

Research

www.mcd.edu.au

Doctor of Philosophy



MCD postgraduate studies in theology

Postgraduate studies in theology provide enriching and enhancing education for students at advanced academic levels.



Course Information

MCD postgraduate studies lead to a deeper understanding and knowledge of Christian tradition and its faith, leading to richer encounters with life, beauty and truth. Students develop 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 development of critical scholarly skills within that discipline for the purposes of teaching, ministry, research and writing, and of inter-disciplinary dialogue.

The MCD Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) enables approved candidates to

interact with the discipline of theology by building on studies undertaken in their previous degree, possibly in other disciplines.

Eligibility for the PhD

Applicants need to hold one of the following degrees in order to be eligible for entry:

- ◆ Bachelor of Theology, Bachelor of Divinity or Master of Divinity with First Class Honours from the Melbourne College of Divinity (MCD)
- ◆ a research Master's degree of the MCD or similar a degree from an approved internationally recognised university;

- ◆ Those who hold, or are qualified to obtain, at a standard deemed acceptable, a research Master's degree of the MCD or similar a degree from an approved internationally recognised university;

- ◆ Master of Theological Studies from MCD who have included a 12,000-word postgraduate essay in their course, and gained a High Distinction for the essay.

Permission to enrol will be granted when the Research Committee is satisfied that the candidate will have adequate supervision and access to libraries. Each candidate must be accepted by an MCD Recognised Teaching Institution.

International applicants must score 7.0 across all bands under 6.5 of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or have completed tertiary study of at least five years duration with English as the language of instruction within the previous two years, to be eligible for candidature in MCD research awards.

Details of the MCD PhD

Doctoral applicants are expected to 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; RTI Research Coordinators may 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, 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).

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 documented regular meetings with their supervisors, and take an active role in MCD postgraduate seminars. An Annual Report on candidates' progress must be signed by both candidate and supervisor(s).

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

Examination

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

Fees

Refer to MCD website, www.mcd.edu.au

Students enrolled in a PhD are eligible to apply for an *Australian Postgraduate Award*, which pays for tuition fees, plus a living allowance. These are awarded on a competitive basis: the number available varies annually, as allocated by Department of Education, Employment and

Workplace Relations (DEEWR).

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

FEE-HELP

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 about \$40,000.

The MCD recommends that all eligible PhD students not holding an APA or RTS place consider FEE-HELP and students who make early voluntary repayments to their FEE-HELP loan receive a 10% discount from the Commonwealth.

Further details about FEE-HELP are available on the MCD website.



Governance and Accreditation

The MCD Research Committee manages 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 MCD 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 who is appointed by the MCD Council, on the recommendation of the Board. This ensures that each supervisor and examiner is qualified and appropriately experienced for their role in relation to MCD research degrees.

Each RTI is audited every five years, reviewing units and courses offered, staff development, and library and learning facilities, in each case with student feedback and planning for future needs and opportunities. The MCD 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 is on <http://www.auqa.edu.au>. The MCD is recognized by both Federal and State Governments as a self-accrediting institution. These audits assure students of the quality of their course of study and that it is recognised across the academic world.

Application Process

- Complete a Postgraduate Research Application Form from the MCD website
- Make an appointment with the MCD Director of

Research, or the Research Coordinator at an RTI.

- After discussion with them, finalise the form, then 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.

For further information:

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