

PhD Study at Nazarene Theological College
Frequently Asked Questions for Students Applying through the Nazarene Theological
Seminary Link

1 To whom do I send my application?

You should send your application to the Registrar at Nazarene Theological Seminary, Kansas City. Liaison Advisor at Nazarene Theological Seminary Dr T.A. Noble, the Liaison Advisor to NTS-based post-graduate students registering with Nazarene Theological College, Manchester, will screen applications and forward them to NTC for consideration and admission. You may consult Dr Noble directly, along with any other PhD supervisor at NTS whom you may already know.

2 What happens to my application once it is forwarded to NTC for consideration?

Normally, the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee will review your application and supporting documentation and take one of three actions: A) Application rejected and applicant advised to apply elsewhere; B) Application referred to MA Admissions Committee to consider options for 'preliminary study'; C) Application accepted in principle.

3 If my application is accepted in principle, what happens next?

The application will be forwarded to a provisional supervisor who will guide you through the process of writing your proposal for submission to the RDC.

4 How long will I wait after I apply to get accepted?

This will vary. You will normally be given a provisional supervisor, who will work with you on polishing your proposal for submission. This often entails giving a sharper focus to your research so that you will be able to achieve appropriate depth within the restrictions of a thesis of up to 80,000 words. This should take no more than three or four weeks. Once your proposal is ready for submission to the RDC, it will be considered by the RDC and, if it is deemed a suitable proposal, will be forwarded to The University of Manchester Postgraduate Research Committee for acceptance.

5 Will I need to take any preliminary studies?

The RDC might also require you to undertake some preliminary studies: since the time frame for completion of the degree is set as three full time years (plus up to an additional year when 'submission is pending') it is important to complete any foundational studies before the 'clock starts ticking.' This may seem as if we are erecting barriers to entry, but we are, instead, wanting to ensure that when your formal supervisory period begins you 'hit the ground running.' These pre-PhD studies may include some taught MA courses at NTC or NTS, or language courses that will facilitate your research. This preliminary study is in addition to the period of research.

6 When does 'the clock start ticking'?

As soon as you register and pay your fees, you become a probationary candidate for the PhD. You then have three years full-time or six years part-time to be supervised and submit your thesis.

7 Am I a student of Nazarene Theological Seminary or of Nazarene Theological College?

You will be a registered student of Nazarene Theological College, through the partnership link with Nazarene Theological Seminary. All PhD students at NTC are formally admitted by The University of Manchester, and so have rights and privileges through that link.

8 Who collects the fees?

NTS will collect all your fees. You pay the 'home student fee' portion to NTC Manchester (see the NTC web site for the latest rate); and there will also be a portion of the fee (roughly equivalent to the balance between the 'home rate' and the 'international rate') payable to Nazarene Theological Seminary.

9 Am I eligible for US student loans or loan deferment?

Since you are a student of NTC, you can apply to defer loans on that basis, and apply for Stafford Loans through NTC (NTC is registered for US student loans).

10 Am I eligible for NTC scholarships?

As part of the financial agreement with Nazarene Theological Seminary, students will only be

eligible for Nazarene Theological Seminary financial support. Only students applying direct to NTC will be eligible for NTC scholarships and bursaries.

11 How long do I spend in Manchester?

If you are a full time student, you should expect to make a visit in each year of registration: the first visit should be near the start of the registration period (i.e., by the end of your first six months); the second visit will be at the start of your second year (for your probationary review); the third visit will be in your final year. On some occasions, this visit may include your oral defence (the 'viva', which will take place in Manchester), but only if you have finished your research and are able to submit your thesis for examination within the three year period. If you require any 'submission pending' time (and most students do), you will need to return to Manchester for your viva. For a Part Time student, you would expect a first visit to Manchester near the start of the registration period (i.e., by the end of your first year); the second visit will be at the end of your second year or the very beginning of your third year (for your probationary review); a third visit will likely be in your fifth year, with a separate visit for the oral defence.

12 What is my 'residency period'?

Each Manchester visit will normally last for three to four weeks – though students should be aware that they may need to spend substantially longer in Manchester

should they need to make more extensive use of the Rylands Methodist Archives (MARC). Your supervisors will advise you on the need for this. Part time students will make similar visits, but every other year (i.e., the second visit will be at the start of the third part time year). Part time students will be expected to be 'in residence' (i.e., on site) for a minimum of four weeks every year (between Nazarene Theological Seminary and NTC). Full time students will be expected to be in residence' (i.e., on site) for a minimum of eight weeks every year (between Nazarene Theological Seminary and NTC).

13 How often should I expect to meet my main supervisor?

If you are a full-time student, you would expect to meet your supervisor regularly, and the details of the arrangement will be recorded on the Research Student – Supervisor Agreement (RSSA), completed by student and supervisor within a month of registration. As a guideline, you could expect to meet your supervisor once a week, for about an hour during the initial and final stages of your research. The intervals may be longer during the middle part of your research period. If you are a part-time student, circumstances will vary: if you are living on-site, then you might expect to meet your supervisor around every other week. If you are studying from a distance, then during your four week residency period you can expect to meet with your supervisor every few days. In addition to face-to-face

supervisions, supervisors and students are expected to make full use of electronic means of communication such as email or Skype or telephone.

14 What might I expect from my supervisor?

Every student-supervisor relationship is unique, but in general terms you can expect that the supervisor will:

- a. Possess good knowledge of the research area
- b. Read submitted written work in advance of meetings (when work is sent in good time!)
- c. Offer constructive criticism & professional judgement
- d. Set a regular, agreed timetable for supervisory sessions
- e. Encourage an exchange of ideas
- f. Act as role model
- g. Teach the discipline-based skills of research
- h. Help with short-term goal-setting & long-term objectives
- i. Monitor deadlines/milestones
- j. Facilitate networking/career building
- k. Take an interest in the student's personal development

15 What should I expect from my second supervisor, or co-supervisor?

This will vary, depending on the relationship. The primary supervisor

is your main point of contact. Some second supervisors are appointed because they offer expertise in a distinct second area, and so may be expected to offer particular insight and reflection in that area. Others mirror the expertise of the first supervisor, and so will offer a second view on the same material. Generally, the second or co-supervisor will read material produced at key stages of the journey: the literature review; completed drafts of chapters, etc. They will be much less involved in the day-to-day supervision. Where the second supervisor is Manchester-based then the second supervisor will meet regularly with the student when in residence in Manchester.

16 Will I have access to 'electronic resources'?

Yes. Since you will officially be registered with the University of Manchester, you will not only have access to the on-site resources of the John Rylands University of Manchester Library, but also to 'Athens', which gives you access to electronic academic resources (journals, etc) which will be essential in your research. In addition, you will have full access to the electronic resources of NTS.

17 What will be expected by the end of my 'probationary year'?

Your probationary review comes at the end of your first year (full time) or second year (part time), and is the point at which your progress is assessed, to determine whether you are allowed to proceed to full candidature for the PhD. It's a key

point to raise 'warning flags' – and this might either be the student's concerns about supervisory processes, or the supervisors' concerns about academic progress. The student will be expected to have completed the equivalent of about 10,000 words by this stage. Half of this will normally be in the form of a literature review: a critical assessment of the primary and secondary literature in the field of study. The remainder will be part of the research: in some cases, it is a more thorough development of the proposal, whilst in others it will be a part of the completed project (a chapter or part of a chapter). If you have already completed a literature review and developed proposal in the pre-PhD period, it will be a chapter or part of a chapter in your thesis. The student will present an academic paper to a research seminar as part of that review process. This will form an integral part of the judgement reached by the panel in allowing you to proceed.

18 Does it always rain in Manchester?

No – but bring an umbrella.