificates, unless otherwise specified above.

**Correspondence with applicants**

Applicants will normally receive communication via email to the email address used to set up the application form account. Applicants should ensure the profile email address is kept up-to-date.

**Selection process**

**Assessment of applications**

All applications are considered in accordance with the University's policy on equality and diversity. The University of Bristol upholds the principles of equality and diversity, respect and dignity. Candidates are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, religion or belief, disability, health or age.

Once a complete application has been submitted with all required supporting documents, it is considered by the Admissions Team.

Applications are considered using the following criteria:

*Academic achievement*

*Research statement*

*Academic references*

*Personal statement*

*Interview*

*Sample of work (if applicable)*

**Interviews**

An interview will form part of the selection process.

The purpose of the interview is to assess whether the applicant currently has the necessary skills and capabilities to pursue the chosen postgraduate programme, and whether the programme is appropriate to the
applicant’s interests and aspirations.

All interviews are normally conducted by two members of staff, at least one of whom is trained in fair and
effective recruitment techniques. All interviews are undertaken in accordance with the University’s policy on
equal opportunities.

If required, interviews can be conducted by Skype.

**Non-standard applications**

We welcome applications from those with non-standard qualifications who can demonstrate knowledge,
experience and skills developed in the workplace, or elsewhere, relevant to the programme of study. Please
use your personal statement to provide further details.

Non-standard applications will be considered by the Admissions Tutor(s) for the programme on a case by case
basis.

**Decisions**

**Notification of decisions**

Applicants will be notified by email when a decision has been made and decision letters will be available to
view and print by logging into the application. If there is a deadline by which applicants must accept an offer of
admission, this will be stated in the offer letter.

**Offers**

Offers will typically be made in line with the academic requirements set out above.

Offers made may be conditional or unconditional. An unconditional offer will be made to successful applicants
who have already met the conditions and provided evidence that conditions have been met. Where academic
or language requirements have not yet been fulfilled, successful applicants will receive a conditional offer
outlining the requirements that must be met.

If an applicant is not selected to receive an offer for the course to which they have originally applied, we may
offer the opportunity to be considered for an alternative programme in a related subject area. In such cases
applicants will receive an email notification providing any alternative course options and asking whether they
wish to be considered for these. It may be necessary for applicants to submit additional documentation in
order for the application to be fully considered for an alternative programme. Details of the documentation
required can be found in the admissions statement for the relevant programme.

**Deferrals**

This programme does not normally allow deferrals unless there are exceptional circumstances. Please contact
the admissions team by emailing artf-pgadmissions@bristol.ac.uk if you would like to discuss the possibility of
deferring your start date.

**Additional information**

**Extenuating Circumstances**

If your education has been significantly disrupted through health or personal problems, disability or specific
difficulties within your studies you can submit an extenuating circumstances form as part of your application.

The information provided on the form will be treated confidentially, and will help us to fairly assess your
academic performance in light of your circumstances.

**ATAS**

An ATAS certificate is not required.
**Fees**
Information about postgraduate tuition fees and funding opportunities can be found on the University’s [fees and funding](#) webpages.

**Deposits**
Deposits are not required for this programme.

**Visa**
International students coming to the UK to study full-time must apply for a student visa. [Tier 4 student visa guidance notes](#) are available on the University website.

**Sponsored Students**
Sponsored students will need to upload a copy of their sponsorship letter using the ‘Post Submission Uploads’ section of the online application. Sponsored students will also need to complete and upload the [sponsorship authorisation form](#).