

COURSE HANDBOOK

OVERVIEW

BECOME A THOUGHT LEADER		
The Master of Philosophy provides a pathway for graduates of coursework Masters degrees to pursue further independent research. Graduates will find this research to be an invaluable part of their career progression in ministry, business or education sectors	Program Director	Professor Johannes Luetz
	AQF Level	AQF Level 9 (Postgraduate)
	Qualification	Master Degree (Higher Degree Research)
	Subjects	3 (including thesis)
	IELTS	7.0
	Languages of Instruction	English
	CRICOS Code	089243A
	ASCED Code	091703
	Accreditation	Self-accreditation
	Course Length	1.5 years full-time; up to 6 years part-time

AC is the national college of the Australian Christian Churches, which is a Pentecostal charismatic Christian movement. Although the courses are accessible to students of any background, this course usually attracts those whose personal faith resonates with the College's Pentecostal orientation. The students' motivation to pursue postgraduate research studies ranges from a desire to be trained in a particular specialisation, to personal growth and edification, as well as the acquiring of advanced professional and communication skills.

The postgraduate courses at AC often attract students who have careers in professional fields, studying with the goal of integrating their faith with their vocation. The College's flexible modes of delivery attract a large proportion of students who wish to maintain other commitments while undertaking research work.

The purpose of this Level 9 Masters (Research) program is to equip students to be independent researchers and make a contribution toward advancing knowledge and professional expertise in a variety of academic and professional contexts. The Master of Philosophy (MPhil) will provide a pathway for graduates of AC coursework Masters degrees who wish to pursue further independent research. The MPhil can also function as a pathway into or exit point from the Doctor of Philosophy, providing students have completed the two MPhil coursework subjects and a significant percentage of the thesis component.

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The MPhil is a research program designed for graduates with in-depth knowledge and skills, in the field of Theology, Business and/or Education, who want to make an original research contribution to research and research training within academic, church and community settings.

Graduates of the MPhil will have systematic and critical understanding, including a working knowledge of recent developments and approaches in the area of specialisation. Specialisation in Theology will include areas such as Systematic Theology, Biblical Studies, History or Ministry. Specialisation in Business will include areas such as Business, Leadership or Communication. Specialisation in Education will include areas such as Education, Educational Leadership and Theological Education. However, it is anticipated that some students may explore cross-disciplinary areas, such as Theology and Economics.

Graduates will demonstrate specialised knowledge and skills in research using methodologies applicable to their discipline. Advanced skills in critical thinking, communication and creative problem solving of complex issues are demonstrated through independent, original research and scholarship.

Graduates' research will identify, investigate and address an issue within the field of Theology, Business and/or Education, to be presented in a research thesis which will make an original contribution toward the advancement of learning and/or professional practice within the chosen field.

AC GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

Christian Worldview

A knowledge of the Christian story, derived from the Scriptures and tradition of the church. An awareness of the implications of this story for self-identity in the context of local and global communities. This includes a commitment to engage with alternate worldviews, showing appreciation of the values and perspectives of others.

Leadership

The ability to provide effective Christian leadership to individuals, groups and organisations, demonstrated in the capacity to influence and enable others to accomplish worthwhile objectives which contribute to the human good and the kingdom of God. This includes seeking to emulate the example of Jesus Christ in serving and empowering others.

Integrity and Justice

The ability to apply a Christian worldview in the diverse situations and responsibilities of life, and to exercise faith, hope, love and generosity as prevailing attitudes. This includes the active promotion of the gospel, social justice, equality, mutual respect and an ecological ethos.

Communications

The ability to communicate effectively to a range of audiences, in appropriate contexts using high levels of verbal, written and technological skills. This includes visual and media literacy, numeracy, rhetoric and persuasion.

Personal and Social Skills

Demonstrate relational skills that incorporate the flexibility for both independent and collaborative situations. This includes personal and group organizational skills, conflict management and resolution, as well as the ability to value and respect the opinions of others.

Critical and Creative Thinking

A capacity for critical and reflective thinking that is explored not only individually but within a community context. This includes a capacity to be creative and to research, analyse and resolve problems in innovative and prophetic ways.

Professional Knowledge

Maintenance and use of knowledge about a discipline or field, involving theoretical, conceptual and methodological elements. This includes striving continually and independently to secure further knowledge and where appropriate, defined professional skills.

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

Specification	AQF Level 9: Masters Degree (Research)	AC Learning outcomes	AC Graduate Attributes
Knowledge	Graduates of a Masters Degree (Research) will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a body of knowledge that includes the understanding of recent developments in one or more disciplines;• advanced knowledge of research principles and methods applicable to the field of work or learning.	Demonstrated: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• critical, creative and systematic understanding of a substantial and complex body of knowledge that makes an original contribution to a particular area in the field of specialisation such as Systematic Theology, Biblical Studies, History, Ministry, Business, Leadership, Communication, Education, Educational Leadership or Theological Education;• advanced knowledge of scholarship and recent developments in the area under consideration;• understanding of advanced research principles and methods, and substantial knowledge of specific research approaches used within the chosen field.	Christian Worldview Critical and Creative Thinking Professional Knowledge

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

Specification	AQF Level 9: Masters Degree (Research)	AC Learning outcomes	AC Graduate Attributes
Skills	<p>Graduates of a Masters Degree (Research) will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cognitive skills to demonstrate mastery of theoretical knowledge and to reflect critically on theory and its application; • cognitive, technical and creative skills to investigate, analyse and synthesise complex information, problems, concepts and theories and to apply established theories to different bodies of knowledge or practice; • cognitive, technical and creative skills to generate and evaluate complex ideas and concepts at an abstract level; • cognitive and technical skills to design, use and evaluate research and research methods; • communication and technical skills to present a coherent and sustained argument and to disseminate research results to specialist and non-specialist audiences; • technical and communication skills to design, evaluate, implement, analyse, theorise and disseminate research that makes a contribution to knowledge. 	<p>Demonstrated ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • autonomously engage in critical reflection, analysis and synthesis of the body of theoretical knowledge related to a particular area within the field of Theology, Business and/or Education; • establish, incorporate and apply effective research methodologies to advance existing professional knowledge and/or practice; • design a research question that explores an original and complex issue and propose solutions; • communicate effectively the complexity of the research and its findings to peers and the community; • provide creative responses to the contemporary challenges and new developments in research and scholarship within the chosen field. 	<p>Christian Worldview</p> <p>Leadership</p> <p>Integrity and Justice</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Personal and Social Skills</p> <p>Critical and Creative Thinking</p> <p>Professional Knowledge</p>

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

Specification	AQF Level 9: Masters Degree (Research)	AC Learning outcomes	AC Graduate Attributes
Application of knowledge and skills	<p>Graduates of a Masters Degree (Research) will demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• with creativity and initiative to new situations and/or for further learning;• with high level personal autonomy and accountability;• to plan and execute a substantial piece of research.	<p>Demonstrated ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• apply the knowledge and skills developed within the selected research field to engage with new questions and find innovative and creative solutions;• work independently and responsibly in the selected research field;• effectively design, implement and communicate a major thesis in the selected research field to contribute original knowledge and expertise to peers and the community;• develop an advanced level of integrative reflection which will inform and enhance professional practice.	<p>Christian Worldview</p> <p>Leadership</p> <p>Integrity and Justice</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Personal and Social Skills</p> <p>Critical and Creative Thinking</p> <p>Professional Knowledge</p>

COURSE STRUCTURE

This course structure applies to students who commence from 2021		
The course consists of 120 credit points comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• one core research methods unit (20 credit points)• one subject at 700 level (20 credit point) to be taken from the area of specialisation• one core 30,000 word research thesis (80 credit points) in area of specialisation To qualify for award of the degree of Master of Philosophy a candidate shall complete at least 120 credit points.		
CONTENT OF THE COURSE OF STUDY		CREDIT POINTS
CORE SUBJECTS	RES701 Research Methods	20
	RES703 MPhil Research Thesis	80
	XXX706 Advanced Studies in Discipline Area	20
ELECTIVE SUBJECTS	Nil	
RULES OF PROGRESSION	Refer to candidature policy and procedure.	
OTHER PROTOCOLS OF THE COURSE	To be eligible to graduate, students must pass at least 120 credit points	
BRIDGING/ NESTED COURSES	There are no nested awards within the Master of Philosophy. The Master of Philosophy can be nested into the Doctor of Philosophy.	

For information on the teaching faculty for these subjects, please visit our [website](#).

Graduate Pathways

Graduates of the MPhil program may progress into the Doctor of Philosophy. Graduates are advised to contact the Future Students Team for information on eligibility requirements for further study.

Career Opportunities

Graduates of the MPhil program are likely to find employment in the church, the business sector, the education sector, as well as in the community sector. Graduate employment opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- Lecturer or trainer
- Academic researcher
- Church pastor
- Community/NFP/NGO worker
- Church administrator
- Education administrator or teacher
- Business professional

ADMISSION CRITERIA

Academic Entry Requirements

Applicants with Recent Secondary Education

This course of study requires the completion of a higher education qualification by an authorised institution. Applicants with recent high school education only are not eligible for direct entry into this course.

Applicants with Vocational Education and Training Study

This course of study requires the completion of a higher education qualification by an authorised institution. Applicants with a Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualification only are not eligible for direct entry into this course.

Applicants with Higher Education Study

Completion of an AQF Level 8 bachelors (honours 1 or 2a) degree in a relevant field, or equivalent.

OR

Completion of an AQF Level 7 bachelors degree in a relevant field, or equivalent, as well as an AQF Level 8 graduate diploma in a relevant field with at least a 20 credit point research component and an overall GPA at least 2.8.

OR

Completion of an AQF Level 9 or above postgraduate qualification in a relevant field, or equivalent.

Applicants with Work and Life Experience

In exceptional circumstances the Program Director may recommend that an applicant be admitted who does not have the qualifications specified. In this case, evidence must be supplied to verify that the applicant has equivalent qualifications based on academic and professional attainment and demonstration of an appropriate capacity for the research.

For further information about AC's provisional entry criteria, please see:

- [AC's Admissions Requirements](#)
- [Higher Education Provisional Entry Policy](#)
- [Admissions Policy](#)

English Language Proficiency

Overseas students are required to demonstrate their English proficiency skills. Such students admitted into our programs must attain an overall IELTS (or equivalent) score of 7.0 (with no score below 7.0 in any of the four skills areas). IELTS (or equivalent) is not required for applicants who have undertaken five years of required higher education study (or equivalent) in English from an approved country or who have completed a Certificate IV or higher qualification awarded in English under the Australian Qualification Framework by an authorised institution or registered training organisation.

Applicants are encouraged to contact the [International Student Office](#) if they are unsure of the equivalence of their English language proficiency test scores.

Essential Requirements

A pre-admission interview for all applicants will be conducted by the Program Director and bridging courses may be required.

In exceptional circumstances the Program Director may recommend that an applicant be admitted who does not have the qualifications specified. In this case, evidence must be supplied to verify that the applicant has equivalent qualifications based on academic and professional attainment and demonstration of an appropriate capacity for the research.

Special Admissions Pathways

AC's [Admissions Policy](#) details the special admission pathways for our courses of study. The Special Admission Pathways are evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Program Director. A student's admission requirements may be reconsidered on educational disadvantage grounds, including but not limited to:

- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, where the normal HSC entry path has not been followed;
- socioeconomic reasons (such as low-family income or poor living conditions);
- learning or language difficulties;
- physical disability;
- serious family illness or excessive family responsibility;
- completion of a prescribed program of non-award study (four subjects or 40 credit points) with an overall GPA of 1.8 or better.

For a full list of educational disadvantage grounds, please see AC's [Admissions Policy](#).

DIVERSITY AND EQUITY

AC is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from discrimination on the basis of income, age, disability, social and ethnic background, location or gender. AC endeavours to increase opportunities for people of all backgrounds to participate in training programs, and implement programs that take into account the specific needs of participants. AC encourages students to inform AC of any disability, medical condition or learning need that may impact on your studies to arrange a study plan that best suits your needs.

HOW TO APPLY

Once you have chosen your course of study, you will need to apply direct to AC. Applications typically close 3 weeks before semester commences.

All AC application forms are completed online. There are different forms depending on the level of study you are applying for and the location of your course.

Further information on How to Apply and access to AC's Application Forms is available on our [website](#).

Credit transfers and recognised prior learning (RPL)

You may be entitled to credit for prior learning, whether formal or informal. Formal learning can include previous study in higher education, vocational education, or adult and community education. Informal learning can include on the job learning or various kinds of work and life experience. Credit can reduce the amount of study needed to complete a degree.

For further information about credit and recognition of prior learning please see AC's [Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#) or contact our [Student Support](#) team.

HOW TO ENROL

Once you have returned a signed copy of your Letter of Offer to accept your place at AC, you will be invited to enrol in your specific subjects in the next academic period. Students are advised to consult their timetable (can be found [here](#)), and contact their Program Director for tailored academic advice before completing the enrolment form.

Any credit transfers or recognition of prior learning will also be applied at this time.

STUDENT SERVICES

Student Support Team

AC's Student Support Team and Graduate Research School Officer exists to ensure you get from Orientation Day to Graduation Day with a smile on your face!

Academic Support

- Tailored academic guidance
- Assessment variation to accommodate disabilities, medical conditions and/or learning needs
- Exam reader/writers
- Physical libraries
- Access to online journal databases
- Access to eBook resources
- Resources are also provided online for self-development

Non-Academic Support

- Pastoral Care
- Chaplains
- Professional counselling
- Careers guidance
- On-campus childcare*
- Extra-curricular and community services
- SRC – The Student Representative Council
- Recreation areas

Student Life

All students can take part in:

- mission trips and community service projects
- weekly chapel services
- lunches and gatherings on campus
- opportunities to hear or present research
- masterclasses to take your skills and knowledge to the next level
- social events both on and away from campus
- exchange programs with other colleges and universities around the world

...and much, much more! To find out what is happening near you or to get specific details just contact the Student Support Team:

Email: studentsupport@ac.edu.au

Phone: (02) 8893 9005

<https://www.ac.edu.au/current-students/student-support/>

**Not available at all campuses*

STUDENT PROFILE

The table below gives an indication of the likely peer cohort for new students at AC. It provides data on students that commenced study and passed the census date in the most relevant recent intake period for which data are available, including those admitted through all offer rounds and international students studying in Australia.

Applicant background	Reporting Year: 2024	
	Number of new students	Percentage of all new students
(A) Past higher education study (includes a bridging or enabling course)	N/A	N/A
(B) Past vocational education and training (VET) study	N/A	N/A
(C) Work and life experience (Admitted on the basis of previous achievement other than the above)	N/A	N/A
(D) Recent secondary education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admitted solely on the basis of ATAR (<i>regardless of whether this includes the impact of adjustment factors such as equity or subject bonus points</i>) Admitted where both ATAR and additional criteria were considered (<i>e.g. portfolio, audition, extra test, early offer conditional on minimum ATAR</i>) Admitted on the basis of other criteria only and ATAR was <u>not</u> a factor (<i>e.g. special consideration, audition alone, schools recommendation scheme with no minimum ATAR requirement</i>) 	N/A	N/A
	N/A	N/A
	N/A	N/A
International students	N/A	N/A
All students	N/A	N/A

Note: "<5" – the number of students is less than 5.

N/A – Students not accepted in this category.

N/P – Not published: the number is hidden to prevent calculation of numbers in cells with less than 5 students.

ATAR-based offers only	ATAR
Highest rank to receive an offer	N/A
Median rank to receive an offer	N/A
Lowest rank to receive an offer	N/A

Note: "<5" – the number of students is less than 5.

Note: This table relates to all students made an offer on the basis of ATAR alone or ATAR in combination with other factors. Students admitted into a course of study based on a Special Admission Pathway or otherwise not based on their ATAR are not included in this table.

WHERE TO GET FURTHER INFORMATION

ac.edu.au

AC's [website](https://ac.edu.au) is the best place to discover what's happening at AC and explore our courses, campuses and support services. If you are not yet an AC student, our [Future Students](#) team are here to help find the right course for you!

Moodle

Once you begin your studies at AC, you will use [Moodle](#) as your Learning Management System (LMS) to access all your subject content, the AC Academic Handbook, Study Skills and Textbook Information. New Students can also use Moodle to view our Induction Videos.

International Students

Nothing beats the experience of being part of our community and participating in our classroom discussions! Alternatively, for students who decide to study from their home country, AC brings education to you by offering many subjects and degrees by distance education allowing you to study from anywhere in the world. Flexible delivery means that you will have access to our e-Learning platform which provides resources, podcasts, online forums and tutor assistance that allows you to complete your studies from your home country.

Further information about International Students, including the application process, international recognition of AC courses of study and FAQ's, is available on our [website](#).

Alternatively, our [Future Students](#) team are available to answer any questions you may have about your requirements as an onshore or offshore International Students at AC.

QILT

Thinking about higher education institutions and study areas? Wish you could ask someone about their experience? The [QILT website](#) helps you compare official study experience and employment outcomes data from Australian higher education institutions.

TEQSA National Register

The purpose of the [TEQSA National Register](#) is to be the authoritative source of information on the status of registered higher education providers in Australia.

Complaints and Grievances

If you are unsatisfied with the outcome of your application, AC's [Complaint and Grievance Resolution Policy](#) outlines the procedure for resolving a complaint or grievance.