

Applications and Admissions Process for the PhD and MPhil Postgraduate Research Degrees in Contextual Theology, at The Luther King Centre for Theology and Ministry.

Information about our Research Degree Courses

General information about the LKH Contextual Theology Research Degree programme can be found on the 'Postgraduate Research Programme PhD and MPhil' page of our website:

www.lutherkinghouse.org.uk/courses-learning/research-program-phd/

Entry requirements, tuition fees information and an application form can all be found on our 'Application and Fees' pages.

If you would like additional information about our academic programmes in general, or our short courses or other events, please contact the Registry Office at Luther King House, by email: learning@lkh.co.uk or by phone: 0161 249 2504.

You can arrange to visit Luther King House at a mutually convenient time for a more detailed conversation about the courses we offer and for a tour of the building and our on-site facilities.

It is also possible for you to access our **Research Degree Programme Handbook**, which is located on our Moodle virtual learning site: <http://learnlutherkinghouse.org.uk> This Handbook contains all the key information students need about their programme regulations. To access the Handbook on our Moodle site, you can set up your own (free) Moodle account using the instructions provided on the site itself. If you need any help, please contact the Registry Office.

Entry Requirements

The entry requirements for the research programme (both MPhil and PhD) are as follows:

- A Bachelors (Honours) degree at 2:1 level or above (or its international equivalent) in a related subject; and
- A UK Master's degree with an overall average of 65% or higher, with a minimum of 65% in the dissertation and with no mark below 55% (or its international equivalent) in Religions and Theology or a related subject.
- Any strong, relevant work experience will be considered on a case by case basis.

Students who speak English as an additional language

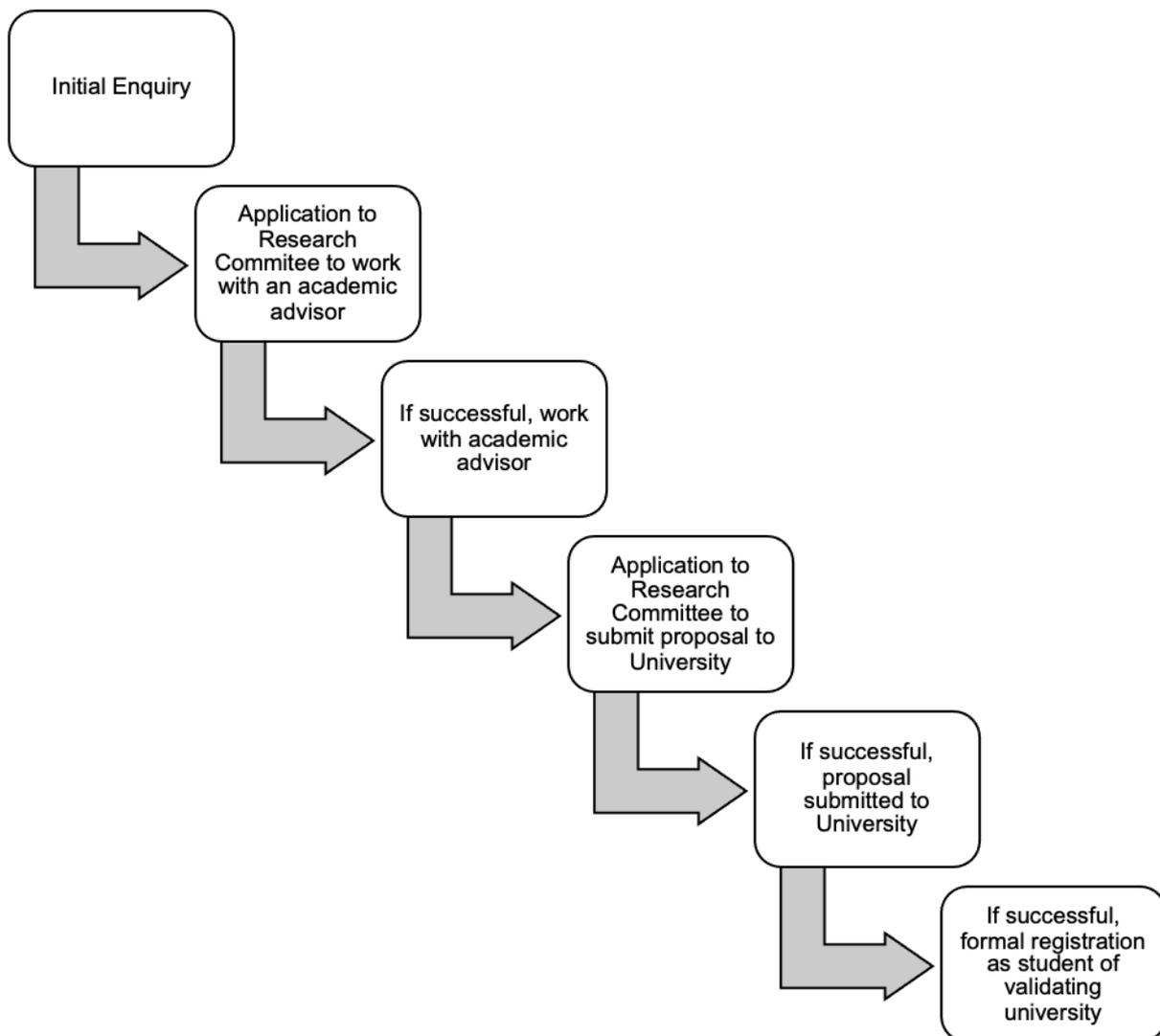
Students for whom English is not their first language should note that a high standard of written and spoken English is necessary for study at LKHET. They should not underestimate the strain of studying and writing in a foreign language, and they must have

a sufficient level of English (at least equivalent to an IELTS score of 7.0 including 7.0 in the writing component), prior to registration.

Some English language test results are only valid for two years. The English language test report must be valid on the start date of the course.

Admissions Process

A flowchart of the basic admission process is outlined below. More details about each stage are then given.



Note that this is fundamentally a two stage process. The first stage is an application to Luther King House to work with an Academic Adviser, with the aim of producing a second,

full application (the second stage) for formal acceptance by Luther King House and the validating University as a registered research student.

The following points outline the process for admission onto the Research Programme of Luther King House to the point of registration with the validating university.

- a. **Initial Enquiry:** an initial contact should normally be made through the Academic Registrar.

Some students may be sponsored directly by one of the colleges of Luther King House. In this case, the Academic Registrar should still be informed.

- b. **Submission of Initial Application:** Applications for admission to Luther King House's MPhil and PhD Programmes are made on an Application Form downloadable from the Luther King House web site (www.lutherkinghouse.org.uk/application-fees/application-process/#1466603285550-d64ab45c-d610) or available from the Academic Registrar. Completed applications should be returned to:

The Academic Registrar,
Luther King House,
Brighton Grove,
Manchester, M14 5JP

Email: registrar@lkh.co.uk

Applicants should usually receive acknowledgment of their applications within a fortnight of the receipt of the application. Please contact the Academic Registrar if you do not receive acknowledgement within this timescale.

If there is a gap before the next Research Committee meeting, the Academic Registrar may pass on the application either to the Chair of the Committee or to a subject specialist for a rapid informal response to indicate if your application is likely to be accepted. If the response is negative, the application will still be taken to the Research Committee for consideration by the full Committee.

Applications need to be received in full at least two weeks before a Research Committee meeting to be considered.

All application forms must be accompanied by:

1. An academic C.V., giving full details of your qualifications.
2. If English is not your first language, then proof of an appropriate score in a UKVI approved standardised test
3. A research proposal, following the guidelines set out below.
4. Degree certificates and transcripts

(High quality scanned copies or photocopies may be provided with the initial application, but the original documents must be provided at the point of registration if not submitted previously).

5. A scanned copy of the details page of your passport, endorsed by you as a "true copy of original document" (and also of your visa if you are not a British citizen).

- c. Consideration of initial application by the Research Committee:** The research committee will consider your application. In particular, they will consider whether the research is feasible; whether the applicant is capable and qualified to carry out the research; and whether Luther King House can provide the necessary academic supervision. If the application is accepted, you will be appointed an Academic Adviser to work with you. Please note that at this stage you will also be asked to pay a non-refundable deposit, which will count towards your fees should you be accepted ultimately by Luther King House and the validating university. You will usually be informed of the Committee's decision about your application within one week of the date of the meeting at which it has been considered.
- d. Working with the Academic Adviser:** With help from the Academic Adviser, you will now prepare a full application for the university. This period acts as an extended interview and induction process which allows you to prepare for admission to the programme. This stage can vary in length from a month or two to over a year. While working with an Academic Adviser, you will normally also be invited to research training days at Luther King House. During this time, until you have been formally admitted by, and have completed your registration process with, the validating university, you will have full access to the Luther King House library.
- e. Full Application to the Research Committee:** the Research Committee usually meets four times a year to consider applications. You should check the exact date and ensure that your application is sent to the Academic Registrar at least two weeks before the meeting. Your application to the Committee **must** include all of the following:
1. Your fully completed application form, including 2 named academic referees. (References will be sought directly from your referees by the Academic Registrar. This normally happens at the point at which you are approved to work with an Academic Adviser. If you are an international student seeking a single stage application process, your references will be sought upon receipt of your full application – see note 1 below.)
 2. An academic CV, giving full details of your qualifications.
 3. A full research proposal, following the guidelines set out below.
 4. An indication of the proposed means of financial support for the full period of your study (as requested on the application form).
 5. Transcripts of your degrees, and degree certificates (high quality scanned copies or photocopies may be provided with the application, but the original documents must be provided at the point of registration if not submitted previously).
 6. If English is not your first language, then proof of an appropriate score in a recognised English Language test.
 7. A scanned copy of the details page of your passport, endorsed by you as a "true copy of original document" (and also of your visa if you are not a British citizen).
 8. If you are an international student based outside the UK, wishing to apply through a single stage application process, you should also submit a piece of written work to accompany your application - see note 1 below.

- f. Consideration of Proposal:** the Research Committee can respond to your application in 3 ways:
1. Recommendation to University: the Committee forwards your application on to the University with suggested supervisors to recommend acceptance. It would be exceptional to be accepted without having worked with an Academic Adviser.
 2. Invitation to Re-submit Proposal: The Committee asks you to do more work on your research proposal with your Academic Adviser and to resubmit the proposal within a year.
 3. Rejection of Proposal: the Committee does not accept you as a research student.

You will usually be informed of the Committee's decision about your application within one week of the date of the meeting at which it has been considered.

- g. Consideration by and registration with the University:** if your application is successful at the LKHET RDC, it will be forwarded to the validating university along with the names of the suggested supervisors. The university will then consider your application. They may accept, ask for revision, or reject the application. If they accept the application, we will send you a formal letter of acceptance which you must sign and return. Formal registration with the University will then take place at the next available registration date.

NOTES

1. **Students not resident in the UK**
In view of potential difficulty in travelling, overseas students are entitled to submit a full application for registration with the University without the Academic Adviser stage (see above for requirements for final applications). However, in this case they must also submit with their application a piece of written work of between 3,000 – 5,000 words. In addition, the application must be received at least one month in advance of the next LKH committee, in order for the Academic Registrar to have time to take up academic references. Inclusion of the extra piece of written work within your application will be taken as indicating that you wish to be considered for University admission without working with an Academic Adviser. Applicants applying through the single stage process will also be required to have an interview, and it is usually possible for this to be conducted by Zoom.

Overseas students alternatively may use the normal two stage admissions process, as outlined in points a-g, on the understanding that work with an Academic Adviser may need to be by email and/or Zoom or its equivalent.
2. Supervisors will be recommended by the Research Committee, and appointed by the university, and not by personal arrangement.
3. In some cases, it may be necessary to appoint a Supervisor who is not employed by LKHET. In such cases, LKHET will also recommend a second, internal supervisor, who will ensure that the procedures outlined in the Handbook are followed and will monitor student progression.

4. Please note that registration with the University is, in the case of PhDs, for an initial probationary period. Students are required to go through a probationary review meeting in order to move into the rest of their period of registration. For the first year (full-time) or first two years (part-time) students are on probation. This means that a positive recommendation from the supervisory team is needed if students are to proceed beyond that period.
5. For students registered on the MPhil, there is no probationary period, although where appropriate, programmes and examinations may be prescribed as a preliminary to preparation of a thesis.

Research Proposal Guidance¹

The research proposal is your chance to demonstrate to Luther King House and the University that you are capable of conducting the research successfully within the time allowed. It needs to allay any doubts that we might have. Each section in the proposal should help us to see how you can do this research.

Typically, research proposals should be around 2,000 words, excluding bibliography, but this is a guideline, not a requirement.

Please use the following format:

- Working title
- Research question
- Provisional thesis statement
- Motivation
- Location of your research in the current scholarship, and its significance
- Scope of the research
- Methodology
- Provisional outline
- Bibliography

Working title

This should accurately reflect the nature and scope of your research. It will almost certainly be adjusted during your research, but it will be one of the ways that the University tracks your registration and should be considered carefully.

Research Question

State the research question as clearly, concisely and precisely as possible. What will the research enable you to find out or discover? Avoid generic questions, or questions that could be answered simply by accumulating data. The question should be an issue to be addressed or problem to be solved. In constructing the question, remember that it needs to be answerable within the three years full-time or six years part-time study period for the PhD. The research question will also be tied to your suggested contribution to research or scholarship. Of course, the question may well be nuanced in the course of your research, but if it is clear from the outset, it will help you avoid straying into interesting, but irrelevant

¹ With thanks to Parushev P. & Grams R. (2008) *Academic Reasoning, Research and Writing in Religious Studies: A Concise Handbook*. Czech Republic: IBTS, from which various parts of this are borrowed and adapted.

(for the thesis) by-paths. Within the overall research question you may also want to address a variety of research goals – include them briefly here too.

Provisional thesis statement

The thesis statement is a brief answer to the research questions. It should encapsulate the provisional direction your answers are likely to take. It needs to be written in clear and precise terms, which means you need to reflect carefully on the words you chose. A good thesis statement will, therefore, be no more than about 50 words in length. You will discover, no doubt, that writing an adequate statement in such a short space is more difficult than you imagined, but, together with the research question, it's the most important statement in the proposal.

Motivation

Why do *you* want to do *this* research?

Location of your research in the current scholarship and its significance

How does your research fit in to what others have already done? You should show here that you have done sufficient preliminary reading and know some key (probably no more than 5 or 10) texts or primary sources. What new contribution to knowledge will it bring (PhDs must contribute something new)? What is the significance of your research? Where might it lead in the future? The current scholarship with which you will interact should also be reflected in the bibliography (see below).

Scope of the research

This sets the parameters of your research. If the Bible is involved, will you be covering all of it, or the Pauline letters, or one letter? If people are involved, which group? What period of time will you be examining? What methods will you be restricting yourself to? If conducting qualitative research, include an estimated timeline.

Methodology

How will you address the research question? Will you be carrying out quantitative or qualitative research? Will you use interviews, surveys, autoethnographic etc? What approach to the Bible will you use – feminist, historical, narrative, postcolonial, rhetorical etc? Be as precise as possible. Your choice of methodology should also be reflected in the bibliography (see below).

For any research with human subjects, please also include an indication as to how you will address any ethical issues that arise. This should also be reflected in the bibliography (see below).

You should also identify any research problems you anticipate, and how you intend to address them (e.g., needing to acquire reading knowledge of a language).

Working outline

Provide an outline of how you see the shape of the thesis at the moment (it will change during your research). What do you expect that the different chapters will cover? Include a proposed outline of chapters with a few key headings in each chapter.

Bibliography

Provide a bibliography. This should include key primary and secondary sources, and should probably be between 20 and 35 sources, including the key texts you have referred to within the earlier sections of your proposal. It should cover not just the subject area, but

also (where appropriate) methodology and ethical issues. The bibliography should demonstrate that you are aware of the major books and articles relevant to your research, and be formatted in line with academic conventions.

Further Guidance

Completing this process may seem daunting. Here are a few tips that will help you navigate the process.

- Our supervisors and the Research Degrees Committee place a high premium on concise prose as a good indication of your ability to think clearly and express yourself in written form. So, make every word work for you.
- Pay careful attention to the appropriate format and style issues. Set your word processor and spell checker to use British English and A4 size paper. Careless writing, typographical errors, a casual use of proper footnote and bibliography form, poor sentence structure or overly complex sentence structure do not inspire confidence in members of the RDC.
- If you are appointed an academic advisor, pay attention to their advice. If you are asked to correct something or a change in focus is suggested, do take account of the advice.
- If you have not heard from your academic adviser within a week of sending something, don't be hesitant to ask again.

International Students Requiring Tier 4 Visas

As indicated above, international students requiring Tier 4 visas are able to apply to study on our academic programmes, as we have been granted a Tier 4 sponsor licence by the UKVI. A separate **information sheet** is available for any international students in need of Tier 4 student visas, outlining the additional requirements made by the UKVI in relation to international student applications, and this can be accessed from the International Students page of our website:

<http://lutherkinghouse.org.uk/application-fees/international-students/>

This document includes links to pages of the UKVI website, where the UKVI's current English language and financial requirements are specified in detail.

Requirements and application processes for international students requiring Tier 4 visas are the same as for other applicants in most respects. However, please note the following differences in the application process for those requiring Tier 4 visas:

- You must meet the UKVI's English language requirements for studying on courses at the level you wish to study (in addition to any requirements set by Luther King House, which are noted on the application form).
- You must meet the UKVI's requirements regarding demonstration of your ability to fund your studies and to fund your living costs whilst studying in the UK.
- You must be able to demonstrate that the course you are applying for involves academic progression from any previous UK studies, or to give a clear explanation of why the course you are applying for does not involve such academic progression.
- Before we can issue you with a Certificate of Acceptance for Studies (CAS), which you will need from us in order to apply for your Tier 4 visa, we will expect you to do the

following in order to demonstrate that your application is in compliance with the above UKVI regulations:

- a) If English is not the official language in your country of birth, provide acceptable evidence of your English language ability. This should take the form of either the results of a standardised test recognised by the UKVI or a degree certificate from a UK university;
- b) pay your first academic year's tuition fees in full*;
- c) show us bank statements for the last 3 months demonstrating sufficient money in your bank account to meet the expected living expenses as set out by the UKVI on their website;
- d) in your application and interview, give clear reasons for why you wish to do this course, and how it represents progression from any previous academic study you have embarked on in the UK.

*If, following our provision of a CAS to you, your visa application is refused for any reasons beyond your control, which you could not have reasonably anticipated, then provided you have been honest in your application to us, we will refund your tuition fees to you, minus the cost of payment for the CAS and minus any bank charges or exchange rate costs incurred in the refund process.

Disability Support and Inclusion

Luther King House is committed to providing excellent standards of education and support, to help ALL our students to fulfil their academic and vocational potential. We seek to provide equality of opportunity to all our students, through a flexible and inclusive approach to teaching and learning which minimises barriers to learning and takes individual needs into account, providing reasonable adjustments for students with particular needs wherever necessary.

We use the term "disability" to identify a wide range of physical impairments, mental health needs and other medical conditions, and specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyspraxia, based on the definition of disability in UK legislation.

You are fully entitled to keep any disabilities or medical conditions you have confidential, and not to disclose them to anyone at Luther King House. However, most students find it helpful to let us know about their circumstances, because it enables us to help you to access appropriate support so that you can gain maximum benefit from your study opportunities. If you think you may have a disability and would like guidance about potential support available to you, please speak to the Academic Registrar, Clare Richardson, who is also the official Disability Adviser for Luther King House.

Appeals and Complaints Processes

If at any stage in the application and admissions process, you feel that the processes outlined above have not been properly followed, or that your application has been treated unfairly, you have the right to lodge an appeal or a complaint in writing with the Academic Registrar. More information about the Appeals and Complaints Procedure for Applicants can be found on the "Appeals and Complaints" section of the website.

How to Get in Touch

If you have any questions about the above applications and admissions process, please do not hesitate to get in touch for clarification. We look forward to hearing from you, and wish you every success with your application.

Email: registrar@lkh.co.uk

Phone: 0161 249 2540

Luther King House, Brighton Grove, Rusholme, Manchester, M14 5JP