



Union Theological College

MTh Reformed Theology

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 Reformed Theology
Final Award	MTh Reformed Theology
Exit Award(s)	PG Certificate in Reformed Theology (60 CATS) PG Diploma in Reformed Theology (120 CATS)
Department	Department of Theology
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	Full-time study – one calendar year 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	Full-time/Part-time
Mode of Delivery	Online
Date Approved and Name of Authorised Body	14 August 2018, PTFI
Applies to Students Commencing Study in (month/year)	September 2026 (full-time and part-time entry) January 2027 (part-time entry only)



Summary of the Programme

The MTh is a specialised, advanced study Master's degree that is designed to enhance prior theological training by providing a rigorous grounding in the Historical Theology of the Reformed Doctrinal tradition.

Aims of the Programme

Main Educational Aims

1. To enable students to build upon prior theological study through a programme focused on the advanced study of Reformed Theology, particularly some of its main doctrines and its historical development in diverse contexts.
2. To provide opportunity for students to reflect upon and integrate their prior theological study (and where appropriate, their experience of Christian ministry) with new learning which is informed by research-led and research-focused scholarship.
3. To provide a digital space in which students may engage in informed and respectful dialogue, recognising the strengths and weaknesses of other points of view.
4. To provide the knowledge and skills necessary to produce original research through sustained reflection on and engagement with a theological and/or historical topic.
5. To develop an appreciation of the vocation of a Christian 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 69 (at least 62 in each of the 'communicative skills' sections).
- Cambridge Proficiency (CPE) or Cambridge Advanced (CAE): total 185 (at least 176 in each module).
- TOEFL iBT: 100 overall with a minimum of 24 in writing and 23 in each of the other skills.
- 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.

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 and systematic understanding of a selection of the major loci of Reformed Dogmatics, their exegetical basis and interconnectedness.
2. An advanced and systematic understanding of the historical development of the Reformed tradition in diverse contexts, especially its emergence from the medieval context, and its development in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
3. An advanced understanding of how Reformed Theology engages with various contemporary theological issues and debates.
4. A thorough understanding of the methodological, hermeneutical and historiographical models and assumptions used in the study of Reformed Dogmatics and history of the Reformed tradition.

Skills

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

1. A high level of critical awareness, currency in theological research, and the potential for original thinking in the subject.



2. The range of techniques of research and enquiry necessary to access, organise, create and interpret knowledge within the discipline.
3. The ability to read and interpret relevant texts with rigour and sophistication, particularly with regard to their contexts and consequences, and with an awareness of how chosen methodologies shape outcomes.
4. The ability to deal systematically and creatively with complex issues and to make sound judgements, on the basis of varied and problematic sources.
5. A high level of presentational and communication skills in the construction and articulation of cogent, well-informed, critically engaged, and sustainable arguments within the discipline.
6. The capacity to reflect upon and articulate one's own theological tradition as well as engage in informed and respectful dialogue with other points of view, particularly about controversial theological issues, recognising the strengths and weaknesses of other theological traditions and the methodological, philosophical, hermeneutical and historiographical issues involved.
7. Competency in postgraduate research skills by evidencing self-direction, initiative, independence, and originality in planning and producing a substantial dissertation.

Programme Structure and Module Requirements

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

Part-time students will take modules as they are available.



		Autumn 2026	Spring 2027	Summer 2027	Autumn 2027	Spring 2028	Summer 2028	Autumn 2028	Spring 2029
Creeds, Councils & Confessions (PTF214)	30		•			•			•
Reformation Theology: Past, Present and Future (PTF201)	30	•			•			•	
The Doctrine of the Holy Trinity (PTF215)	30	•			•			•	
The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit (PTF216)	30		•			•			•
15,000-word Dissertation (PTF402)	60	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

Vocational Opportunities

Employability

- The course is particularly tailored to provide further training and ongoing development for ministers.
- The course is also designed to prepare students for doctoral research in the fields of systematic theology, historical theology, or ecclesiastical history.
- Enhanced skills of analytical thinking and the ability to express oneself clearly in writing are all highly sought after by a diverse range of employers.
- The nature of the course enhances a spectrum of digital capabilities.

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 2025-30. 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:

- Online video lectures which provide an overall perspective on each module and which exemplify discussion on the topics in question, especially by considering and assessing different views within the discipline and differing explanations of complicated material.
- Instruction in the nature of the module assessment.
- Guided independent reading that is designed to provide breadth and depth in their understanding of Reformed Theology.
- Engaging with others in the online forums in order to discuss and consolidate knowledge.
- Completing exercises which enable sustained engagement with relevant primary and secondary texts.
- The formative nature of all the other written assessment tasks.
- Individual written (and at times oral) feedback on written submissions.
- Dissertation supervision to help students to develop and assess their progress.

Skills

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

- The full range of skills is deliberately modelled through the video lectures provided on the VLE, tutor participation in forums, detailed tutor feedback on assessed work, and dissertation supervision.
- Guided independent reading on primary and secondary texts is designed so that students engage with authors who model these skills.
- The assessments tasks on the primary and secondary texts enable the students to demonstrate these skills
- The 1,500-word assignments which provide *breadth* to the learning experience.
- The 3,000-word assignments which provide *depth* to the learning experience.
- The posting of 1,500-word pieces on the discussion forum is formative since it enables students to observe how other students are developing these skills.
- The required dialogue with other students is designed to enhance a student's ability to communicate views and discuss controversial issues in a sensitive and effective manner.
- One-to-one dissertation supervision from those with subject-specific expertise in Reformed Dogmatics and Historical Theology prioritises research skills training.



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:

- 1,500-word responses to questions posed on primary and secondary texts assess particularly the breadth of knowledge and understanding.
- Online students are required to post to forums on a certain number of occasions (this requirement is on a pass/fail basis and does not contribute to the summative grade).
- 3,000-word research essays particularly assess the depth of understanding.
- A 15,000-word capstone dissertation provides students with an opportunity to display most, if not all, the programme level learning outcomes for knowledge and understanding.

Skills

Written assignments provide a vehicle for demonstrating skills

- The 1,500-word responses to questions posed on the primary and secondary texts assess, in particular, the breadth of the skills which a student has acquired.
- Online students are required to post to forums on a certain number of occasions (this requirement is on a pass/fail basis and does not contribute to the summative grade).
- The 3,000-word research essays particularly assess the depth of skills.
- The 15,000-word capstone dissertation provides students with an opportunity to display most, if not all, the programme level learning outcomes for skills, particularly the ability to engage in self-guided research which reaches independent conclusions.

Student Support and Guidance

Each student is allocated a Personal Tutor who can assist with academic advice and support with personal issues. The College also has a Disability Officer for those who have a disability, specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia or long-term medical condition which may impact their studies.