



## UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH, SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

### DISTANCE MODE OF DELIVERY FOR PART-TIME PhD PROGRAMMES

The School of Divinity offers a distance part-time mode of delivery for its PhD students, with the primary goal of enabling international students to access its existing PhD programmes on a part-time basis. For all students the recommended route to a PhD in the School of Divinity is by full-time study based on residence within reach of Edinburgh. However, for suitably qualified applicants from both overseas and the UK whose circumstances make it impossible for them to reside in or near Edinburgh part-time PhD study at a distance may be an option.

Students enrolled on this mode of study are required to come to Edinburgh **at least once per year** of study in order to meet with supervisors and attend seminars. For first-year students, these visits include participation in Welcome Week in September at the start of the academic year, which includes an induction to PhD research through sessions in the School's 'Approaches to Research in Divinity and Religious Studies' course. In all years of study, students are normally required to schedule a visit in June. During this visit, annual reviews will be held and a Summer Programme will take place, comprising academic and social events. Hence in their **first year** students would normally pay **two visits** to Edinburgh, and in subsequent years **one visit** a year (for the Summer Programme). Students are also normally required to return to Edinburgh for their viva examination.

### GENERAL PROGRAMME INFORMATION

<b>Subjects available:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethics and Practical Theology</li> <li>• Hebrew and Old Testament Studies</li> <li>• History of Christianity</li> <li>• Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations</li> <li>• New Testament and Christian Origins</li> <li>• Religion and Literature</li> <li>• Religious Studies</li> <li>• Science and Religion</li> <li>• Systematic Theology</li> <li>• World Christianity</li> </ul>
<b>Programme Title</b>	PhD in Divinity
<b>Method of Study</b>	Part-time distance – 72 months
<b>Tuition Fee</b>	The tuition fee charged will be 50% of the overseas or UK/EU fee for full-time students for each of the six years of the programme. You should be aware that fees are likely to be raised annually.

## SPECIFIC PROGRAMME REQUIREMENTS

### Entrance requirements

The entrance requirements are the same as for the on-campus PhD programmes, with the same academic and English Language entry requirements, as indicated on our website at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/divinity/studying/graduate-school/information-for-applicants/entry-requirements>

Applicants who are not native English-speakers must obtain an overall score in IELTS of 7.0 or above, with a score in each module of 6.0 above (for equivalent English language qualifications recognized by the University; see the above webpage).

Applicants will be required to submit the standard supporting documentation for their application:

- Degree Certificates
- Academic Transcripts
- Sample of Academic Work
- Research Proposal
- 2 x Academic References
- (Certificate of English Language)

**In addition** to the standard supporting documentation, applicants will be required to complete a Supplementary Application Form for Distance Applicants. Applicants are required to provide information on any previous experience of distance study, together with a statement making the case for why full-time study in Edinburgh is not possible in their case. Previous experience of study at a distance is desirable in a candidate applying for this programme as it would show a successful track record, though this is not a specific requirement for admission. It is essential that the applicant shows a clear awareness of the challenges of this mode of study. The form also requires the applicant to detail what access to research facilities they will have at the normal site of study and whether a local advisor is proposed.

The application form will be reviewed by the proposed supervision team and the School's Director of Postgraduate Studies (DPGS). If DPGS considers that the applicant is in principle ready for distance study, (s)he may arrange an online interview with the applicant (using Zoom or Teams), in which the supervisor would normally be involved. The decision of DPGS is final in determining the mode of study, and it is expected that some who apply for the part-time distance route may be offered full-time residential study only.

Applicants will also be required to complete a provisional study plan in consultation with the proposed University of Edinburgh supervisor(s).

### Funding

Applicants will be eligible for School scholarship funding. This is highly competitive, and awards are made on academic merit only. It is expected that most students will need to support their studies through part-time employment or other means of support.

### **Location of studies – on campus requirements**

Students on the distance programme will be required to visit Edinburgh **at least once** a year of study in order to meet with supervisors, participate in research methods training, graduate seminars and the Summer Programme, and to engage in annual review.

Students are encouraged to spend at least **two weeks** per year on their visits to the University of Edinburgh for the purposes of seminar participation, engagement with supervisors and fellow students, and annual reviews. Applicants must therefore factor travel costs into their planning.

### **Visa Regulations**

Overseas applicants are advised to apply for the appropriate short-term visa for each visit to the UK. For more information see <https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/immigration/applying-for-visa>

### **Facilities at applicant's local site**

#### **Essential:**

- Access to local University-level library facilities
- Computing facilities – own access to internet or access through local University

#### **Desirable:**

- Access to local research seminar/research groups at local University
- Plan for visiting relevant academics in local institutions

Applicants will be required to provide this information at the point of application.

Applications by international students for part-time distance PhD study will not be accepted if there is no access to local University level library facilities or if the applicant does not have access to the internet.

### **Pastoral support and academic community**

The support structure for distance students is similar to that for on-campus students, with supervisors providing on-going support to students throughout their programme of study, along with DPGS and the Graduate School Administrator. The School's Distance PhD Co-ordinator offers an additional point of contact and support. Students also have access to all University of Edinburgh support services and will be supported by the School Student Support Team and Teaching Office.

The School records a number of its research seminars (and livestreams some seminars), in order to make them available to distance students. All PhD students are required to deliver at least one seminar paper of their own in person as part of their programme.

### **Programme Structure**

#### **Courses**

All students are required to be in attendance at the commencement of their programme to participate in Welcome Week activities, including the 'Approaches to Research in Divinity and Religious Studies' course. Students may also visit Edinburgh for specific research methods training at appropriate points in their programme.

Students are encouraged to make use of relevant online research and skills training courses offered by the University's Institute of Academic Development. The English Language Teaching Centre provides online independent study material to support academic writing, including writing a PhD First-Year Report.

### **Other online resources**

Students are able to access the University library catalogue, DiscoverEd, and learning support in the usual way. They are also able to access home-use software through University site licenses in the same way that on-campus students can.

### **Supervision**

Students receive the same level of support and supervision as on-campus students. The only difference is that their supervisory sessions mostly take place online, via a combination of Teams, Zoom or other video conferencing technology, and e-mail exchanges.

The frequency with which students meet with their supervisors should be provisionally agreed at the point of application and confirmed during induction. At a minimum, as specified in the University's Code of Practice, **contact should take place twice within each three-month period**. Contact should include **at least one in-person supervision session** each year, usually held as part of the student's annual visit to Edinburgh. Additional meetings take place via Teams/Zoom, and electronic communication should be maintained on a regular basis.

### **Assessment & Progression: Study Plan and Annual Review Process**

At the point of application prospective students (in consultation with their principal supervisor) should prepare an outline study plan covering the duration of their programme, and indicating the approximate intended dates of visits to Edinburgh. It is expected that the majority of these visits will take place for and around the annual Summer Programme.

Additionally, every distance PhD student should receive their annual review at around the time of the Summer Programme; students should prepare for this important milestone accordingly, in consultation with their supervisors.

At the annual review, progress is assessed by a panel consisting of the supervisors and additional staff members as appropriate. The first-year review has special significance, since this is the point at which PhD status is confirmed (assuming satisfactory progress to this point). However, for part-time students, the University regulations allow for this decision to be deferred until the second-year annual review (Regulation 14 (c); [https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/pgr\\_assessmentregulations.pdf](https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/pgr_assessmentregulations.pdf)). Hence, for part-time distance PhD students, while the first-year review board should be sufficiently rigorous to allow the student and supervisors to gauge progress, the full review (which confirms progression into full PhD status) does not usually take place until the second year after matriculation (i.e. about 21 months after starting).

All students are normally required to return to Edinburgh for their annual reviews, which take place in the Summer Programme. In exceptional cases, with the permission of DPGS, the reviews could take place by Teams/Zoom (or equivalent). In addition, DPGS monitors the progress of each student (in consultation with the supervisory team).

**Examination**

Students are normally expected to return to Edinburgh for their viva examination. In exceptional circumstances students may be allowed to attend the viva via video-link when they can be in the same physical location as their external examiner.