



MARYVALE INSTITUTE

Research at the Institute

**Leading to the degrees of
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)**

**INTRODUCTION
FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS**

2019-20

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Maryvale Institute

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Maryvale Institute, Birmingham

RESEARCH DEGREES

Master of Philosophy(MPhil) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) *In Collaboration with Liverpool Hope University*

Introduction

Maryvale Institute, a Catholic educational establishment in Birmingham, England, welcomes applications from students who wish to pursue research leading to a higher degree, in areas of religious, philosophical, catechetical, historical, educational and cultural scholarship that are particularly relevant to the tradition that Maryvale represents. Within this broad field, Maryvale has particular research strengths, including: catechesis, both theoretical and applied; the philosophy and thought of the Catholic tradition, with a special focus on Thomas Aquinas; research relating to the life, writings and influence of John Henry Newman, with whom Maryvale has historic associations; and Church history. The spirit in which Maryvale seeks to conduct its research degree programme, and indeed all its educational and scholarly activities, is one of academic objectivity and openness.

The Maryvale research programme is conducted in collaboration with Liverpool Hope University, and leads to awards by the University. Students register both with Maryvale Institute and with Liverpool Hope University. The research involves regular supervision and guidance by scholars appointed for that purpose. The degree is gained by personal research, leading to the preparation, and submission for examination, of a written thesis on a significant theme. Students also complete a portfolio of evidence demonstrating a range of relevant research skills. Study is part-time, is non-residential, and the study time is between 4-6 years for a Doctorate and 2-4 years for an MPhil.

Students are required to spend a minimum of two weeks in the U.K., at the Institute and University each year, normally in June.

Admission of each student is dependent on both Maryvale and the University's approval of the suitability of the student to undertake research, of the programme of research itself, and of the supervision arrangements and research facilities. Both Institutions continue to monitor the student's academic progress, requiring regular progress reports and accurate keeping of student records. University approval is required for the examining panel and for confirmation of the thesis title. Liverpool Hope authorises the appointment of the examiners and reviews their recommendations. The power and decision to award the degree rests with the University. Students always have access to its appeal procedures.

Maryvale has its own Director of Research, a Research Programme Committee and other internal procedures for quality assurance, to ensure that its higher degrees programme conforms with the University's requirements and national norms, and to its own high

academic standards. The Institute regulations and the complaints policy and procedures can be found on the Maryvale website under [‘Study with us – Handbooks and Regulations’](#).

Entry Requirements

The normal entry requirement for Maryvale Institute research degrees is a Master’s degree awarded with Distinction from a UK University;

Or a Master’s Degree from a UK University that does not offer awards with Merit, the Liverpool Hope Registrar having confirmed that the profile of marks awarded by that University satisfies or exceeds Liverpool Hope University’s requirements for the award of a Master’s Degree with Merit;

OR an equivalent qualification from outside the UK. (Please note that equivalency of qualifications is a matter to be judged by Liverpool Hope University, and all its decisions are final).

Applicants who do not fully meet the criteria may be considered on an exceptional basis and a considered rationale would need to be provided to support such an applicant.

In order to be accepted for admission, the student must have sufficient command of the English language to complete the programme of work satisfactorily and to prepare and defend a thesis in English (for students for whom English is not their first language, formal evidence of competence in English is needed).

Students are expected to communicate with their supervisors regularly during an academic year, either face to face or electronically. Each time a meeting takes place, the student writes a brief report on the meeting, including agreed action points. Maryvale’s research office and the University monitor this work, and receive an annual report on progress. Students also undertake a general research skills audit and build a portfolio demonstrating their general research competences.

Registration and Continuance

After admission to the research degrees programmes, registration is renewable annually, and is subject to confirmation of satisfactory progress, which must be to the satisfaction of the academic authorities both at Maryvale and at the University. In the event of any unexpected and important changes in circumstances, students may apply in writing for an interruption of studies during the registration period (normally this would not be longer than six months) using forms designed for such an event from the Maryvale Research Administrator.

During the course of their studies, usually in the 3rd year following registration as a doctoral student by the University, students present themselves for a formal ‘Confirmation of Registration Event’ (CRE), where a significant amount of work is presented to a panel and defended by the student. The purpose is to confirm that the student is working at an appropriate level for a (potential) doctoral award and to establish the expected timescale for completion of the thesis.

In the unlikely event that the panel is not satisfied that the student will reach doctoral standard, (s)he may be re-registered as a candidate for the award of a Master of Philosophy degree.

Academic Standards – Doctor of Philosophy

Liverpool Hope University will award the degree of PhD to students who have demonstrated:

- the creation and interpretation of new knowledge through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication;
- a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice;
- the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems;
- a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

Master of Philosophy

Typically, holders of an MPhil degree from Liverpool Hope University will be able to:

- make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas or approaches; **and**

have the qualities & transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of:

- personal responsibility;
- largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations.

Application process

Since students must be registered with both Maryvale and Liverpool Hope, the application process has two stages: an initial application to Maryvale which, if successful, will be forwarded, with the recommendation that the student be registered, to the appropriate University Admissions Committee. The University has two entry dates, 1st February and 1st October. For entry in February, applications have to be submitted to Hope by 1st October of the previous year; for entry in October the deadline is 1st May.

In order to process applications in accordance with the University entry dates, if students are seeking to begin their studies in February, completed application forms together with references need to be received at Maryvale by 1st September of the previous year; and for entry in October the deadline is 1st April. These will be considered by the Maryvale Research Committee and applicants will be notified of the outcome within one month of their completed application form and references being received at Maryvale. Initial

acceptances require ratification by Liverpool Hope University and we aim to obtain this within two months after the notification of the original admission by the Research Committee at Maryvale.

PhD Applications – Timetable 2019-20		
Proposed Entry Date	Application Deadline (Maryvale)	Application papers to LHU deadline
1 st October 2019	1 st April 2019	1 st May 2019
1 st February 2020	1 st September 2019	1 st October 2019

Therefore, if you wish to explore this route towards a higher degree and bearing in mind the dates set out above:

1. Please send for and complete the necessary application forms obtainable from the administrator: **Academic Administrator – Postgraduate, Maryvale Institute, Old Oscott Hill, Birmingham B44 9AG, England** or by email: postgrad@maryvale.ac.uk .

Fees

Tuition Fee Policy

An expanded version of Maryvale’s Tuition Fee Policy is available on request; however, the following are key points:

- Tuition fees must be paid in full at the beginning of each academic year; Fees are payable in £ sterling and are generally non-refundable
- In the case of any non-EU students who have been denied a Visa, fees will be reimbursed less an administration charge of £250
- Students are not allowed to receive supervision, participate in residential events, sit examinations, or progress through the course until all outstanding fees are paid in full.

If you decide to apply for admission to the research programme at Maryvale you are asked to submit an application fee of £85 with your application form. This is non-returnable. Payment can be made by cheque, made payable to ‘Maryvale Institute’, by credit card, electronically direct to Maryvale's bank account or through PayPal.

Please see the Institute website (www.maryvale.ac.uk) under ‘Study with us’ for [details of current fees](#). A [link to the Institute policy on the payment of fees](#) can be found under ‘Handbooks and Regulations’.

For 2019-2020, annual fees for this part-time research programme, following registration with the University, are:*

European students: £3,940

Non-European students: £5,495

These fee rates can be expected to rise annually by around 5% to cover increases in inflation and other costs. Precise fees are updated in the Spring each year. More details of financial matters can be obtained by writing to: finance@maryvale.ac.uk

(*In the final year only of the research programme, there are two further costs: an exam fee of £1,625 and a fee for the binding of the thesis.)

Appendix 1 Guidance: Describing Your Research Proposal

NB This is intended purely as a guide to help you provide an initial description of your intended research. As such it is not a compulsory format. Use it if it is helpful. If it does not meet your needs then use a format that more accurately describes your proposed investigation while keeping to the same approximate word count.

<p style="text-align: center;">The Sort of Questions To Ask Yourself When Formulating A Description Of Your Proposed Area of Research</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Word Count 5,000</p>
<p><i>Aims</i> <i>What is the intended focus of my proposed research?</i></p> <p><i>Why have I chosen this particular aspect of practice / question(s)?</i></p> <p><i>What do I hope to achieve?</i></p> <p><i>What is the likely relevance / importance of what I am proposing to do?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2,000 approx</p>
<p><i>Indicative Sources</i> <i>What is the story so far? Who else has researched into my proposed area of inquiry?</i></p> <p><i>What was their motivation?</i></p> <p><i>How did they go about collecting and analysing the data?</i></p> <p><i>How rigorous are the line(s) of argument being developed?</i></p> <p><i>List key sources/bibliography</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1,000 approx</p>
<p><i>Methodology</i> <i>How do I see my role as researcher and my relationship to that or those I'm researching about?</i> <i>What is my personal background/ideology (i.e. from where am I coming in researching this project)?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1,000 approx</p>
<p><i>Research Methods</i> <i>How exactly am I intending to go about doing my research (empirical, archival, library etc.?)</i></p> <p>(A) If you intend to undertake empirical research <i>How exactly am I intending collect my data/make my observations?</i></p> <p><i>In what way are the data/my observations to be recorded?</i></p> <p><i>How are the data/observations to be analysed?</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>(B) If you intend to make undertake philosophical/theological research that is library based <i>How do I intend to identify/select my prime sources?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">500 approx</p>

<p><i>How will I make sense out of the data in those sources?</i></p> <p><i>In what ways will I validate my analysis/argument?</i></p>	
<p><i>Ethical Issues</i> <i>Provide a summary of any ethical issues that might arise from the proposed research – especially if this involves human subjects – see current Liverpool Hope Ethics Policy.</i></p>	<p>500 approx</p>