

St Augustine's College of Theology / Common Awards

Admissions Policy

Key contacts (2020-21):

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1. Admissions decisions will be made by the Director of Studies (Programme Director) in consultation with the Principal (or their acting substitutes). Where applicable, St Augustine's College of Theology may consult staff from diocesan teams responsible for the delivery of the relevant programme, in line with the Service Level Agreement in place.
2. The Management Committee ('Board of Studies') shall monitor the admissions processes and may issue guidance on such processes.
3. Standard entry qualifications permitting admission to the programmes are:
 - a) for postgraduate awards, either a 2:1 degree (or other equivalent level 6 qualification, e.g., a Graduate Diploma) including a substantial element of theology and/or ministry; or a 2:2 degree in any subject and an additional qualification at level 5 or above in theology and/or ministry at 2:1 standard or equivalent; or a 2:1 degree in any subject and an additional qualification at level 4 or above in theology and/or ministry;
 - b) for the Graduate Diploma, a Diploma of Higher Education or equivalent in theology and/or ministry, or a 2:1 degree in any subject;
 - c) for the BA, 3 A levels at grade E or above, or equivalent or higher qualifications;
 - d) for the Diploma of Higher Education or Certificate of Higher Education, 2 A levels at grade E or above, or equivalent or higher qualifications.
4. Applicants for a postgraduate award who do not meet the standard entry qualifications (e.g., a 2:2 degree in theology and/or ministry and no other HE qualification) may be conditionally admitted based on their academic and/or ministerial potential (see para. 8). Such admission will be conditional upon satisfactory completion of the first module in the postgraduate programme to a standard that demonstrates potential to complete a postgraduate qualification.
5. Applicants for an undergraduate award, especially mature applicants, who do not meet the standard entry qualifications may be admitted to the Certificate of Higher Education if St Augustine's College of Theology believes they are capable of undertaking these awards, and allowed to progress from these to higher awards if their performance in them is satisfactory. Likewise, other students admitted to lower awards may be permitted to progress to higher awards if their performance in the lower awards has been satisfactory.

6. Applicants whose first language is not English will be asked to provide evidence of English Language ability, as follows:
 - i. Successful completion of a comprehension and writing assessment, conducted by St Augustine's College of Theology; *and*
 - ii. successful completion of external language test, as required by Durham University, e.g., IELTS score of 6.5 (see <https://www.dur.ac.uk/common.awards/programmes/>).

External English language tests are undertaken at the potential applicant's own expense.

7. Admissions decisions are based as appropriate on previous qualifications, evidence from church selection processes, sample work, interview and references.
8. Admissions decisions are made on the basis of merit and potential. This may include not just merit and potential with regard to the academic award *per se*, but also with regard to the contribution that an applicant can make to and the benefit they may gain from the learning community at St Augustine's College of Theology.
9. In making admissions decisions, St Augustine's College of Theology staff shall take every care in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 to avoid unlawful or unjust discrimination.
10. Before an offer is finalised, at least one reference will be taken up, except in the case of those who have been recommended for training for ordained or licensed lay ministry who therefore come with the commendation of their diocese (or equivalent in other denominations).
11. The reasons for all admissions decisions, and supporting evidence as appropriate, shall be recorded and held by St Augustine's College of Theology, and made available to Durham University on request.
12. Admission to programmes of training for licensed church ministry (lay or ordained) may be made conditional on the candidate subsequently gaining the sponsorship of their diocese for ministerial training (or equivalent in other denominations).
13. If an applicant is found to have provided false or misleading information (whether in formal application processes or in other ways), this is sufficient grounds for refusing admission or withdrawing offers already made.
14. Feedback on admissions decisions is given on request only.
15. If an applicant has a complaint following the provision of feedback and is unable to resolve this informally, a formal complaint may be made. Formal complaints should be submitted in writing to the Principal. A complaint is defined as a specific concern related to a procedural error, irregularity or mal-administration in the admissions procedures or policies. A written response shall be given to the complaint within one month of its receipt.

16. If a complaint cannot be resolved internally, it will be referred it to Durham University. For more information, see <https://www.durham.ac.uk/departments/academic/common-awards/students/complaints-appeals/#d.en.401987>.
17. Appeals, defined as a request by an unsuccessful applicant for a formal review of the outcome of an admissions decision, will not be considered.
18. Applicants will not be discriminated against in any further application should they request feedback or make a complaint under these policies and procedures.
19. St Augustine's College of Theology, in consultation with partner dioceses (where applicable), may close admissions to any programme when it believes it has recruited to its capacity. However, it must ensure that fair treatment is given to all who have applied prior to the closure of admissions. This may include taking into account (in addition to merit and potential, as in section 8 above) factors such as when the application for admission was made, when the applicant made themselves available for interview, and when the applicant would be in a position to confirm acceptance of their place.
20. If further places become available following closure of admissions, St Augustine's College of Theology shall either offer those places to those who had previously applied (ensuring they are all treated fairly) or reopen a fair admissions process.

Version 1.1 (May 2021)