



## Contact us

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If you have any questions about courses, applications or student life at Bristol, please contact the Enquiries Team.

### Photography

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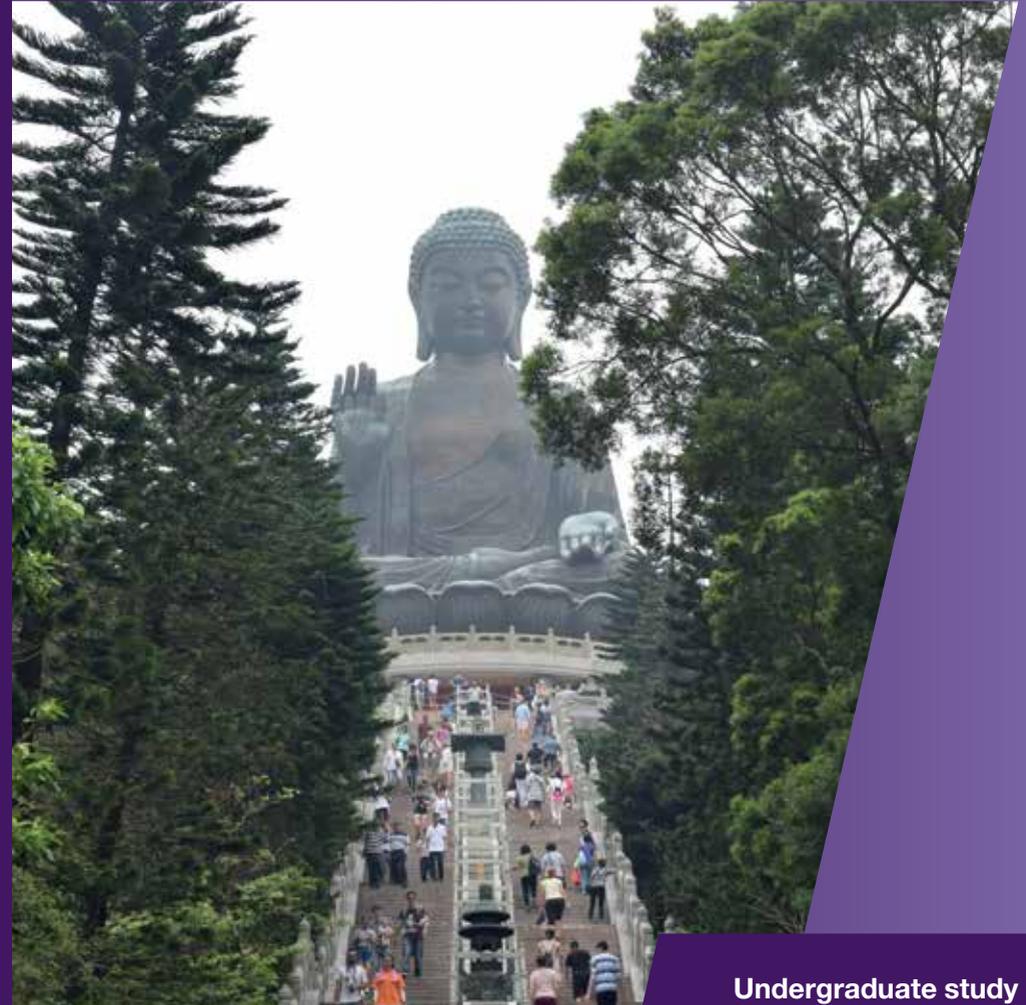
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# Religion and Theology



Undergraduate study

## Courses

### Single Honours

#### **BA Religion and Theology**

three years V600

#### **MArts Religion and Theology with Study Abroad**

four years V601

### Joint Honours

#### **BA Philosophy and Theology**

three years VV56

#### **BA Theology and Sociology**

three years VL63

## Why study religion and theology at Bristol?

The various religious traditions of the world represent significant expressions of cultural values and ideas about the meaning of life and death. It is not possible to have a mature understanding of the past and present state of the world without some knowledge of these traditions.

Our single and joint honours degrees and MArts Religion and Theology involve studying some of the world's major religions – Buddhism, Chinese religions, Christianity, Japanese Religions, Judaism, Hinduism and Islam – and their foundational texts. We are a friendly department with nine permanent staff engaged in teaching and research, ranked fifth out of 33 departments in the UK for our research according to analysis of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014 by *Times Higher Education*.

Our courses are modular and allow you the flexibility to either concentrate on certain areas or choose units from many areas of study. Whichever path you follow, you will find that the department has a tradition of intellectual innovation, using a range of archaeological, historical, linguistic, philosophical and theological approaches. The only commitment asked of you is an academic one: belief in the importance of the subject and a willingness to pursue it seriously.

Besides the core focus on religion and theology, you will also have the opportunity to contextualise your studies by taking options beyond your department. You may choose to take units in related or broader subject areas or in a foreign language. You will also take part in the Bristol Futures programme, which builds knowledge and experience in the fields of innovation and enterprise, global citizenship and sustainable development.

You may choose to spend one semester (for BA courses) or one year (for the MArts course) living and studying abroad, an experience which broadens horizons and which employers value highly.

## Ranked 4th in the UK for Theology and Religious Studies

Complete University Guide 2020

This leaflet contains information for students planning to start university in autumn 2020. We have made every effort to ensure all details are correct at the time of going to press (May 2019). However, since this information is subject to change, you are advised to check the University's website, [bristol.ac.uk/ug-study](http://bristol.ac.uk/ug-study), for the latest updates.

# What will you study?

Our courses introduce you to the history, practices and ideas of some of the world's principal living religions. We focus in particular on Buddhism, Chinese Religions, Christianity, Japanese religions, Judaism, Hinduism and Islam, as well as studying a significant element on the philosophy of religion.

Our welcoming classroom environment enables you to interact closely with lecturers as you explore key issues of world religions and learn how leading scholars approach the subject. You may also choose to study a language: Chinese, Greek, Japanese, Latin or Sanskrit. By looking at sacred texts, ritual, ethics, sexuality, politics, philosophy, history and law, you will consider how religion informs and has informed the ways that millions of people, both individually and collectively, live their lives, finding meaning and purpose in the process.

In the first year, you will take Approaches to the Study of Religion, in which you will consider key questions in the academic investigation of religion. Additionally, you will study two units (Living Religions West and Living Religions East) that introduce major world faiths (including Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism).

You will have the option to take Topics in Religion in Theology, a discussion-based seminar focusing on a particular theme or text, Issues in the Study of Religions, and various introductory language modules (Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, Chinese or Japanese).

In your second year, two mandatory units – Religion: Contexts and Perspectives, and Religion: Practices and Ideas – build on your first-year study of religious traditions, both east and west. Religion: Contexts and Perspectives examines particular aspects of two or more religious traditions (at least one Judeo-Christian and one Asian), deepening your understanding of unique and shared contexts and perspectives. Religion: Practices and Ideas encourages you to examine the prominent ideas and practices of at least two different methodologies.

You will also take four optional units, which may include:

- Early and Pre-Modern Christianity
- Philosophy of Religion
- Indian Philosophy
- Introduction to Japanese Religions
- Torah through the Ages
- introductory language units.

You may have the option of spending a semester at one of our overseas exchange partners.

If you are studying for the BA course, in your third year you will work one-to-one with a member of staff on either a 12,000-word dissertation or a dissertation with fieldwork (comprising an 8,000-word dissertation and a 4,000-word portfolio). If you choose the fieldwork option you will attend workshops in fieldwork skills. You will also take four optional units, for example:

- Sex, Marriage, and Deviance in the Early Modern Era
- Atheism
- Medieval Christian Mystics
- Zen Buddhism
- Buddhist Psychology and Mental Health.

The MArts course offers a rare opportunity to study the fascinating subject of religion and theology at home and abroad. You will spend a year at one of our world-renowned partner institutions in Asia, Australia, Canada, the US or Continental Europe.

In your final year you will study comparative religions and take optional units that allow you to focus on a particular religion or pursue broader themes. You will also compose a dissertation on a bespoke topic.

## Our teaching and learning

We deliver an education at the forefront of the subject. You will acquire the key skills and attributes sought by employers, and our diverse range of assessments ensures that you gain a thorough training in advanced research, source analysis and sharing your findings.

We will make sure that you graduate with experience in formal writing and presentation skills, and in using digital formats and other media to present knowledge, ideas and arguments. You will be experienced in working individually and in groups, and in making connections with and communicating to audiences beyond the University.

It is possible that units for future academic years may change, for example due to staff changes or developments in the field. Please see [bristol.ac.uk/ug20-religion](http://bristol.ac.uk/ug20-religion) for the most up-to-date information

The Department of Religion and Theology is based in the Woodland Road complex, a series of converted Victorian villas at the heart of our Clifton campus.



'Academic staff are experts in their focus areas and produce exciting, cutting-edge and peer-respected work through a variety of prestigious journals and book publishers.'

Marek (BA Religion and Theology)

## Careers and graduate destinations

The skills that arts students traditionally bring to the workplace are now, more than ever, valued in every part of the employment market. Our students go on to succeed in careers as diverse as the subjects they study – education, the charity sector, law, accountancy, theatre, museums, publishing, journalism, commerce, tech start-ups, politics and international relations, to name just a few. Arts graduates also go on to work in sectors perhaps not immediately associated with arts disciplines, such as engineering and IT.

To ensure arts graduates continue to be appealing to employers, the Bristol Skills Framework enables students to recognise their development in areas such as academic writing, problem solving, group work, and individual and group presentation. We will equip you with the tools to market your skills, your achievement and your potential in whatever career path you choose to pursue after you graduate.

Employers place great value on the transferable skills that religion and theology graduates offer. These include the ability to think critically, write fluently, and appreciate ideas and opinions different from their own. Recent graduates have entered varied fields, such as teaching, international development, law, social work and business.

Alternatively, there is the possibility of postgraduate study on our full-time (one year) and part-time (two years) MA and MPhil programmes. Research work at PhD level can also be undertaken. The department hosts two highly active research centres: the Centre for Buddhist Studies and the Centre for Christianity and Culture.

**Bristol is the second most targeted university by top UK employers.**

High Fliers Research 2019

Source: Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey 2016/17. Find out more at [bristol.ac.uk/careers/be-inspired](http://bristol.ac.uk/careers/be-inspired).



### Graduate employers

Hybrid  
Hope Bristol  
Euromoney plc  
Headland Consultancy  
Reform Synagogue Youth



### Career destinations

Marketing Executive  
Journalist  
Project Manager  
Account Executive  
Youth Worker

## Making your application

Visit [bristol.ac.uk/ug20-religion](http://bristol.ac.uk/ug20-religion) for more information about our courses.

### Typical offer for BA Religion and Theology

**A-levels** AAB (contextual BBB).

**IB Diploma** 34 points overall (contextual 31) with 17 at Higher Level (contextual 15).

Our contextual offer is a grade reduction of up to two grades below the standard entry requirements, made to applicants from under-represented groups. Find out more at [bristol.ac.uk/contextual-offers](http://bristol.ac.uk/contextual-offers).

**GCSEs** No specific subjects required.

**Selection process** UCAS.

For other accepted qualifications, and for our English language requirements, visit [bristol.ac.uk/ug20-religion](http://bristol.ac.uk/ug20-religion).

### Application guidance for religion and theology courses

All candidates are judged according to the following categories:

- academic potential;
- enthusiasm for and commitment to the subject;
- self-motivation and management;
- communication skills;
- responses to challenges faced.

Taking a degree in religion and theology at Bristol does not require you to be religious; in fact, staff and students in the department are rather diverse in that regard. Whether you have a religious commitment or not, you are very welcome. What is expected of applicants is a genuine fascination with the religious ideas of humanity and their role in framing people's lives, past and present, including religious literature, art, music, politics, philosophy and ethics.

You should familiarise yourself with the kinds of issues studied in religion and theology at university level and show this in your application. If some time has elapsed since you gained relevant qualifications (eg A-levels), we may invite you to interview.

### Further information

Find out more about the Department of Religion and Theology: [bristol.ac.uk/religion](http://bristol.ac.uk/religion).

This information is correct at the time of printing (May 2019), but we recommend you check the University website for the latest information: [bristol.ac.uk/ug20-religion](http://bristol.ac.uk/ug20-religion).



Read more about how we support you when you are here:

[bristol.ac.uk/students](http://bristol.ac.uk/students)