



The Melbourne College of Divinity

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Affiliated with the University of Melbourne 1993*

CRICOS Provider Code 01037A

Doctor of Philosophy – Enrolment Information 2009

Why undertake postgraduate research in theology?

The purpose of postgraduate studies in theology is to provide an enriching and enhancing education for students at an advanced academic level, based upon a primary degree in theology.

In personal terms, this means a deeper acquaintance with and knowledge of one's particular Christian tradition and its faith, leading to a richer encounter with life, beauty and truth, to a more profound sense of God and of the divine purposes for humankind and creation.

Professionally, this means the further development of knowledge and experience in a theological discipline, and the honing of critical scholarly skills within that discipline for the purposes of teaching, ministry, research and writing, and of inter-disciplinary dialogue.

The MCD PhD is designed to enable approved candidates to interact with the discipline of theology by building on studies undertaken in their previous degree, usually in other disciplines. The entry level is a research master's degree in a discipline which is considered by the Board to be the foundation for work which engages with a theological discipline at doctoral level.

Who is eligible for the PhD?

The following people may be admitted to the PhD by the MCD Research Studies Committee:

- ◆ Those who hold, or are qualified to obtain, at a standard deemed acceptable, a research Master's degree of the MCD or the University of Melbourne;
- ◆ Applicants who hold the MCD BTheol, BD or MDiv with First Class Honours; or
- ◆ Graduates of the MCD Master of Theological Studies degree who have included a 12,000-word postgraduate essay in their course, and gained a High Distinction for the essay.

The MCD PhD is most often taken by candidates who have completed the MCD Master of Arts (research mode), but admission is not restricted to this path.

The Committee may recommend to the Board that awards in appropriate disciplines of other tertiary institutions, or in exceptional cases advanced levels of relevant professional attainment, be recognised as equivalent qualifications for the purposes of entrance to the PhD.

Permission to enrol will only be given where the Committee is satisfied that the candidate will have adequate supervision and access to adequate libraries. Each candidate must be attached to an MCD Recognised Teaching Institution, though the Committee may, in exceptional circumstances, permit a candidate to attend another institution.

International students need to have achieved a IELTS score of at least 7.0 overall and in each area to be considered for candidature in MCD postgraduate awards.

In the MCD office, overseas student matters are the responsibility of the MCD Registrar, and administered by the MCD Executive Assistant to the Dean.

What is involved in MCD PhD study?

It is presumed that a doctoral applicant will have an area of potential exploration in mind, and have made some preliminary investigation regarding existing work.

Candidates are responsible for approaching and nominating an appropriate supervisor in the area of study, though the MCD Director of Research and RTI Research Coordinators can offer suggestions. Please note that the approval of supervisors rests with the MCD Academic Board.

MCD PhD students are normally admitted as probationary candidates, who work with their approved supervisor for a year, then submit written work of around 10-12,000 words, usually early chapters of the thesis, together with a detailed research proposal and bibliography, to a Confirmation panel. The Panel consists of the supervisor, the MCD Director of Research and two or three scholars in relevant discipline(s).

A Master of Theology candidate can request an upgrade to doctoral candidature after the equivalent of two semesters' full-time study, through a similar Confirmation process.

After the research proposal has been approved, ethical clearance must be obtained from the MCD Human Research and Ethics Committee before any research involving human subjects, or records not in the public domain, may commence.

The candidate then proceeds under the appointed supervisor(s) to research and write a thesis of up to 100,000 words (including footnotes and appendices) for examination.

Candidates are expected to have regular meetings with their supervisors, and take an active role in MCD postgraduate seminars. An Annual Report, signed by both candidate and supervisor(s), is made on progress.

Length of candidature is three years (full-time) and up to five years (part-time).

Examination

The Thesis is initially examined by two examiners, one of whom is normally overseas, who report to the Chair of Examiners: not uncommonly revisions are asked for from their reports. The Chair may ask for a report from a third examiner, request the examiners to consult, ask that an oral defence take place or take similar steps to ensure appropriate assessment.

When the Chair of Examiners reports that the thesis is acceptable, award of the degree can be recommended by the Academic Board to the MCD Council.

How much does the PhD cost (in Australian dollars, 2007)?

Application fee (non refundable)	\$120
<i>(no charge is made where a candidate progresses immediately from an MCD MDiv, MA or MTheol)</i>	
Full time Annual Fee	\$6,600
Part time Annual Fee	\$3,300
Conferral fee:	\$90

When a candidate has paid three full-time Annual fees, no further fees are charged while the candidate has not exceeded the maximum time allowed. These fees include examination costs. If permission is given to extend candidature, a continuation fee of one PG unit is charged for each extra semester (\$850 in 2007).

Students undertaking the PhD are eligible to apply for an *Australian Postgraduate Award*, which pays for tuition fees, plus a Living Allowance (approximately \$18,000 per year of full-time study). These are awarded on a competitive basis: the number available varies annually, as allocated by DEST.

Where Commonwealth Research Training Scheme funding permits, the MCD seeks to award an RTS place to each doctoral candidate from the time of their Confirmation.

Can my tuition fees be put on FEE-HELP?

Yes – if you are an Australian citizen, or hold a Permanent Humanitarian visa, you are eligible for a Commonwealth Government FEE-HELP loan. The Commonwealth pays the MCD for your studies, and your loan is repaid through the tax system once their taxation income reaches around \$36,000.

The MCD recommends that all eligible PhD students not holding an APA or RTS place consider FEE-HELP seriously: the scheme ensures a stable cash flow to the MCD and the RTIs, and students who make early voluntary repayments to their FEE-HELP loan receive a 10% discount from the Commonwealth, without reducing the amount paid to their RTI.

Further details about FEE-HELP are given elsewhere on the MCD web site.

How is the PhD governed and accredited?

The MCD Research Studies Committee oversees all MCD Higher Degrees by Research, and each RTI Research Coordinator is a member. The Committee reports to the MCD Academic Board, which is responsible to the Council for all matters of academic policy and procedure.

All supervisors are approved by the MCD Academic Board, while all examiners are appointed by the Committee. Examiners' reports are considered by the appropriate Chair of Examiners, as noted above: each Chair of Examiners is appointed by the MCD Council, on the recommendation of the Board. This system of checks and balances seeks to ensure that each supervisor and examiner is qualified, equipped and appropriately experienced for their role in relation to MCD research degrees.

The MCD as a whole is audited every five years by the Australian University Quality Agency (AUQA): the first took place in 2005, and the AUQA Report on the MCD can be found at <http://www.auqa.edu.au>.

How do I apply?

Obtain a Postgraduate Research Application Form from the MCD website, and make an appointment with the MCD Director of Research, or the Research Coordinator at an RTI. After discussion with them, complete the form, have it signed by a Coordinator, and submit it, together with certified photocopies of previous relevant academic qualifications and transcripts and the Application fee, to the MCD office.

Further information may be found on the MCD website, including **Regulation 22** which governs the Doctor of Philosophy degree.

Want to know more?

Information and application forms may be obtained from the MCD website. Applications generally close in late November of the year preceding commencement of studies, but enquiries may be made at any time, since it may take some time for initial enquiries to bear fruit.

If you have questions related to the Doctor of Philosophy which have not been able to be answered by the Research Coordinator at an RTI, please contact:

The Director of Research (Administration)
The Melbourne College of Divinity
21 Highbury Grove, Kew 3101

Tel: (03) 9853 3177

Fax: (03) 9853 6695

Email a.elvey@mcd.edu.au

Website www.mcd.unimelb.edu.au

MCD Recognised Teaching Institutions related to the PhD

Catholic Theological College

278 Victoria Pde (PO Box 146)

East Melbourne Vic 3002

Ph (03) 9412 3333

Shane McKinlay, email smckinlay@ctc.edu.au

Fax (03) 9415 9867

Web www.ctc.edu.au

Churches of Christ Theological College

44-60 Jackson's Road

Mulgrave Vic 3170

Ph (03) 9790 1000

Alan Niven, aniven@cctc.vic.edu.au

Fax (03) 9795 1688

Web www.cctc.vic.edu.au

United Faculty of Theology

Until December 2006:

Queen's College

Parkville Vic 3052

Ph (03) 9347 5700

Janet Crawford, dean@uft.unimelb.edu.au

Fax (03) 9347 0146

Web www.uft.unimelb.edu.au

From February 2007:

1 Morrison Close

Parkville Vic 3052

Ph (03) 9340 8890

(same electronic addresses)

Yarra Theological Union

98 Albion Road (PO Box 79)

Box Hill Vic 3128

Ph (03) 9890 3771

Michael Kelly, m.kelly@ytu.edu.au

Fax (03) 9890 1160

Web www.ytu.edu.au

Whitley College

271 Royal Parade

Parkville Vic 3052

Ph (03) 9340 8100

Simon Holt, sholt@whitley.unimelb.edu.au

Fax (03) 9349 4241

Web www.whitley.unimelb.edu.au