



University of
BRISTOL

Undergraduate study

Religion and Theology



Key highlights



Flexible courses

Our range of courses gives you the flexibility to either specialise in certain topics or undertake a broader survey across many areas. You may also choose to study Sanskrit, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Japanese or Chinese. Open units also allow you to take options beyond the department.



International perspective

We offer a rare opportunity to study religion and theology both at home and abroad. You can spend a semester studying at one of our world-renowned partner institutions in Asia, Australia, Canada, the US or Europe – or choose the four-year MArts course to spend a year overseas.



Real-world relevance

For your final-year dissertation you can take a fieldwork or community placement option, giving you the chance to conduct research on living or past religious communities either locally or further afield, in locations such as the US or Malta.

bristol.ac.uk/ug-study

Why study religion and theology at Bristol?

Taught by expert academics, our courses involve studying some of the world's major religions: Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism, Chinese religions, Japanese religions, Hinduism, Islam, non-religion and secularity. A strength of our department is the balanced provision and variety of expertise across both eastern and western religious traditions.

The department has a tradition of interdisciplinary innovation, using a range of philosophical, sociological, historical, linguistic, archaeological and theological approaches. Teaching is enriched by the research of our staff. We host two highly active research centres: the Centre for Buddhist Studies and the Centre for Christianity and Culture.

Taking a degree in religion and theology at Bristol does not require religious commitment. The academic study of religion equips you to address humanity's most vital questions both globally and historically.

What you will study

In the first year, you will consider key questions in the academic investigation of religion in mandatory units that introduce major world faiths and concrete methodologies for the discipline of religious studies. You can choose optional units in any year, including introductory language modules such as Sanskrit.

In your second year, mandatory units build on your first-year study of eastern and western religious traditions and disciplinary debates. The second year deepens understanding of unique and shared contexts and perspectives. You will also take optional units, and you have the opportunity to spend a semester studying abroad.

MArts students will spend their third year studying at one of our partner universities overseas. In their final year, they will study comparative religions and take optional units that focus on a particular religion or pursue broader themes.

In your third year (BA) or fourth year (MArts), you will write a dissertation on a topic of your choice, or a dissertation with fieldwork. We provide training workshops in fieldwork skills.

You may choose to combine your religion and theology studies with philosophy or sociology; our joint honours degrees are equally weighted towards both subjects.

Sample units may include:

- Philosophical Approaches to Religious Experience and Mysticism
- The Dead Sea Scrolls and Scripture
- Buddhist Psychology and Mental Health
- Vatican II and Post-conciliar Roman Catholic Debates in Theology
- Atheism
- Philosophy of Religion
- Zen Buddhism
- Medieval Religion: Christianity and Islam
- Sex, Marriage and Deviance in the Medieval and Early Modern Eras.

Find out more

Entry requirements, course structure and units
bristol.ac.uk/ug2021-religion

'I am so grateful for the amazing time I have had. The department has contributed significantly to my experience – they offered me a little family to be a part of! The teaching and support were the best I possibly could have asked for.'

Sophie (BA Theology and Sociology)



Bristol is home to many places of worship. We work with venues across the city such as Bristol Cathedral, the Bristol Hindu Temple, Bristol Jamia Mosque, Park Row Synagogue, St Mary Redcliffe Church and St Paul's Church – home to Circomedia.



97 per cent of BA Religion and Theology students agree that staff are good at explaining things and value students' views (NSS 2019).



Our student-run Theology society provides a forum for discussion on theological topics, peer-led academic support and a friendly space to socialise. You can also join many of the University's faith-based societies and visit the Multifaith Chaplaincy, a welcome space for people of all faiths and none.



Our students are well equipped to pursue a variety of careers, including many not directly related to religion such as policymaking, law, consultancy or counselling. Employers are attracted by our graduates' transferable skills in critical thinking, writing, debating and negotiating fairly between oppositional ideas and opinions.

Courses

BA Religion and Theology

MArts Religion and Theology with Study Abroad

BA Philosophy and Theology

BA Theology and Sociology

Connect with the Department of Religion and Theology

 [@BristolReligion](https://twitter.com/BristolReligion)

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Jenny Hooton, Bristol City Council

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This leaflet contains information for students planning to start university in autumn 2021. We have made every effort to ensure all details are correct at the time of going to press (May 2020). However, since this information is subject to change, you are advised to check the University's website, bristol.ac.uk/ug-study for the latest updates. Any sample units listed are indicative and offerings may change due to developments in the relevant academic field. Unit availability varies depending on staffing, student choice and timetabling constraints.

