RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT KENT

Today religious themes are everywhere – from politics and economics to art and literature. An understanding of religions and their sometimes-hidden influence can help you to make sense of life in the 21st century, giving you new perspectives on the major problems of the day. Religious Studies at Kent is a broad and creative programme covering world religions and areas such as film, philosophy and secular societies.
WHY CHOOSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT KENT?

**Flexible programmes**
You choose from a diverse selection of modules, from those introducing major world religions and investigating key philosophical themes, to those exploring connections between religion and other subjects. We also have a wide range of joint honours degrees.

**Academic support**
University is different to school. You need to be self-motivated and organised to succeed. We provide academic tutors and a peer mentoring programme, and you can also get help with academic skills, such as essay writing.

**Excellent resources**
Access more than 1 million books, ebooks, databases and journals, including our special collections, at the University’s refurbished Templeman Library. We also have strong links with Canterbury Cathedral library and archives.

**World-leading research**
You learn from leading experts. Our staff undertake research of international quality, write and contribute to journal articles and books and provide expert comment to the media. They develop with you cutting-edge new approaches to religion.

**Friendly community**
The Department of Religious Studies is based within the School of European Culture and Languages (SECL), which means you are part of an international community of students with a wide range of interests.

**Lively campus**
Kent is a campus university, so everything you need is within walking distance. You can watch a play or a film at the Gulbenkian arts centre, dance at The Venue nightclub, keep fit at our sports centre and meet friends at one of many campus cafes and restaurants.

**International links**
The School of European Culture and Languages has long-standing links and exchange agreements with some of Europe’s most prestigious institutions and there are many opportunities to study or work abroad.

**Career success**
Employability is a priority at Kent. SECL has its own events programme to boost your job skills, from CV workshops to careers talks, and it offers work and volunteer opportunities. You can also get help from the University’s Careers and Employability Service.

**Historic location**
Canterbury is a lovely city with a world-famous cathedral, medieval buildings and lively pubs and restaurants. There’s a vibrant cultural scene, and the coast and countryside are within easy reach. London is less than an hour away by high-speed train.
Inspirational teaching

Our agenda-setting and internationally respected research informs our teaching, so you’ll learn at the cutting edge of the discipline. We approach Religious Studies from many perspectives, and we can show you the latest developments in understanding religion in the contemporary world – through globalisation, film and new media, secular and religious spiritualities and new political movements.

Independent rankings

The Complete University Guide 2019
• 17th in the UK for Theology and Religious Studies

The Times Good University Guide 2018
• 18th in the UK for Religious Studies and Theology

QS World University Rankings 2018
• Theology at Kent was ranked in the top 100

Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education
• Of Kent undergraduate students who graduated in 2017, over 95% of those who responded to a national survey were in work or further study within six months

Teaching Excellence Framework
• Kent was awarded gold, the highest rating, in the UK government’s Teaching Excellence Framework*

*The University of Kent’s Statement of Findings can be found at www.kent.ac.uk/tef-statement
STUDENT PROFILE

Helena Phillips is in the final year of a joint honours programme in Religious Studies and Philosophy.

What attracted you to the course?
Religion plays a major role in national and international events and is increasingly involved in politics, so I wanted to better understand individual belief and the impact of different belief systems across the world and throughout history. Religion is often discussed, but generally very poorly understood. Taking Religious Studies allows you to challenge people’s misconceptions and better understand key controversies.

And why did you choose Kent?
Most other departments that I looked at focused on Christian theology, whereas Kent focuses more on world religions and has strong research in East Asian traditions. The impact of religion in contemporary society is also a big research area, as opposed to only looking at doctrine and early traditions. I came to an Applicant Day, had taster sessions with the department and got a chance to meet some of the lecturers. That was fantastic – I knew immediately that I wanted to come here, because they were so enthusiastic and engaging.

How is your course going?
The choice of modules has been the best thing because I’ve been able to study lots of different religious traditions that I didn’t know anything about. And learning about the sociology and psychology of religion as well, which isn’t offered elsewhere, has been really interesting.

What are your favourite modules?
I’m really enjoying writing my dissertation about Buddhism and mindfulness. Mindfulness is everywhere at the moment – self-help books, NHS healthcare, military, business, politics – but it’s really poorly understood. So in my dissertation I’m comparing western secular mindfulness to Buddhist mindfulness, which is far more concerned with ethical behaviour and its broader social implications.

What do you think of the support available?
All students have an academic adviser to help with choosing their modules, and peer mentoring is available too. Staff have weekly drop-in sessions, where you can ask questions and get essay advice and feedback. I’ve also felt welcome to discuss other ideas and interesting things I’ve found during research. Because it’s a small department, you get to know the staff quite well and they’re all very approachable. They make it clear you can contact them outside office hours as well.

What social activities are you involved in?
In my second year I was president of the Religious Studies Society: we organised lots of events, including a trip abroad. This year I’m on the committee of the Poetry Society, helping to run events. I’m also a Student Ambassador, because I genuinely think this is a fantastic university. I love the department and the course, and talking about it to prospective pupils and their parents.

What are your plans for after graduation?
I’m working as an Activity Leader for the National Citizenship Service (NCS) over the summer, which will be challenging, but great fun. In September I start tutoring and teaching training at a school for students with special educational needs. In the future, I’m hoping to complete a TEFL qualification and teach English in Asia. Religious Studies is non-vocational: you develop lots of skills which you can apply to many different careers.

Any advice for future students?
Come to Kent! Do the suggested reading before starting to familiarise yourself with what you’re going to be studying. Once you’re here, get involved in societies and department events – it will help you meet like-minded people and make new friends. And try not to worry too much. Everyone is nervous when they first start university and there’s lots of support available.
CHOOSING YOUR DEGREE

Not sure which programme to choose? Here’s a quick guide to the degrees on offer.

Single honours

Religious Studies (V616)
Our single honours programme is varied and covers religions including Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism. Further modules cover areas such as religion and psychology.

Global Philosophies (V590)
Kent’s new Global Philosophies degree provides an exciting, innovative opportunity to engage with intellectual thought from around the world. The programme offers a global approach to philosophical study with modules drawing not only on European and Western thought, but also traditions originating in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, from antiquity to the present day.

For more information, see www.kent.ac.uk/ug or download the separate subject leaflet.

Joint honours
You can also combine Religious Studies with another subject. Joint honours degrees on offer include Religious Studies and:
• Asian Studies (TV46)
• English and American Literature (QV36)
• History (VV61)
• Philosophy (VW56).
For details of UCAS codes and entry requirements, see p18. For more details, see: www.kent.ac.uk/ug

International students
If you need to extend your existing academic qualifications or ability in English to be able to study at university level, Kent’s one-year International Foundation Programme (IFP) gives you the opportunity to do so. After the IFP you can move on to our degrees in Religious Studies; for details, see www.kent.ac.uk/ifp

Placement year
Students in Religious Studies have the opportunity to take a placement year as part of their degree. It involves a year in the workplace between Stages 2 and 3. For more details, see p9.

Study abroad
You also have the opportunity to spend time abroad as part of your degree. This involves spending a year studying in another country between Stages 2 and 3 (or sometimes a term). Students are based at universities which teach in English, unless they have the skills to study in another language. For details, see p9.

Teaching and assessment
You are taught mostly in small groups with most modules involving either two or three hours per week in class and individual consultations with teachers, as well as sessions on computing and library skills.

Some modules are assessed by 100% coursework, others by a combination of formal examination and coursework. Seminar participation is also taken into account in the assessment of modules.

Further information
If you would like further information about our Religious Studies degree programmes, please email secl@kent.ac.uk
At Kent, you have the opportunity to broaden your experience either by studying overseas or through a work placement.

Year abroad
Going abroad as part of your degree is an amazing opportunity and a chance for you to develop academically, personally and professionally.

You gain confidence and independence and further develop many of the transferable skills employers are looking for, such as the ability to communicate effectively and being able to plan and organise your time. You also demonstrate that you are flexible in your outlook and have the enthusiasm and drive to succeed in a new environment.

For many students, their year abroad is a life-changing experience. Having risen to the challenge of living in another country, they have a renewed belief in their ability to succeed.

For further details of where you can study, please see the A to Z course list at www.kent.ac.uk/goabroad/opportunities/az.html

Placement year
The placement year provides the opportunity for you to get experience in the workplace as part of your degree. The placement can be either paid work or an internship.

It gives you the opportunity to increase your contacts and networks so that you can hit the ground running when you graduate.

If taken, the year is assessed on a pass/fail basis through employer feedback and a written report that you submit.

Tuition fees for the placement year are greatly reduced and employers may offer expenses or a salary.

There are many benefits to taking a placement year: it gives you the chance to gain some knowledge of the work environment, acquire new skills and develop your confidence.

For more information, see www.kent.ac.uk/humanities/studying placement
At Stage 1, you get a grounding in the nature of religion and explore major belief systems. At Stages 2 and 3, you choose from a wide range of modules exploring major religions, religious themes and links between religion and other disciplines.

Please note that the module lists listed on these pages are not fixed as new modules are always in development and choices updated yearly. For the most up-to-date information, please see: www.kent.ac.uk/ug

To read a full description of each module, search by the module code at: www.kent.ac.uk/courses/modules

Stage 1
Stage 1 covers the first year of your degree programme. You explore the nature of religion and are given an introduction to the world’s major belief systems.

All students take the following compulsory module:
• What is Religion? (TH341)

You then choose at least two modules from the list below:
• Ethics, Society and the Good Life (TH349)
• Introduction to East Asian Traditions (TH348)
• Introduction to Hinduism and Buddhism (TH331)
• Introduction to Judaism and Islam (TH340)
• Religion in the Contemporary World (TH342)
• The Global Search for Meaning (TH350).

You may also choose modules from a wide range available in the Faculty of Humanities.

Joint honours students take at least three modules from the list above, plus the required modules in their other subject.
Stages 2 and 3
These are the second and third years of your degree programme. You can choose from a wide range of modules that explore the subject in more depth, and have the opportunity to experience teaching in a secondary school classroom.

Each year, single honours students take at least three modules and joint honours students take two modules from the following list:

• Blasphemy: Sex, Scandal and Religion (TH646/TH647)
• Chinese Philosophy and Religion (TH650/TH651)
• Death and the Afterlife (TH641/TH642)
• Indian Philosophy (Hindu and Buddhist Thought) (TH624/TH625)
• Intoxicated Philosophers: Religion and Drugs in Continental Philosophy (TH618/TH617)
• Political Theologies in Secular States: Roman Empire to European Union (TH628/TH629)
• Religion and Film (TH570/TH574)
• Religion and Japanese Culture (TH648/TH649)
• Religious Studies and Philosophy in the Classroom (Stage 3 only) (TH643)
• Religious Studies Dissertation (Stage 3 only) (TH515)
• Sociology of Religion (TH608/TH558)
• Themes in the Study of Asia (Stage 2 only) (TH640).

You can also choose modules from a wide range in the Faculty of Humanities.

Those taking joint honours choose modules from those listed above and also take the required modules in their other subject. Please see www.kent.ac.uk/ug for more details.
SUPERB STUDY SUPPORT

We’ll support you throughout your time at Kent, from helping you adjust to university study to discussing module choices and essay topics with you.

You are assigned an academic adviser in your first year, and they help you get the most from your degree programme. They meet with you regularly to discuss general academic issues or specific assignments. They will assist you in developing academic skills and refer you to other sources of help if you need it.

Peer support
The best advice often comes from people who’ve been in your situation. On our Academic Peer Mentoring scheme, first-year students can request to be matched with second- or third-year students on a similar degree programme.

Peer mentors will help you settle in to university life and find your feet. They can help you to discuss ideas and improve your study skills as you progress through your first year.

Study skills advice
Successful students take control of their own learning. Kent’s Student Learning Advisory Service (SLAS) can help you increase your competence and confidence and fulfil your potential.

You can request a one-to-one appointment or attend workshops on a diverse range of topics, from making the most of lectures to writing well and avoiding plagiarism.

Student support and wellbeing
You might need extra help to get the most from university. If you have a medical condition, specific learning difficulty, mental health condition or disability, the Student Support and Wellbeing team is there to support you.

They are committed to improving access to learning for all students at Kent and can assist with many things, including:
• talking to your lecturers about any help you need in lectures or seminars
• arranging note-takers, signers and other support workers for you
• discussing exam access arrangements
• helping you with emotional, psychological or mental health issues
• applying for relevant funding to support you.

Find out more at: www.kent.ac.uk/studentsupport
A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE

What do you hope to do once you have your degree? Whether you have a specific career in mind or haven’t yet thought much beyond university, we can help you to plan for success in the future.

Build your CV
Your degree studies help you to develop skills such as thinking critically, expressing yourself clearly, solving problems and working independently and as part of a team, along with the insights into human ideals and motivations you can acquire through Religious Studies. These transferable skills are valued by employers and will also be vital if you go on to further study.

At Kent, you have lots of other great opportunities to enhance your skills. For instance, you can:
- join a society or sports club (even better – get involved in running it)
- volunteer with a community
- work in a part-time job or take up a summer internship
- represent your fellow students as a student rep, or become a student ambassador
- learn a new language or skill with Study Plus.

Getting involved means you can earn Employability Points. The more points you earn, the more valuable the rewards: we work with local, national and international employers to offer internships, work experience and other activities that prepare you for the world of work.

Experience work
As part of your programme, you can take a placement year between Stages 2 and 3, giving you the chance to get work experience, acquire new skills and gain insight into your career options. For further details, see p9.

Your programme also includes an optional teaching module in Stage 3, where – subject to a selection process – you can combine study with classroom experience.

Find a great job
The School of European Culture and Languages (SECL) organises opportunities to help you prepare for your future career and enhance your skills. These include modules, volunteering opportunities and a number of events organised throughout the year.

You can also visit the University’s award-winning Careers and Employability Service for careers advice. Throughout the year, the Service delivers events on the recruitment process such as CVs, interviews and assessment centres as well as talks on developing awareness of the opportunities available.

For more information, see: www.kent.ac.uk/ces

Our track record speaks for itself: just six months after graduating in 2017, more than 95% of Kent graduates who responded to a national survey were in work or further study (DLHE).
Chris Handley graduated with a BA (Hons) in Religious Studies in 2017. He is now at the University of Cambridge, training to become a teacher.

Why did you choose Kent?
Kent was originally at the bottom of my UCAS list, selected as I needed a fifth choice of university. But, when I came to look around, it very quickly came to the top of my list. I really liked the campus feel – how Kent was like a mini town – and the exciting nature of the course.

What attracted you to the programme?
I liked the contemporary and fairly unrestricted nature of the degree course. I developed my own specialism in the sociology of religion and religion in contemporary society because of the wide choice of yearly modules. However, I could also take other modules that would widen my skill set and allow me to experience a rich and diverse course.

What was your degree course like? And what about the lecturers?
Overall, the degree course was very enjoyable. The lecturers on the course varied from experienced professors to more specific subject specialists, such as in the Religious Studies in the Classroom module. Regardless, on the whole, they were always very happy to help you with the course, whether that be meeting for coffee, emailing, talking on the phone or via Skype.

When I was at Kent, it was a fairly small course, and so we also had the benefit of many lecturers knowing us by name, remembering our interests, our writing styles, our own personal strengths and weaknesses. I was also grateful that I gained a lovely friendship group on the course.

What extra-curricular activities did you get involved with?
I also worked in the Partnership Development Office at Kent and progressed to the most senior student position. These jobs were instrumental in my current success and provided me with invaluable training and development opportunities, as well as many exciting and enjoyable years of work. I started in my first year and progressed throughout the department during my time at Kent.

How did your degree course lay the foundations for your career?
I knew I wanted to be a teacher. The Religious Studies in the Classroom module, especially, allowed me to experience what it was like to be a teacher before I decided whether or not I should pursue that career path.

Describe your career path since leaving Kent?
After leaving Kent, I came to the University of Cambridge to study an Religious Education PGCE. I am due to finish this in June 2018, and will then, hopefully, be getting a teaching job.

Could you describe a typical day in your current role?
In my current role as a trainee teacher at Cambridge, I tend to go to school fairly early in the morning, teach lessons, attend meetings and complete lesson planning, lesson evaluations or assignments. We have two school placements on this course, at two different schools, ensuring we develop into outstanding teachers.

What are your future plans and aspirations?
I would like to develop into an outstanding teacher, and then progress, eventually, into a senior leadership position in a school.

Do you have any other happy memories of Kent?
I’ve made some amazing friends, loved the facilities at Kent and had a positively varied academic experience. Kent has paved the way for my further training and career.
Choosing a university is a big step, so it’s important to find out as much as you can before you make your decision. Come and visit us to see what we can offer you.

Open Days
Open Days are a great way to find out what life as a student at Kent is like. For instance, you can:

- learn more about the course you are interested in at a subject presentation
- ask questions – talk to the academic teams at the information stands
- find out about student finance, opportunities to study abroad and extracurricular activities such as Kent Sport.

Explore the campus at your own pace on the self-guided walking tour. You will be able to visit different types of accommodation, chat to current students and enjoy the stunning views over the city of Canterbury.

Open Days are held in the summer and autumn. Book your place at www.kent.ac.uk/opendays

Applicant Days
If you apply to Kent and we offer you a place (or ask you to come for an interview), you will usually be invited to an Applicant Day.

Applicant Days run in the autumn and spring terms and are an opportunity to find out about the course in more detail. You spend time with your academic school meeting staff and current students, and take part in activities that give you a flavour of your prospective course and university life.

Let us know you’re coming
Scheduled tours and personal campus tours (for international students) need to be booked in advance – you can do this via www.kent.ac.uk/informal

Meet us in your country
Our staff regularly travel overseas to meet with students who are interested in coming to Kent. We also have strong links with agents in your home country who can offer guidance and information on studying at Kent. Find out more at www.kent.ac.uk/courses/international
Self-guided tours
If you prefer to explore on your own, you can download a self-guided walking tour at www.kent.ac.uk/informal or pick up a copy from us.

A self-guided audio tour is available too, which allows you to learn about Kent without even leaving home. See www.kent.ac.uk/courses/visit/informal/audio-tour.html

Explore online
Find out more about the academic team, the course and events in the department and School at www.kent.ac.uk/secl/thrs

Keep in touch with us via social media:
www.facebook.com/unikentsecl
www.twitter.com/unikentsecl
www.youtube.com/unikentsecl

Contact us
If you would like more information on Kent’s courses, facilities or services, please contact us on:
T: +44 (0)1227 768896
www.kent.ac.uk/ug

Location
Canterbury

Award
BA (Hons)

Degree programme
Single honours
• Religious Studies (V616)

Joint honours
Religious Studies and…
• Asian Studies (TV46)
• English and American Literature (QV36)
• History (VV61)
• Philosophy (VV56).

Offer levels
Single honours: BBB at A level, IB Diploma 34 points or IB Diploma with 15 points at Higher.
Joint honours: ABB/BBB at A level, IB Diploma 34 points or IB Diploma with 15/16 points at Higher. Joint honours subjects may have special requirements.

Access and BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma/National Diploma applicants are assessed on an individual basis, please contact us for more information.

Year abroad/placement year
You have the opportunity to take a year abroad or a placement year between Stages 2 and 3. See p9 for details.

Scholarships and bursaries
For details of scholarships and bursaries at Kent, see www.kent.ac.uk/ugfunding

Offer levels and entry requirements are subject to change. For the latest course information, see: www.kent.ac.uk/ug

This brochure was produced in June 2018. The University of Kent makes every effort to ensure that the information contained in its publicity materials is fair and accurate and to provide educational services as described. However, the courses, services and other matters may be subject to change. For the most up-to-date information, see www.kent.ac.uk/ug and for full details of our terms and conditions, see www.kent.ac.uk/termsandconditions

For the University to operate efficiently, it needs to process information about you for administrative, academic and health and safety reasons. Any offer we make to you is subject to your consent to process such information and is a requirement in order for you to be registered as a student. All students must agree to abide by the University rules and regulations at: www.kent.ac.uk/regulations
COME AND VISIT US

To find out more about visiting the University, see our website:
www.kent.ac.uk/visit