



Nottingham Trent University Graduate School

NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY - INVESTING IN EXCELLENCE

**VICE-CHANCELLOR'S PHD SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME 2014
(entry in 2015/16)**

15 Fully funded PhD scholarships available

School of Social Sciences

Supervisor Name

Director of Studies : Dr Michael Keenan

Co-Supervisors : Professor Robert Dingwall, Dr Graham Bowpitt

Project title

Exploring the role and value of university chaplaincy in contemporary UK higher education institutions

Project Description

University chaplains and chaplaincies are long established within higher education institutions. Traditionally offering spiritual and religious guidance to students and staff, chaplaincies may be viewed as becoming increasingly marginal to campus life in higher education institutions which are widely seen as secular. However, rather than disappearing many chaplains and chaplaincies are thinking creatively about role and purpose or are being encouraged to embrace changing roles. Chaplaincies increasingly identify as multi-faith, emphasising their role to support all faiths and none. Some chaplaincies are being incorporated within university student services, and others are engaging with and pioneering academic partnerships and research. Such developments not only illustrate the diversity of contemporary multi-faith chaplaincy, but also raise a variety of questions about the role of chaplaincy and the place of faith in contemporary culture. For example - what is the place of religion within chaplaincy? Is chaplaincy public service rather than spiritual support? Does the changing role of chaplaincy offer a way of engaging with and thinking about the changing role and place of religion?

Focusing on the religious/non-religious activities of chaplaincy this project seeks to explore the role of contemporary chaplaincy for students, chaplains and institutions, and the position of religion/spirituality within such activities. In doing so it seeks to explore the public relevance of chaplaincy, the emergence of the 'multi-faith space', the connections and separations between chaplaincy and 'secular' student support, and the professional/vocational challenges changes to contemporary chaplaincy may bring.

The supervisory team crosses the disciplines of sociology, politics, and social work and it is hoped that the successful applicant will seek to engage with these disciplines by reflecting on issues of social relevance, the place of power and the provision of care with reference to the role of chaplains and chaplaincy. More broadly applicants are encouraged to reflect on how the role and activities of chaplaincy may reflect broader changes on the religious landscape, both in terms of individual belief, for example 'lived religion' (McGuire 2008) and 'reflexive spirituality' (Besecke 2014), and the

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importance of practice and experience in contemporary faith e.g. 'moralistic therapeutic deism' (Smith 2008), and the role of action in the living of religious faith (Bender 2003). The supervisory team have expertise in the research of clergy lives, identities and roles; contemporary religion; and university experience – applicants should consider these interests in applications.

Methodologically the supervisory team wish to encourage applicants to think creatively about how to engage with chaplaincies and elicit meaningful data. In doing so applicants are encouraged to engage with ideas of public sociology and to embrace observational and participatory methods. Particularly the research team would encourage the inclusion of collaborative participatory methods which involve chaplains and students in the design and development of data collection. This is a study which is designed to engage with the everyday experiences and practices of chaplaincy in order to reflect on ways forward for chaplains, student support and higher education institutions.

References

- Bender, D. 2003. *Heaven's kitchen: Living Religion at God's love We Deliver*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Besecke, K. 2014. *You Can't Put God in a Box: Thoughtful Spirituality in a Rational Age*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McGuire, M. 2008. *Lived Religion: Faith and Practice in Everyday Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Smith, C. 2008. On "moralistic therapeutic deism" as US teenagers' actual, tacit defacto religious faith' in Collins-Mayo, S. and Dandelion, P. 2008. *Religion and Youth*. Farnham: Ashgate.

Entry requirements

In order to be eligible to apply, you must hold, or expect to obtain by 1 October 2015, a Master's degree, or a 1st Class/2.1 Bachelor's degree in a relevant subject (including, where appropriate, training in the relevant research methods and, where relevant, laboratory experience).

Applications can be accepted from UK/EU and International students. The minimum English language proficiency requirement for candidates who have not undertaken a higher degree at a UK HE institution is IELTS 6.5 (with a minimum of 6.0 in all skills)

Fees and funding (2014/15)

The scholarship competition is open to applicants who wish to study for a PhD on a full-time basis only. The scholarships will pay UK/EU fees (currently set at £3996 for 2014/15 and are revised annually) and provide a maintenance stipend linked to the RCUK rate (this is revised annually and is currently £13,863 for academic year 2014/15) for up to three years*. The scholarships are due to commence in October 2015.

For further details of the scholarships, please see the web site here:

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/research/research_degrees/studentships/index.html

Applicants will be required to produce a research proposal and should refer to the research proposal guidance in the application pack.

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Please note that these scholarships are only available for new applicants. Existing PhD students are not eligible to apply

If a student has not submitted their thesis by the end of year three, he / she is required to enrol for a fourth year and pay the Writing Up Fee to enable him/her to complete and submit the thesis. The Writing Up Fee is currently £550. No Bench fee is payable in Year Four.

*Applications from non-EU students are welcome, but a successful non-EU candidate would be responsible for paying the difference between non-EU and UK/EU fees. (Fees for 2014/15 are £12,000 for non-EU students and £3,996 for UK/EU students)

Applying

Application Deadline: **12.00 noon on Friday 12 December 2014.**

For informal enquiries about the project, please contact:

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