

# **Hong Kong LifeRoad Theological Seminary**

## **Handbook for the Integrated Master of Theology (ThM) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Program**

### **1. Introduction**

- The Integrated Master of Theology (ThM) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) program at Hong Kong LifeRoad Theological Seminary (HKLTS) is designed to cultivate scholarly excellence and equip leaders for global theological engagement.
- This innovative pathway integrates rigorous academic training, critical reflection, and practical ministry formation.
- The integrated structure enables qualified students to transition seamlessly from advanced coursework in theology to doctoral-level research of international standard.

### **2. Rationale and Vision**

#### 2.1 Rationale

- In a rapidly evolving religious and social landscape, theological education must respond with depth, integrity, and relevance.
- HKLTS seeks to form scholars who bridge academic theology and ministry practice, fostering faithful leadership amid global challenges.

#### 2.2 Vision

The integrated ThM–PhD program aims to:

- Equip Christian leaders, theologians, and educators for informed engagement with global theological issues.
- Contribute to the development of original theological knowledge and research.
- Strengthen HKLTS’s identity as a centre of theological research, reflection, and dialogue.

### 3. Admission Requirements

#### 3.1 Entry Qualifications

Program	Entry Requirement
Master of Theology (ThM)	Bachelor of Theology (BTh), Master of Divinity (MDiv), or equivalent qualification
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)	Master of Theology (ThM) or equivalent qualification with GPA – B+ (85%)

#### 3.2 Required Documents

Applicants must submit:

1. Two Letters of Recommendation, including at least one from a PhD holder.
2. Official Academic Transcripts of all previous studies.
3. Expression of Interest (motivation and study objectives).
4. Curriculum Vitae (CV) of proposed supervisors if applicable.

#### 3.3 English Language Proficiency

- Applicants must meet HKLTS's English proficiency standards for postgraduate study.

### 4. Master of Theology (ThM) Program

#### 4.1 Overview

- The ThM is a two-year, 120-credit program consisting of 12 subjects (10 credit points each). It combines advanced theological learning, research training, and a capstone thesis, preparing students for entry into the PhD program or equivalent advanced study.

#### 4.2 Aims

1. Develop advanced skills in theological reasoning and research.
2. Foster critical engagement with theological literature.
3. Equip students to produce substantial original research.
4. Enable scholarly contributions to church, academy, and society.

#### 4.3 Learning Outcomes

Graduates will:

- Demonstrate advanced theological knowledge in historical and contemporary contexts.
- Analyse and synthesise complex theological concepts critically.
- Design and conduct independent research using appropriate methodologies.

- Communicate theological insights effectively in academic and professional settings.
- Engage diverse theological perspectives with rigour and reflective maturity.

#### 4.4 Program Structure

Component	Description
Duration	2 years (4 semesters)
Total Subjects	12
Credit Points	120 (10 per subject)
Study Load	3 subjects per semester
Delivery	Face-to-face, online, or blended

#### 4.5 Course Schedule

##### 1<sup>st</sup> Year – Semester 1

Unit Code	Unit Title	Description
THM901	Research Methodology in Theology	Introduction to theological research methods, ethics, and proposal design.
THM902	Academic Writing and Essay Skills	Develops academic writing, argumentation, and referencing for theological research.
THM903	Survey of Theological Literature	Critical engagement with major theological texts and research synthesis.

##### 1<sup>st</sup> Year – Semester 2

Unit Code	Unit Title	Description
THM904	Biblical Studies Methods	Examines exegetical and hermeneutical approaches to biblical interpretation.
THM905	Systematic Theology Foundations	Explores key doctrines and theological frameworks for critical inquiry.
THM906	Theology in Context	Studies theology within social, cultural, and historical contexts.

##### 2<sup>nd</sup> Year – Semester 3

Unit Code	Unit Title	Description
THM907	Ethics and Theological Practice	Examines ethical issues in research, ministry, and public theology.

Unit Code	Unit Title	Description
THM908	Advanced Research Methods	Explores sophisticated research design and methodology.
THM909	Elective 1	Topic-based elective in a chosen area of specialization.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Year – Semester 4

Unit Code	Unit Title	Description
THM910	Elective 2	Further specialization in a chosen theological area.
THM911	Research Colloquium	Presentation and peer review of research findings.
THM912	Capstone Thesis (15,000 words)	Independent theological research project under faculty supervision.

## 4.6 Progression to PhD

Graduates may apply to the PhD program with:

- GPA – B+ (85%)
- Approved PhD research proposal aligned with ThM thesis topic
- Identified and approved Principal Supervisor

## 5. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Program

### 5.1 Overview

- The PhD program is a three-year, research-based degree (240 credit points), representing HKLTS's highest academic qualification.
- It fosters original, independent, and critical theological research.

### 5.2 Entry Requirements

- Completed ThM or equivalent with GPA – B+ (85%).
- Approved PhD research proposal.
- Endorsement from a Principal Supervisor and supervisory panel.
- Evidence of research capacity and academic writing proficiency.
- English language proficiency per HKLTS policy.

### 5.3 Program Objectives

PhD graduates will:

- Produce an original 80,000-word thesis contributing to theological knowledge.
- Demonstrate mastery of advanced research methodologies.
- Engage critically with global theological scholarship.
- Present research in scholarly and public contexts.

### 5.4 Program Structure

Year	Semester	Credit Points	Key Components
1 <sup>st</sup>	Semester 1	40	Refinement of proposal, supervisor confirmation, ethics approval, research seminar
	Semester 2	40	Methodology development, data collection, Research Progress Review 1
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Semester 3	40	Ongoing research and writing, Mid-candidature Review
	Semester 4	40	Data analysis, chapter drafting, research seminar
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Semester 5	40	Final writing, pre-submission seminar
	Semester 6	40	Thesis submission and oral defence

### 5.5 Supervision

- Primary Supervisor: Specialist in candidate's field.
- Secondary Supervisor or Advisory Panel: Offers additional academic guidance.
- Progress Reporting: Monthly meetings and annual reports are mandatory.

### 5.6 Research Focus Areas

- Biblical Studies (Old & New Testament)
- Systematic and Historical Theology
- Ethics and Moral Theology
- Practical and Pastoral Theology
- Missiology and Cross-Cultural Studies
- Contextual and Intercultural Theology
- Interfaith Dialogue
- Theology and Public Issues (e.g., ecology, gender, justice)

### 5.7 Assessment

- Thesis: 80,000 words
- Examination: External evaluation by at least two international scholars
- Criteria: Originality, scholarly rigour, and contribution to the field
- Oral Defence: Required for final assessment

## 5.8 Graduate Outcomes

PhD graduates will be prepared to:

- Teach and supervise in theological and academic institutions.
- Publish original theological research.
- Lead research and policy initiatives in theology and ethics.
- Serve as public theologians in church, media, and civic contexts.

## 6. Contact Information

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