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The Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS)

at Liverpool Hope University





The Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS)

The Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS) is a national qualification awarded by the Bishops Conference of England and Wales, aimed at and strongly recommended to anyone who wants to teach in Catholic primary and secondary schools, as well as for parish catechesis. The qualification sets out to meet the formation needs of teachers, chaplains, catechists, youth workers, lay pastoral ministers and all who are interested in learning more about Catholic theology and faith in today's world. National recognition for the CCRS course comes from the Board of Religious Studies of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and from Catholic dioceses, schools and parishes across the country.

Why Study CCRS at Liverpool Hope University?

Studying for the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS) at Liverpool Hope University offers a unique opportunity to deepen one's understanding of Catholic doctrine and practices within an institution celebrated for its high-quality teaching and leadership in higher education. Liverpool Hope University is recognised for its commitment to educational excellence, providing a supportive community where students can critically engage with theological and religious studies.

Liverpool Hope University is distinctive in that it is the only university foundation in Europe (and the USA) where Catholic and Anglican colleges have come together to form an integrated, ecumenical, Christian foundation. It has a rich history dating back to its foundations in 1844. The university was established from the merger of three teacher training colleges: S.Katharine's College (1844, Anglican), Notre Dame College (1856, Catholic) and Christ's College (1964, Catholic). This unique heritage underscores its mission to foster a community grounded in faith, scholarship, and service, promoting respect, social justice, and the pursuit of truth. The university's ecumenical roots are central to its identity, emphasising collaboration and unity among different Christian traditions while maintaining a commitment to academic excellence and holistic development.

The CCRS programme, highlighted in a report by Dr Ros Stuart-Buttle (a longstanding course director at Liverpool Hope) for its effectiveness in theological education, is especially beneficial for educators, catechists, and pastoral ministers.

Additionally, Liverpool Hope's innovative online provision and growing learning resources ensure flexible and accessible study options, catering to diverse learning needs. Delivered entirely online and asynchronously, the course combines a great degree of flexibility with structure. While individual modules run to a timetable and have starting and closing dates, students can do their work at their own pace and convenience within the allocated timeframe. This comprehensive and inclusive approach not only enhances personal spiritual growth, but equips students with the pedagogical skills necessary to communicate the Catholic teaching effectively in various contexts.

Flexible Online Study

Liverpool Hope University offers the CCRS online, a study-route widely recognised as a high-quality, tutor-facilitated course, rich in Catholic theology and combined with a strong understanding of adult learning. It enables flexible study with multi-media learning resources and encourages participative, reflective and collaborative learning. Due to its flexibility and accessible learning, the course has a wide national outreach with a growing international presence.

Liverpool Hope University offers the CCRS for both full-time Hope registered students and for external candidates. The course is taught entirely online and in an asynchronous mode, using the university's virtual learning site (Moodle). There is no requirement for campus attendance. Media-rich learning resources invite independent study and reflection together with interactive activities for collaborative exchange among tutors and students.

Course Structure

The CCRS is delivered as a two-year rolling programme and requires completion of a total of eight modules: six core and two specialist modules. Four modules are offered each academic year and so it is possible to complete the course within two years or else take up to five years as allowed by the Board of Studies.

With the exception of the intensive summer modules, all modules run for approximately eight to ten weeks, and the online activities are best handled on a weekly basis mapping onto the weekly release of materials. There is no set time when students are required to be online, which allows students to manage their own study time accordingly.



Modules

The CCRS seeks to ensure that participants have a basic knowledge and understanding of the central beliefs and practices of the Catholic Church.

To gain the CCRS qualification, a total of eight modules must be achieved. This is made up of six core modules (Old Testament, New Testament, Person of Christ, Church, Sacraments and Morality) and two specialist modules (World Religions and Curriculum RE in a Catholic School).

The core modules explore key themes of contemporary Catholic theology while the specialist modules take a more practical focus and relate to pastoral work in the Church such as in a school, parish or workplace.

Each CCRS module requires a minimum of ten hours of independent course study time.

Successful completion of each module is evidenced firstly by regular online access and participation during the module and secondly through completion of an assignment that gains a passing standard by showing evidence of independent reflection, understanding and application of the module content, as well as wider reading.

Cost

For external students, each CCRS module currently costs £100. For Liverpool Hope registered students, the cost is £75 per module. In addition, for all students, there is a £25 Board of Studies registration fee.

Module registration and module payments can be made via the University's online store: <https://store.hope.ac.uk/short-courses/ccrs>



The Course Director



Rev. Dr Taras Khomych

Senior Lecturer at Liverpool Hope University

Rev. Dr Taras Khomych is a Senior Lecturer in Theology at Liverpool Hope University. He is also a priest, trustee and acting ecumenical officer of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of the Holy Family of London, a member of the International Commission for Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Disciples of Christ, and the priest chaplain at St Edward's College, Liverpool. His research interests lie mostly in early Christian literature, the writings of the Apostolic Fathers (1st & 2nd centuries) in particular, as well as more recent Eastern Christian theological trends and contemporary ecumenical issues.

E: khomyct@hope.ac.uk

Course Queries

E: ccrsonline@hope.ac.uk



Hear from **our Students** and **Alumni**

“The CCRS has allowed me to gain a deeper knowledge and appreciation of the Catholic faith, as well as improving my subject knowledge on Catholic Christianity which has been vital for me as a non-Catholic teacher in a Catholic school. The course has enabled me to uphold and maintain the teachings, practices and ethos of Catholicism in the schools that I have taught in.

The course has been very insightful and informative, and I would recommend anyone, Catholic and non-Catholic, who wishes to become a teacher to complete the course.”



**Christopher
Dempsey**

UK Student



**Michael
Hegarty**

International
Student

“I decided to study for the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies primarily to strengthen my own faith by gaining a deeper knowledge and understanding of Catholic theology, and to inform my work. Having qualified and worked as a secondary school teacher and Head of Department in England prior to taking up my current leadership post at an international school in Tokyo, Japan, Liverpool Hope University's online CCRS course offers a unique opportunity to be able to pursue this course from any location whilst continuing to work.

“I found the weekly readings and tasks to be both manageable and stimulating. The quality of information and support provided by the course tutors is excellent, and there are frequent opportunities to speak directly and learn from the tutors through the viva requirement for each module. I highly recommend the CCRS to anyone who, like me, works in or aspires to work in a Catholic school.”



Rachel Parle

CCRS Alumna and
Assistant Head
Teacher of St Bede's
Catholic Infant
School, Liverpool
(rated 'Outstanding'
by Ofsted)

"I have recently completed the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS) Online Course with Liverpool Hope University and I would highly recommend the programme. As a busy teacher with a demanding schedule and family commitments, finding a programme that offered flexibility was crucial. The CCRS being an online course was a perfect fit, allowing me to balance my professional and personal life effectively while deepening my understanding of Catholic education.

"The online format provided the convenience to study at my own pace, fitting the coursework around my existing responsibilities. This flexibility was invaluable, enabling me to engage with the material thoroughly without feeling overwhelmed. The course content was enriching and well-structured, offering insightful perspectives that have enhanced my teaching practices. I highly recommend the CCRS to anyone looking to expand their knowledge of Catholic teaching whilst managing a busy schedule. It's an investment in both professional development and personal growth".

"I am more than happy to hear that I have successfully completed all of the CCRS modules. It was a great opportunity for me to attend inspiring courses at Liverpool Hope University, and I learned a lot from them.

"How can I [understand what I read], except some man should guide me?" Your courses have enlightened me on the great mystery of the Holy Scriptures. I also really appreciate that you allowed me, a non-Christian, to learn Catholicism with other faithful Christians. It was a great joy to be able to contribute to the discussion in the last module on world religions from the perspective of Mahayana Buddhism, and in all modules, I was impressed by how my classmates witnessed to Jesus in their personal and professional lives. It has been a challenging but fruitful two years".



Shigeru Ozawa

International
Alumnus, Japan



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For more information, please email: ccrsonline@hope.ac.uk

www.hope.ac.uk/ccrs