

- BA Religious and Theological Studies
- BA Joint Schemes (With Ancient History, Archaeology, Languages etc.)



School of History, Archaeology and Religion, Cardiff University

Undergraduate Religious and Theological Studies Degrees



Cardiff University and Cardiff School of History, Archaeology and Religion

Cardiff University is one of the UK's major teaching and research universities and a member of the elite 'Russell Group'.

Located in the centre of the capital city of Wales, it has an international reputation for teaching and research, and attracts staff and students from around the world.

Cardiff School of History, Archaeology and Religion is home to four Departments: Ancient History, Archaeology & Conservation, History & Welsh History and Religious Studies & Theology. The School brings together 60 academic staff and around 800 undergraduates and 200 postgraduates in the Humanities Building, next to the Arts and Social Studies Library, and just a short walk from the heart of the capital.

Religious Studies and Theology at Cardiff has been established for almost thirty years and has attracted scholars of international calibre throughout this period. The department is a small and friendly one, which places students' interests at its heart while, at the same time, producing exciting research on the role of religion in human societies past and present. Were you to take up the study of religion at Cardiff University, you would find yourself surrounded by passionate and committed scholars who are concerned to make sure that you are able, at the end of your time at university, to understand something of the role of religion in how human beings have thought about themselves and others from the ancient past of, for example, India, the Middle East and Europe to the present day experiences of the Cardiff Muslim community! As well as discovering the extraordinary significance of religious ideology in human society, you will learn how to conduct high-quality research and to express your findings in a clear and compelling fashion both orally and in writing.

It is for these reasons that the Religious and Theological Studies Department has an international reputation for its teaching and research. Its graduates regularly enter careers in accountancy, the armed services, broadcasting, the civil service, finance, law, overseas aid, teaching, the police and a further range of professions. The transferable skills provided by a Religious and Theological studies degree and the subject-specific awareness of the critical issues that surround the role of religion in modern society, are increasingly sought after by employers and offer our graduates a wide choice of career opportunities.

The School itself is housed in a modern building just 10 minutes walk from the city's cultural and ultra-modern shopping quarters. Within the School, the Department benefits from close links with Cardiff Centre for Late Antique Religion and Culture, the Centre for the Study of Islam in the UK and the Centre for the History of Religion in Asia. Nationally, it has strong connections with a number of other universities. Internationally, scholars in the school have founded relationships with institutions in Europe, the Americas, China and India.

Staff in Religious Studies and Theology work on the history of Christianity, Islam and Judaism and the Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh and Jain Traditions. Staff also explore religion in the contemporary world and the relationship between religion and film.

What the papers say about us

'Cardiff is long established as the front-runner in Welsh higher education and a leading player in the UK and beyond. It is a member of the Russell Group of 20 research-led universities and has two Nobel Laureates on its staff. Teaching quality is also highly rated ...the Quality Assurance Agency complimented the university on its 'powerful academic vision and well-developed and effectively articulated mission to achieve excellence in teaching and research'. Cardiff has done well in every edition of the National Student Survey, finishing just outside the top 30 in 2009.'

Times Good University Guide, June 2011

'Cardiff seems to have it all: grand civic architecture in a breezy waterside location, super-smart city bars and venues just a short hop from lovely countryside. The university is as confident and forward-looking as the city it's located in, and has an excellent reputation for the quality of its teaching and research. Almost 60% of its research is ranked as world-leading and it is a member of the Russell group of leading research universities. There are approximately 27,000 students, including more than 3,000 from over 100 countries outside the UK, helping to create a vibrant, cosmopolitan community.'

The Guardian 8 June 2010

Contacts

Information on Cardiff and the university for prospective students can be found at www.cardiff.ac.uk/for/prospective/index.html

For more information on our degrees contact the appropriate Admissions Tutor.

Email: religiousstudiesandtheologyugadmissions@cardiff.ac.uk

Tel: +44 (0)29 2087 5297

Which Degree is for Me?

BA Religious and Theological Studies

The BA scheme is one that offers you a wide range of modules that take up the role of religion in ancient, medieval and contemporary society. You can also study the philosophical and doctrinal history of a variety of religious traditions. In addition, the school offers instruction in a range of primary source languages such as Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Syriac, Aramaic, Arabic, Sanskrit and Pali. We have a range of thematic courses that take up the relationship between religion and film, religion and warfare,

religion and science and ethical and social issues in the modern world. After the first year, the course has no compulsory modules and students are encouraged to develop, follow and deepen their own interests as far as is possible.

BA Joint Schemes

If you wish to advance your passion for two subjects at degree level, the Joint Honours scheme is worth serious consideration. Through the flexible modular nature of the Cardiff degree schemes you can study Religious and Theological Studies in combination with

a range of 17 other disciplines both within the School of History, Archaeology and Religion and outside it. Joint honours degree schemes require no greater workload than single honours.

Possible combinations with Religious Studies are: Ancient History, Archaeology, Cultural Criticism, Education, English Literature, German, History, History of Ideas, Italian, Mathematics, Music, Philosophy, Politics, Social Philosophy & Applied Ethics, Sociology, Spanish and Welsh.

Typical offers

Single Honours BA Religious and Theological Studies: BBB

Joint honours: AAA-BBB



Teaching and Learning

Most Religious Studies modules are taught through two to four lectures weekly. Students taking theology in their first year have a further two hours of lectures. You would also have to take a third subject either within or beyond the department.

These are further supplemented by weekly seminars in smaller groups typically of about 12 students in Year One, known as Part One. You should complement this with your own advance suggested reading to make your total hours of learning around 35 each week.

All BA honours Religious Studies students choose at least two modules from the following: Religious Studies, Theological Studies, Elementary Greek, Elementary Hebrew, Elementary Sanskrit to make a total of 80 credits of your 120 first year credits. Joint Honours students take a third of their credits in Religious and Theological Studies, one third in their joint subject and a further third in another subject, possibly a language.

In Years Two and Three you have considerable freedom of choice from a broad menu of more than 40 modules: 10 based around Christian religion and theology, 8 around philosophy, anthropology, the history of ideas, ethics and psychology, 14 around a plethora of religions from Ancient, Medieval and Modern Judaism,

Early Islam, Early Hinduism, Buddhism, to Sufism and 12 on the writings of religions both in translation and in their original languages. You will have the opportunity to take the following languages at both elementary and more advanced levels: Greek, Hebrew, Latin, Sanskrit, Pali, Syriac, Aramaic and Arabic. Cardiff is one of the few Universities left in the U.K. where such a range of primary source languages are offered to undergraduate students. Language study is not, however, compulsory.

This means second and third years study together.

Each student is assigned a Personal tutor with whom to discuss and reflect upon overall academic progress. Every member of staff has weekly contact hours for you to seek further support on relevant modules. You meet your tutor formally at least three times during the academic year and in practice much more often.

All teaching at Cardiff is research-led. This means that students are being taught by individuals whose research is shaping and re-defining the way we think about the role of religion in human societies past and present. Cardiff Religious Studies students are therefore at the forefront of new research and are well placed to undertake higher degrees in the future.

Making the most of local and national heritage – trips and visits

Religious Studies students have the opportunity to go on relevant field trips to local sites of interest such as local and national churches, temples and other places of religious interest. The ERASMUS programme also enables students to study in another university within Europe for a year.

Bursaries and grants

Religious Studies students are eligible for a limited number of bursaries, such as the Professor T. H. Robinson Fund.



Frequently Asked Questions

Views from current and past students

In choosing to study Religious Studies at Cardiff you may have a range of questions which can be answered by the information on our web pages.

To supplement this we offer the views of existing and past students by asking them to answer some of the most frequently asked questions.

How big a change is university from school?

Oliver, BA Religious Studies, Year 2 writes...
“With regard to first year, there's not really a change from Sixth Form/College as you're given time to settle in to your new accommodation and discover how to exploit the academic resources available to you within your University School. I personally did not take Religious Studies as an A-Level; many of my colleagues have and mentioned that there was some repetition in first year, adjusting what they had learned to a higher university style assessment. Thankfully the department offers you the option to take level 3 modules within the 2nd year so the learning curve is not so steep! You may manipulate your 2nd and 3rd year course to be equally weighted if you wish.”

Rachel, BA Religious Studies, Year 2 writes...
“The main difference, for me, between School and University is the fact that University needs a lot more self-motivation. At Schools and Colleges the teachers tell you, you must do your work, whereas in University your grade depends on your commitment to your degree. If you don't work hard, you don't get good grades.”

Why should I study Religious Studies and Theology at Cardiff?

Rachel, BA Religious Studies, Year 2 writes...
“Religious Studies at Cardiff is an amazing course. The diversity and opportunities of different courses available mean that boredom is never present. The lecturers in the department are passionate about their subjects, which reflects in their teaching and makes you more dedicated to the course.”

Oliver, BA Religious Studies, Year 2 writes...
“It's not a massive department; if you need time to consult a tutor regarding work or university life contacting them is extremely easy. All tutors have office hours and reply quickly to emails. This has been very beneficial both socially and academically. There is a great variety of modules to choose from, some of which are becoming limited in the UK, e.g. Sanskrit. The Humanities library also has a decent amount of resources available for students.”

Can I only study only one Religious Tradition?

Oliver, BA Religious Studies, Year 2 writes...
“No. You have to study modules which cover a certain amount of Religious traditions in your 3-year course, but that doesn't mean you can't specialise in Western Traditions if you want to! You can choose up to 160 credits worth of modules, each module is usually 20 credits so it's quite easy to specialise or spread a wide net over all traditions. I've specialised in South East Asian and Middle Eastern subjects yet I enjoy studying the European Renaissance also.”

Rachel, BA Religious Studies, Year 2 writes...
“The department offers a wide range of religious studies, with western religious traditions being involved as well. In each year you must study at least two different subjects, but these can be Judaism or Christian if you so desire. The department isn't only involved in religion; they have some anthropology courses as well, which offer a different view on religions present in today's society.”

Will it help me find a career?

Oliver, BA Religious Studies, Year 2 writes...
“I feel that there are many career opportunities with a degree in Religious Studies; not only is it a contemporary issue within society, it derives skills achieved from several degrees such as: History; English language/literature; Geography; Archaeology and of course there are many ancient languages to choose from. There are also modules offered within the School which are now limited in the UK's Universities provision such as Sanskrit. In the UK there is also a current lack of Religious Education teachers should you take the PGCE route or if you intend to go further there are many subjects which you can specialise in for a master's degree or PHD. Not only that, it's a subject that enhances toleration and social harmony, something essential for customer service in any job prospect. I intend to seek a career in policing following the completion of my BA single honours.”

How easy is it to adjust as an overseas student?

Yiota from Greece writes...
“Life in Cardiff as an undergraduate at SHARE is particularly exciting. As a first year, I had the chance to meet many other students from Britain and all around the world. This was a fascinating experience and was a great opportunity to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds. There are various student societies to cover almost, if not all, personal and intellectual interests. These are lively hubs, which link people with shared interests together. Being the first time that I was living abroad, I had to adjust myself to a different approach to organisation and study. Especially at the beginning this can be difficult, however, the support that both Cardiff University and the Students Union provide, proved invaluable, not just of social nature, but for other issues (from personal to administrative). A sudden shower of rain has always been a good 'excuse' to visit the National Museum, which is just around the corner!”

About the Staff

The Religious Studies and Theology Department of the School has 10 core members of staff. These include lecturers esteemed within their fields for long-distinguished careers and early-stage researchers, with particular strengths in Asian Religions, Religion in the Mediterranean World and Religion in Contemporary Society.

Naomi Appleton

Religious narrative of South and Southeast Asia, especially Buddhist and Jain multi-life stories.

Nicholas Baker-Brian

New Testament studies; Late Antiquity; Gnosticism; Manichaeism; Later Roman Empire; Biblical Hermeneutics; Study of Mythology.

Simon Brodbeck

Sanskrit epic literature (Mahabharata, Harivamsha, and Ramayana); genealogical discourse.

Louise Child

Psychology and the Supernatural in Contemporary Film, Anthropology, Myth, Ritual, and Gender, History of Ideas.

Max Deeg

Buddhism in India, Central Asia and East Asia, Reception history of Religious Studies.

Sophie Gilliat-Ray

Islam in Britain, publicly-funded chaplaincy, sociology of religion, Islamic environmentalism, Muslim childhood, Islamic pastoral care.

James Hegarty

The role of Sanskrit literature in South Asia. Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist Traditions within South Asia and beyond.

Will Johnson

Sanskrit epic literature and drama; Jainism.

Daniel King

Syriac Literature and Philosophy; Greek Patristics; Bible Translation in Antiquity; Old Testament.

Josef Lössl

History of Theology, Early Christianity, Greek and Latin Patristics, Religion in Late Antiquity.

Saira Malik

Arabic-Islamic History of Ideas and Philosophy.

Stephen Roberts

Christianity and inter-religious dialogue; religion in the public sphere; theology and pluralism.





Karen Smith

Christian Spirituality, Christian religion and culture in Britain in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Women and nonconformity in Britain.

Frank Trombley

Byzantine history & historiography, Byzantine Greek language, classical Arabic, Qur'anic studies, Christian Arabic historiography, War studies, philosophical analysis of religious texts.

John Weaver

Practical Theology, especially Theological Reflection on life.

Dialogue between Christianity and Science, especially Environmental Theology.

Simon Woodman

The New Testament, especially the book of Revelation, and its varied interpretation, reception and influence.

All computer applications are supported by the IT Manager who provides this service for the whole School of History, Archaeology and Religion. The School has a number of administrative staff, one of them dedicated to the Religious Studies and Theology Department.

The many links between members of staff within Religious Studies, and between Archaeology, Ancient History, History and Religious Studies and Theology make the School a lively and dynamic research environment, and one into which students readily fit.



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