

Course Assessment Strategy

School	School of Creative Arts
Course Group	MA Applied Theology
Course Leader	Helen Miller

Part 1: The overall approach to assessment on the course

The College's philosophy of assessment is explicated in its AF 02 Learning and Teaching and AF 10 Awards and Assessment frameworks. The approach is implemented consistently across the College's activities. These documents are presented to new HE academic staff members as the foundation of the College's work and is accessible to students from within all Programme Handbooks. These frameworks contain no conflict with the University's stated goals and values, supporting students to reach their potential (AF 02 1.3, UoG Strategic Plan Goal 2) through diverse and educationally enriching experiences (UoG Strategic Plan Goal 1, AF 02 2.1). In this way, the College views all assessment as formative, whether summative or not.

Assessment on the MA Applied Theology programme is intentionally designed to be intellectually stimulating and contextually challenging for the student, as it plays a significant role in the educational process (AF 02 3.1), drawing on the taught content, professional arena, and facilitating feedback mechanisms. Assessment tasks are progressive in nature, reflecting the stage of study that the student is engaged in, ultimately building towards a greater level of autonomy at the Master's stage.

Similarly, assessment has a deliberately strong orientation towards professional development, appropriate to the learning outcomes of the programme, and the focus of particular modules. This creates through assessment a dialogue between the field and the lecture room (UoG Strategic Plan Goal 1, AF 02 3.1), supported by academic staff, all of whom have expertise in the professional arena (UoG Strategic Plan Goal 5, AF 02 2.3).

There is a diversity of assessment types across the programme, including group and individual presentations. The majority are standard written assignments. However, diversity is a feature of the style and approach of individual tasks set (AF 02 3.6). Modules often make use of formative individual and group work, developing your ability to work effectively both alone and with others. Study is never in isolation, with local through to global impact amongst the communities served being the ultimate goal of the College for each and every student (UoG Strategic Plan Goal 3, AF 02 1.4).

Part 2: The student experience of assessment on the course by stage

This course is designed to provide professional development and spiritual formation as a means of enhancing your practice, whether that is within local church ministry, charity and community work, or other vocational spheres. A key part of this is an assessment process within a learning community that will allow you to learn about yourself, monitor your own progress and grow in skills and confidence as you reflect upon assessment tasks and the feedback you receive. Throughout the programme, you will have the opportunity to work closely with a variety of academic staff members well qualified in both theory and practice who will give you detailed individual feedback and suggestions for improvement, both through formal assessment processes and informal discussions. The demand we place on you will increase progressively throughout the programme to enable you to become an increasingly

confident and competent professional. We will ask you to be creative, to synthesise and analyse information rather than just report, and to be critical of your work and the work of others.

You will be given a series of summative assessment opportunities. Each carries a sense of the formative in that feedback, which markers write to a clear set of expectations to ensure their usefulness for learning, will help prepare you to engage more critically in the future.

Apart from an initial formative assessment undertaken in your first compulsory module, and any formative tasks undertaken within core modules, all assessment tasks contribute to your module marks, and you will have access to clear marking criteria so that you know what is expected. Some of these tasks are presentations, where you will need to communicate verbally and most often to your peers. However, most of the assessments are written tasks, whether applying theoretical and professional approaches to discuss complex problems, interpreting texts, or reflecting on your own experiences and what you have learned from them. Most modules have one or two summative assessment tasks, allowing for a depth of critical engagement with the subject.

Stage: PG Cert

The initial compulsory module (M701) provides the core foundational knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary, methodologies and perspectives of practical and applied theology. For instance, you'll learn the skills of robust hermeneutical engagement, taking account of such factors as the genre of the biblical material being studied and the cultural context of its first recipients. Your second module will be chosen by you from a suite of core modules to allow you to engage with specialised areas of study, with its related practice. Autonomy and flexibility over your module choices allows you to tailor your learning to be most effective and applicable to your particular interests and context. Assessment in all modules taken during this stage focuses on your ability to acquire and communicate clearly understanding of key concepts and relevant practical skills, engaging in an appropriately critical manner with a range of differing views and perspectives. In all modules, your ability to demonstrate the integration of theory and practice is paramount, whether through written tasks or presentations.

Feedback provided on these tasks will allow you to monitor your learning of the knowledge and skills acquired and will prepare you for your studies at the next stage.

The emphasis across the Certificate stage on academic and professional development within a learning community is supported by the scheduled learning activities, consisting of a variety of guided activities with teacher presence and online seminars, in addition to in-person learning and teaching, as well as by opportunity for non-scheduled, more informal peer-to-peer contact. The College is committed to helping facilitate your holistic formation as you prepare for work and ministry in a variety of settings. Formation takes place in the areas of communication, faith and relationships, and the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

During the scheduled activities, time is allocated to briefing and discussion on assessment tasks, although the main work on the tasks is undertaken independently outside of class.

Stage: PG Dip

Throughout the Diploma stage, assessments are designed to give you the opportunity to reflect on specific areas of practice and to integrate those reflections with advanced theoretical perspectives on the primary contexts in which your practice takes place. As in the PG Cert stage, you will be given the opportunity to select between core modules to tailor your learning to your interests and context. As a result, you'll gain insight in identifying and addressing complex issues in at least two fields of Christian theology and practice. Most summative assessments are individual written assignments or presentations, giving you the opportunity to develop confidence in a variety of communication skills, research skills and academic writing as you work on tasks and integrate the feedback received

into your subsequent work, particularly preparing you for a more substantial research project at the MA stage. One of the core modules, M706, includes a group presentation as part of the assessment, allowing you to demonstrate appropriate professional and academic skills such as self-direction, effective communication, and teamwork.

Throughout this stage, the emphasis on academic and professional development within a learning community is supported by the scheduled learning activities, guided activities with teacher presence and online seminars, as well as by opportunity for non-scheduled, more informal peer-to-peer contact. Time is allocated to briefing and discussion on assessment tasks during the scheduled activities, although the main work on the tasks is undertaken independently outside of class.

Stage: Masters

During the MA you will have the opportunity to conduct a significant independent research project, on a topic of your choice, allowing you to achieve far greater depth of understanding than in any other assessment task. There are two routes for completing this research project: either through a Dissertation (M712) or Practice-Based Research (M713). M712 culminates in a longer piece of writing that furthers your ability to frame and negotiate a research question, use appropriate methodologies, engage with primary and secondary sources, arrive at a clear structure and argument, and present your findings in an academically responsible fashion. Alternatively, M713 allows you to undertake substantial research within a volunteer or employment setting. You will be responsible for initiating and organising the project, which will identify and address at least one complex issue within the chosen setting. Then, by analysing and evaluating the appropriate use of strategies to support the successful management of people, projects and/or programmes, you'll deliver and reflect on outcomes that have the potential to transform personal or organisational practice.

Both M712 and M713 are designed to develop your ability to think critically and theologically, and must contain a substantial component of engagement with practice. This is to be expected in a Master's in Applied Theology, where the overall aim of the programme is to enhance students' engagement with Scripture and their theological reflection on, and critical engagement with, context and practice.

You are supported through this stage by a supervisor who is allocated to you once your registration for the Dissertation or Practice-Based Research project, setting out details of your intended topic, has been approved. Further information about working with your supervisor is provided in the Module Guides. Additional support is provided throughout the duration of your master's studies by means of in-person research-focused sessions, run during block weeks. The scheduling of College-wide research seminars during block weeks provides space for students of different stages to come together and discuss and support each others' research. In addition, optional writing retreats are run throughout the year for those already underway with their research projects, to provide mutual encouragement and support.

The Dissertation or Practice-Based Research project will be your final demonstration of your depth of understanding within the field of Christian theology, and of your ability to plan and carry out a significant research project.

Part 3: Mapping assessment against module learning outcomes at each level

Table A: Assessment to module learning outcomes

- Shade the boxes of those learning outcomes that are not required for the module.
- ✓ Enter a tick in the boxes of those learning outcomes that are assessed by the module.
- Leave blank the boxes of those learning outcomes that are not assessed by the module.

No of Credits	Module Learning Outcomes at PGC/PGD Stage Module Assessment Elements	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		30	M701 Bible and Context Task A, weighting 100%, Assignment, 6000 words	✓	✓	✓					
30	M702 Ethics, Humanity and Morality Task A, weighting 50%, Assignment, 3000 words	✓	✓								
	M702 Ethics, Humanity and Morality Task B, weighting 50%, Assignment, 3000 words		✓	✓							
30	M703 Bible and Preaching Task A, weighting 100%, Assignment, 4000 words	✓	✓	✓							
	M703 Bible and Preaching Task B, weighting 0% (pass/fail), Presentation, 30 minutes				✓						
30	M704 Christian Leadership in Contemporary Contexts Task A, weighting 30%, Presentation, 25 minutes	✓									
	M704 Christian Leadership in Contemporary Contexts Task B, weighting 70%, Assignment, 4500 words	✓	✓	✓							

No of Credits	Module Learning Outcomes at PGC/PGD Stage	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Module Assessment Elements										
30	M705 Spirit and Mission in Acts and Today Task A, weighting 100%, Assignment, 6000 words	✓	✓	✓							
30	M706 Justice, Ecology and Poverty in the Old Testament and Today Task A, weighting 30%, Group Presentation, 50 minutes			✓							
	M706 Justice, Ecology and Poverty in the Old Testament and Today Task B, weighting 70%, Assignment, 4500 words	✓	✓								
30	M707 The Church in Revelation and Today Task A, weighting 100%, Assignment, 6000 words	✓	✓	✓							
30	M708 Christian Life and Thought in a Post-Enlightenment World Task A, weighting 100%, Assignment, 6000 words	✓	✓	✓							
30	M709 Spiritual Formation and Pastoral Care Task A, weighting 30%, Assignment 2000 words				✓						
	M709 Spiritual Formation and Pastoral Care Task B, weighting 70%, Assignment 4000 words	✓	✓	✓							
30	M710 Theology in a Digital Age Task A, weighting 50%, Presentation, 20 minutes	✓									
	M710 Theology in a Digital Age Task B, weighting 50%, Assignment, 3000 words		✓	✓							

No of Credits	Module Learning Outcomes at PGC/PGD Stage Module Assessment Elements	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		30	M711 Independent Theological Study Task A, weighting 100%, Assignment, 7000 words	✓	✓	✓					

Table A: Assessment to module learning outcomes



Shade the boxes of those learning outcomes that are not required for the module.



Enter a tick in the boxes of those learning outcomes that are assessed by the module.



Leave blank the boxes of those learning outcomes that are not assessed by the module.

No of Credits	Module Learning Outcomes at <i>Masters Stage</i> Module Assessment Elements	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		60	M712 Dissertation Task A, weighting 0% (pass/fail), Assignment, 1000 words	✓							
	M712 Dissertation Task B, weighting 100%, Assignment, 15000 words		✓	✓	✓						
60	M713 Practice-Based Research Task A, weighting 25%, Assignment, 4000 words	✓									
	M713 Practice-Based Research Task B, weighting 50%, Assignment, 8000 words		✓	✓							
	M713 Practice-Based Research Task C, weighting 25%, Presentation, 30 minutes				✓						

Table B: Indicative schedule for assessment for taught postgraduate study (September starts)

<i>Standard term weeks</i>
<i>Non-term weeks</i>
<i>Assessment weeks</i>
<i>Progress weeks</i>
<i>Planning weeks</i>

If you are a PT student, you will undertake the different stages of the MA programme over three years. If you are a FT student, you will undertake the different stages of the MA programme over one or two years.

TT Week	PGC Stage	PGD Stage	Masters Stage
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9 Induction	Residential (M701)	Residential (Core Module)	Residential (M712/M713)
10			
11			
12			
13			
14 Reading Week			
15			
16	M701 Formative Task		M712/M713 Assessment Task A
17			
18			
19	Residential (M701)	Residential (Core Module)	Residential (M712/M713)
20			
21			
22 Christmas Vacation			
23 Christmas Vacation			
24			
25			
26			
27			
28			

29	M701 Assessment Task A	Core Module Assessment Task A (& B)	
30 Reading Week			
31	Residential (Core Module)	Residential (Core Module)	Residential (M712/M713)
32			
33			
34			
35			
36			
37			
38 Easter Vacation			
39 Easter Vacation			
40	Residential (Core Module)	Residential (Core Module)	Residential (M712/M713)
41			
42			
43			
44			
45			
46			
47			
48	M701 Assessment Task A	Core Module Assessment Task A (& B)	
49			
50			
51			
52			
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			M712/M713 Assessment Task B (& C)