

Notice for all taught theology students 01.04.20

We continue to hope that all our students are keeping safe and well, and coping with the unexpected and unusual demands of the moment.

We are very conscious that for many people, routines have been disrupted and it is hard to continue 'normal life' in any recognisable way.

In this context, we want to exercise maximum flexibility in enabling you to continue with your studies, progress at a pace which is manageable and achieve your goals. So do please note the following:

Deadlines. All assignment deadlines, with one exception (see below) are being postponed exactly two weeks. Thus the main deadline will now be **Friday 12th June** and the main mark release date **Friday 3rd July**. All other deadlines would also be extended by a fortnight, including any early assignment deadlines, the deadline for BA dissertations, the advisory deadline for MA/MTh dissertations, and the later (June) deadline for Master's research proposals. **Please note that you will continue to see the old deadlines on Moodle; don't worry about this, the late penalty will not be applied provided you submit within the new extended timeframe.**

The one exception will be the late July deadline for PMP1 and 2, which will remain as it is for practical reasons.

Students with recognised learning needs who are entitled to an extra two weeks will continue to be allowed this extra time on top of the standard extra two weeks.

The submission windows for assignments will open as normal, which will allow you to submit assignments at the usual time if you are ready to do so.

Extensions. If you anticipate any difficulty in meeting the revised deadlines, please submit an Extension Request in the usual way and the Special Cases Committee will consider your request.

Graduation. The graduation **ceremony will not** take place as planned on 4th July, but as we will still hold a Progression and Awards Board, students who were expecting to finish or progress this year will be able to do so and receive the appropriate award. We will plan to hold a celebration for those graduating once we are allowed to gather again, probably in the autumn.

Part-time study or interrupting your study. For some students, keeping up the usual pace of study may simply be impossible in this period. If you feel as if you are in this category, please consider transferring from full-time to part-time study; this is normally an easy process and just requires you to fill in a transfer form, which can be found on Moodle. Alternatively, and especially if you are already studying part-time, please consider applying to the Special Cases Committee for an Interruption of Studies, which would allow you to pause for a period and then resume at an appropriate point (or apply for a further interruption if required).

Engagement with teaching. As you know, we need to monitor 'attendance' of students for various purposes, including reporting to the Student Loan Company. We also want to make sure that no one falls behind, and try to help any who are struggling. Clearly, monitoring 'attendance' is more difficult at the moment, but it remains important that you continue engaging with the material of different kinds, especially the Panopto recordings, that tutors are providing for their units. We will be using data from Moodle to monitor engagement with these, and also recording attendance in the usual way if an entire class is held by Zoom.

Internet access. If anyone is having difficulty with internet access, please be in touch in the first instance with your pastoral tutor and we will investigate how we might be able to help.

Illness. If you are unwell and unable to engage with the teaching material, please submit the 'report your absence' form on Moodle in the usual way.

Online library resources. There is now an excellent range of online resources for you to draw on. Do take time to explore these via the Library page on Moodle. Tutors will do their best to guide you where to find the best resources to use for your assignments. We are aware that some have been asking for more specific guidance about how to reference these, and we are working on some simple guidelines which will be available shortly.

And finally – the experience of studying is bound to be different in this virtual medium, but our tutors are doing all they can to provide an enriching experience for you through the usual teaching, as well as setting up various opportunities for interaction. Do please take advantage of these opportunities. Please be in touch with unit tutors for any queries about a particular unit of study. If you want to discuss wider issues about your programme of study, please contact Dr Debra Reid (d.reid@spurgeons.ac.uk) for undergraduate programmes or Dr Joshua Searle (j.searle@spurgeons.ac.uk) for postgraduate programmes.

With warm good wishes
Stephen Wright
Academic Director