

4.2 MTh Thesis Programmes (879 Options)

Please note: It is possible to take the MTh (thesis option; 879) in any of the six theological disciplines with a Gender and Health focus:

- You register for the two modules in your area of specialisation, as well as for the compulsory Gender, Health and Theology module; and
- For your MTh thesis you must research a theme that relates to gender and health.

The MTh thesis options in the six different disciplines are set out below.

4.2.1 MTh in Ecclesiology (Thesis) (12068:879)

Please note: As from 2020, a number of modules are offered in collaboration with Glasgow University (GU), in Scotland, via videoconferencing. SU will offer the module History of Christianity in Africa in this way, involving GU students in joint video-linked seminars. In the same way, SU students can participate via video connection in the following modules offered by GU: The Early Church, Reformation History, and The Nature and Practice of Church History.

Specific Admission Requirements

See specific, as well as supplementary admission requirements as for all MTh programmes.

Duration of Programme

- The duration of the programme is at least one year.
- A supervisor may, after consultation with the discipline concerned, require a minimum period of six months' residence for MTh students from outside Southern Africa.

Programme Content

Total 180 credits

Compulsory Modules (credits = 120)

Thesis Ecclesiology	873(120)
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plus

Elective Modules (credits = 60)

Choose two modules to the value of 40 credits from the subjects below.

(credits = 40)

Church Law	872(20)
Early Christian Church History	872(20)
History of Christianity in Africa	872(20)
History of the Church in South Africa	872(20)
History of the Reformation	872(20)
Medieval Church History	872(20)
Modern Church History	872(20)
Nature and Practice of Church History	871(20)

plus

Choose any relevant module to the value of 20 credits in Arts and Social Sciences OR choose a module to the value of 20 credits from the subjects below.

(credits = 20)

Missiology	872(20)
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New Testament	872(20)
Old Testament	872(20)
Practical Theology	872(20)
Systematic Theology	872(20)

4. MTh (NQF level 9)

Target Group

The various MTh Programmes are aimed at students who wish to undertake advanced studies in a specific theological field of study.

Specific Admission Requirements

- Any degree programme in Theology at NQF level 8, or any other appropriate four-year qualification equivalent to a four-year training deemed by Senate to be suitable for the proposed study; and
 - you must comply with further requirements that the relevant discipline group may set;
 - during your Theology studies you must have maintained an average achievement of at least 60% in the subject in which you wish to acquire the MTh degree, and obtained an average of 60% in the final year of Theology-related studies preceding the MTh degree;
 - you must have applied in writing and have been admitted to the MTh programme by Senate, or by the Executive Committee acting on behalf of Senate; or
- A BAHons (Religious Studies) which you have obtained after a BA (with Theology) at this University, or some other honours degree deemed equivalent by Senate, or if you have achieved in another way a standard of competence in your particular field of study, deemed adequate by Senate; and
 - you must comply with further requirements that the relevant discipline group may set;
 - during your Theology studies you must have maintained an average achievement of at least 60% in the subject in which you wish to acquire the MTh degree, and obtained an average of 60% in the final year of Theology-related studies preceding the MTh degree;
 - you must have applied in writing and have been admitted to the MTh programme by Senate, or by the Executive Committee acting on behalf of Senate; or
- If you have passed this University's Postgraduate Diploma in Theology with an average of at least 65%, and received a mark of at least 60% for the research assignment in the subject in which you wish to obtain the MTh degree, you may apply to sit for an admission examination, as determined by the relevant discipline group, with a view to enrolment for the MTh programme.
- If you wish to write an MTh thesis, you must submit a research proposal in which the research problem, the research methodology and the method of work are set out to the satisfaction of your supervisor(s).

Supplementary Language Requirements

- If you do not meet the language requirements such as German, Latin, etc. as set by the relevant discipline group, you must supplement the language requirements preferably before, or otherwise during, the first phase of the MTh programme.
- If you must do supplementary studies in Greek and Ancient Near Eastern Languages and Cultures with a view to registration for the programmes MTh and PhD, you must report to the relevant discipline groups **before** 1 October of the preceding year, so that special arrangements can be made for you.
- International candidates who have obtained their qualifications from tertiary institutions where English is not the language of instruction are required to provide proof of English Language proficiency. **This evidence must accompany your application and must not be older than 24 months from the date of application to the University.**
 - The minimum English language requirements and recognised language tests for admission to Stellenbosch University's postgraduate degree programmes are available via the Prospective Postgraduate Student website (<http://www.sun.ac.za/english/pgstudies/Pages/English-language-proficiency-requirements.aspx>).
- You will not be allowed to take any examination in the programme for which you are registered before a certificate in English communication skills has been obtained.

Supplementary requirements with regard to major subjects

The following additional requirements apply to the various subjects when they are chosen as major subjects for MTh studies. If you do not meet these requirements, you must complete the outstanding module(s).

- Ecclesiology: If necessary, Latin I.
- New Testament: Appropriate language requirements as determined by the discipline group in the light of your research proposal.
- Old Testament: Appropriate language requirements as determined by the discipline group in the light of your research proposal.
- Old and New Testament: Appropriate language requirements as determined by the discipline group in the light of your research proposal.
- Systematic Theology: Relevant requirements as determined by the discipline group.

- The supervisor can also recommend that the Faculty of Theology set additional requirements necessary for a particular field of study.

Closing Date for Applications

- Admissions of new applications for MTh programmes are considered twice a year, namely in May and October. Therefore, if you have not obtained your preceding qualification at this university, the closing dates for applications are:
 - 1 May (for enrolment as from the second semester); or
 - preferably, 30 October (for enrolment as from the first semester of the following year).
- If you have obtained your preceding qualification at SU, your application will be considered immediately.
- Apply to the Registrar and state your area of specialisation.
- Direct queries about the application procedure to the Faculty administrator at shirle@sun.ac.za.

Duration of Programme

- The duration of the MTh programme is at least one year.
- A supervisor may, after consultation with the discipline concerned, require a minimum period of six months' residence for MTh students from outside Southern Africa.

Assessment and Examination

- Of candidates following the structured option, also called 889 candidates:
 - Students (excluding Clinical Pastorate and Ministry Practice) do a final oral examination which covers the assignment and (where applicable) the evaluation of practical work. The examination is set by at least the discipline groups involved with the main subject and supplementary subjects.
 - The research assignment must be approximately 50–60 pages long.
 - Assignments are discussed as part of the examination:
You must submit an electronic pdf version of the assignment through Turnitin and at the administrative officer of the disciplinary group concerned in time for the final examination.
 - If you are a student in the MTh (Practical Theology: Clinical Pastoral Care), MTh (Practical Theology: Ministry) and MTh (Practical Theology: Youth Ministry), you must refer to the Faculty of Theology's Postgraduate Policy and Agreement document, which you have received during registration.
 - The research assignment is examined and moderated internally and is also examined externally.
- Of candidates following the thesis option, also called 879 candidates:
 - You do a final oral examination which covers the thesis and (where applicable) the evaluation of practical work. The examination is set by at least the discipline groups involved with the main subject and supplementary subjects.
 - When you, as 879 candidate, declare yourself ready for the examination of your thesis by a faculty-appointed examination committee, you must submit an electronic pdf version of the thesis through Turnitin and at the administrative officer of the disciplinary group concerned, either **before** 1 September (for the December graduation ceremony) or **before** 1 December (for the March graduation ceremony).
 - The examination of the thesis is conducted in accordance with the Faculty's Guidelines for Administration and Supervision of Postgraduate Study.
 - For the technical requirements in respect of the appearance, duplication and binding of theses, see Part 1 (General Rules) of the Yearbook.
 - Also see Part 1 (General Rules) of the Yearbook for general regulations in respect of examiners for master's theses.

Programme Structure

To obtain the MTh degree, you can follow one of two options:

- You follow a structured option (also called the 889 option) and obtain the degree if you:
 - successfully complete four examination papers in your field of specialisation and one paper in each of the supplementary subjects; and
 - successfully defend an assignment in which especially the problem, the research hypothesis and methodology in respect of a particular theme are dealt with, before the Faculty; or
- You follow a thesis option (also called the 879 option) and obtain the degree if you:
 - successfully complete two examination papers in your field of specialisation and a paper in one supplementary subject; and
 - successfully defend a thesis before the Faculty.

Course of the Programme

- You register for the modules and assignment or thesis concerned at the administrative officer of the discipline group in which you wish to specialise.
- After registering for the programme, you will receive a policy document from the relevant discipline group containing clear guidelines concerning the respective responsibilities of the student and the supervisor, regular discussions, progress reports, examination procedures, assessment criteria for theses and other regulations as set out by the discipline group.
- Discipline groups annually report to the Faculty on the progress of students.
- You must take note of all fees and possible additional levies as specified in Part 3 (Student Fees) of the Yearbook, or you must consult the Student Fees Division.

Licensing for the Ministry

If you wish to present yourself for licensing for the ministry of a specific denomination, you can, during your MTh study, complete the outstanding modules for the MDiv and or Postgraduate Programme in Theology in Christian Ministry to the satisfaction of the licensing body of the church concerned.

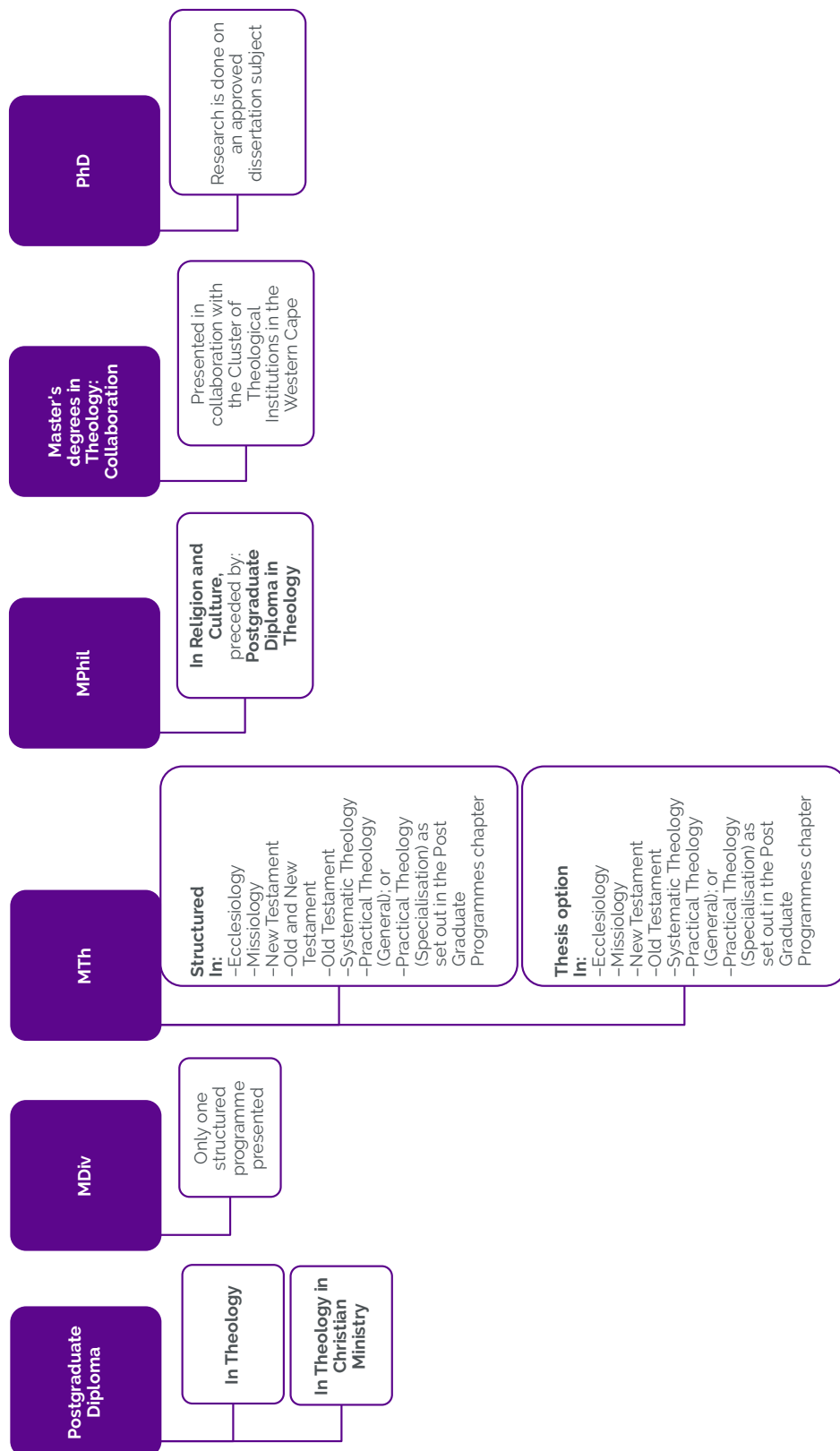
Programme Content

- The MTh structured option (also called the 889 option), as well as the MTh thesis option (also called the 879 option) can be followed in one of the following theological disciplines:
 - Ecclesiology
 - Missiology
 - New Testament
 - Old Testament
 - Practical Theology
 - Systematic Theology
- You may take supplementary subjects presented in departments in other faculties of this University.
- The specific modules that you follow in each of the theological disciplines are set out under the specific MTh structured programmes.

Postgraduate Programmes

1. Summary and explanation of postgraduate programmes

The diagram below offers a representation of the postgraduate programmes offered in the Faculty of Theology, namely postgraduate diplomas, master's degrees and doctoral degrees. It also gives a summary of the options within the various programmes, under each block.



Disclaimer:

The content above comes from the 2025 Theology Yearbook. Make sure to consult the full **Theology** to see this extract in context and to check if there have been any changes. Take special note of additional information in the yearbook under section **1. Summary and explanation of postgraduate programmes.**