



## Postdoctoral Research Associate in Catholic Studies

### Overview

Reference Number:	016878
Department	Theology and Religion
Grade	Grade 7
Term	Three Year Fixed Term Contract (or until 13 January 2022)
Salary Range	£33,199 per annum
Opening Date	9 November 2018
Closing Date	10 December 2018 at midday
Working Arrangements:	This role is full time but we will consider requests for flexible working arrangements.

### Durham University

Durham University is one of the world's top universities with strengths across the Arts and Humanities, Sciences, and Social Sciences. We are home to some of the most talented scholars and researchers from around the world who are tackling global issues and making a difference to people's lives.

The University sits in a beautiful historic city where it shares ownership of a UNESCO World Heritage Site with Durham Cathedral, the greatest Romanesque building in Western Europe. A collegiate University, Durham recruits outstanding students from across the world and offers an unmatched wider student experience.

Less than 3 hours north of London, and an hour and a half south of Edinburgh, County Durham is a region steeped in history and natural beauty. The Durham Dales, including the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, are home to breathtaking scenery and attractions. Durham offers an excellent choice of city, suburban, and rural residential locations. The University provides a range of benefits including pension and childcare benefits and the University's Relocation Manager can assist with potential schooling requirements.

Durham University seeks to promote and maintain an inclusive and supportive environment for work and study that assists all members of our University community to reach their full potential. Diversity brings strength and we welcome applications from across the international, national, and regional communities that we work with and serve.

## The Department

Founded in 1832, Durham's Department of Theology and Religion was recently ranked third in the world in the QS World University Subject rankings. We also came top in the country in the last two UK assessments of research (2008 and 2014). We are home to more than 30 academic staff, and a community of over 100 doctoral students.

Teaching and research within the Department is focused on three key areas: Biblical studies, Christian Theology, and the Study of Religion.

**Biblical studies** covers the New Testament, the Old Testament / Hebrew Bible and ancient Judaism, and includes both close engagement with the biblical texts and broader considerations of their historical, cultural and theological contexts and interpretation. We are one of the few universities to offer the full range of biblical and ancient languages (Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, and Middle Egyptian).

**Christian theology** covers ethical, philosophical, and systematic theology, as well as historical theology and church history. We work within a range of Christian traditions – Catholic, Anglican, and Eastern Orthodox Studies are particular strengths – but we are not confined to any of them: our approach is to let each tradition be itself, but also to bring them each into dialogue.

**The study of religion** looks at the anthropological and sociological aspects of religion in the analysis of mainstream traditions and alternative religious movements, and at the practical study of contemporary religion. Specialist staff interests include Mormonism; death, dying, and disposal; shamanism; religion and emotion; religion/faith and globalization; contemporary and post-evangelicalism; religion and generational change; pilgrimage; sacred space; myth analysis; and South Asian Christianities.

The Department enjoys many cross-departmental and interdisciplinary links around the University, including with the Institute for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, and the Institute of Medieval and Early Modern Studies, as well as a strong, collaborative relationship with the theological institutions based in and around Durham (e.g. Cranmer Hall).

With its home in Abbey House, right next to Durham Cathedral, a UNESCO world Heritage site, it is a beautiful and immensely exciting place to study and to research in Theology and Religion.

The Department is also home to a number of research centres: the Michael Ramsey Centre for Anglican Studies, the Centre for Death and Life Studies, and the Centre for Catholic Studies (CCS). The CCS is a research, teaching, and outreach unit in Catholic Theology and Catholic Studies more widely (including the empirical study of Catholicism, the history of Catholicism, and the cultural impact of Catholicism. See <https://www.dur.ac.uk/theology.religion/ccs/>). One of the core research project areas for the CCS relates to the critical constructive Catholic ecclesiology and empirical study of Catholicism, to which this post relates.

## The Role

This is an opportunity for a first-rank post-doctoral researcher. Applications will be considered from candidates whose background lies at the intersection of Catholic ecclesiology and ethnography and with a background in the empirical study of Catholicism, who wish to undertake a postdoctoral project in the area of Catholic Sexual Abuse.

As a post-doctoral researcher, the candidate will develop and co-lead a research project 'Boundary Breaking: Discerning the consequences and implications of the sex abuse crisis within the Roman Catholic Church.' This is a flagship research project specifically analysing the potential and – claimed – complicity of Catholic ecclesial self-understanding and wider Catholic cultural habitus in creating the circumstances in which Catholic clerical sexual abuse could be at once endemic, hidden, unthinkable, denied, and routinely mismanaged.

The successful candidate will be expected to:

- Assist with the development of research objectives and proposals including initial reviews of existing data, and setting-up and undertaking a program of interviews with victim/survivors as well as former offenders.
- Prepare and deliver presentations on research outputs/activities to audiences which may include: research sponsors, academic, and non-academic audiences.
- Assist in the development of a digital research hub to house the project.
- To publish high-quality outputs, including papers for submission to peer-reviewed journals and papers, for presentation at conferences and workshops under the direction of the Principal Investigator and co-Investigator.
- Assist in the organisation of regular international colloquiums in collaboration with partnering institutions and in the organisation of a major international conference.
- To liaise with research colleagues and make internal and external contacts to develop knowledge and understanding to form relationships for future research collaboration.
- Assist in the editorial process for a volume arising from the research.
- Assist in Impact case-studies related to the project.
- Complete, or to be working towards completion of, a monograph.

In addition to the primary research responsibilities of this post, the appointed post-holder may be asked to take on the 0.1-0.2 FTE specific administrative role of Assistant Director of the CCS, with responsibility for key aspects of the internal life of the CCS in such ways as: leading on regular liaison with CCS postgraduate student members; organising the annual one-day Postgraduate and Early Career Catholic Theology and Catholic Studies Conference; coordinating and making a lead contribution to the work of the CCS Communications Working Group; leading on organising occasional visits of groups of school students in response to requests (typically once, or twice, per year); and other such activities.

As part of the Department of Theology and Religion at Durham University, the appointee will be directly responsible to the Head of Department of Theology and Religion, but will work under the immediate direction of Dr Marcus Pound, who is PI for this project, and with Prof. Paul D. Murray, the Co-Investigator and CCS Dean and Director.

The appointee will be fully involved in the life and work of the CCS, including participation in key meetings and regular academic and public/church engagement events. Established in October 2007, the CCS is a major research and teaching centre – situated within the Durham's Dept. of Theology and Religion but with cross-Faculty and inter-Faculty reach – focussed on the study of Catholic theology, history, and practice in the heart of the UK public university system (see [www.dur.ac.uk/theology.religion/](http://www.dur.ac.uk/theology.religion/)).

This post is for a fixed-term until 13 January 2022 as the funding is available for this fixed period only.

The post-holder is employed to work on research/a research project which will be led by another colleague. Whilst this means that the post-holder will not be carrying out independent research in his/her own right, the expectation is that they will contribute to the advancement of the project, through the development of their own research ideas/adaptation and development of research protocols.

Successful applicants will, ideally, be in post as soon as possible in early 2019.

## The Requirements

### Essential:

#### 1. Qualifications

- A good first degree in an appropriate subject.
- A PhD (or be close to submission) in an appropriate subject.

#### 2. Experience

- Working knowledge of Catholic ecclesiology.
- Demonstrable ability to write material of a quality commensurate with publication in highly-ranked journals.
- Demonstrable ability to present research papers at international conferences and communicate complex information to specialists and within the wider academic community.

#### 3. Skills

- Demonstrable ability to work cooperatively as part of a team, including participating in research meetings.
- Ability to work independently on own initiative and to strict deadlines.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.

## Desirable:

### **4. Experience**

- Experience in conducting high quality academic research in the empirical study of Catholicism.
- Strong publication record in peer-reviewed journals, commensurate with stage of career.
- A track record of presenting research at conferences, symposia, or meetings, commensurate with stage of career.
- Demonstrable ability to develop research proposals and designs in collaboration with other academics.
- A track record of working in relation to the institutional Catholic Church, and Catholic laity and clergy.
- Proven administrative competence.

### **5. Skills**

- Demonstrable ability to plan and manage independent research.
- Proven skills in conducting research interviews.

## **How to Apply**

For informal enquiries please contact Dr Marcus Pound [m.j.p.pound@durham.ac.uk](mailto:m.j.p.pound@durham.ac.uk)  
All enquiries will be treated in the strictest confidence.

We prefer to receive applications online via the Durham University Vacancies Site. <https://www.dur.ac.uk/jobs/>. As part of the application process, you should provide details of 3 (preferably academic/research) referees and the details of your current line manager so that we may seek an employment reference.

Applications are particularly welcome from women and black and minority ethnic candidates, who are under-represented in academic posts in the University.

## What to Submit

All applicants are asked to submit:

- A CV and covering letter which details your experience, strengths, and potential in the requirements set out above.
- An academic article by the candidate.

## Referees

You should provide details of 3 academic/research referees.

## Next Steps

Assessment method: When they attend for interview, candidates will be asked to give a 20-minute presentation on how their existing and/or current research and experience would provide a basis for the proposed research project for this post to a mixed audience of staff and postgraduate students. Shortlisted candidates will be invited for interview and assessment in early January 2019.