

1	Awarding Institution:	University of Exeter
2	School(s)/Teaching Institution:	South West Ministry Training Course
3	Programme accredited/validated by:	University of Exeter
4	Final Award(s):	<i>Bachelor of Theology (Ministry)</i>
5	Programme Title:	SWMTC Partner Programme in Theology
6	UCAS Code (if relevant):	
7	FHEQ Level of Final Award(s):	6
8	QAA Subject Benchmarking Group:	<i>Theology and Religious Studies</i>
9	Date of Production/Revision:	January 2010

1 0	Programme Structures and Requirements, Levels, Modules, Credits and Awards	
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The Bachelor of Theology (Ministry) is designed to meet the specific needs of students preparing for roles as theological educators, or posts of responsibility, within accredited ministry in the Church of England and the Methodist Church, by a course of part-time study, where those roles or posts, or the student's previous academic attainment, suggest the need for a honours degree-level qualification.

Students wishing to gain the Bachelor of Theology (Ministry) will enter the degree with 240 credits prior study (or the equivalent), and will normally acquire 120 credits at Level 3 to complete the BTh (Min). An exception may arise in which a student previously registered for the BTh(Min) transfers credits by APCL from their previous programme into the co-funded BTh(Min). An award of the BTh (Min) in such circumstances will be based on not less than 90 and no more than 150 credits at Level 3. Awards of AP(E)L and APCL will be in accordance with the Bachelor of Theology (Ministry) Programme rules for AP(E)L and APCL and the University's general Degree Regulations.

Where a student qualifies for the BTh(Min) by gaining the Foundation Degree in Christian Theology for Ministry validated by Exeter, it has been agreed that classification for the BTh(Min) will be based on all the taught credits gained at Levels 2 and 3.

Every student pathway will be individually negotiated with the Programme Director and will include study of a biblical topic (either through a taught module, an independent study module, or a dissertation), study of a doctrinal topic (either through a taught module, an independent study module, or a dissertation), and study based on reflection on ministerial practice. Choice of credit values in the taught modules will depend on the student's own circumstances, and the balance of the rest of the pathway.

#### Modules in biblical studies

SWM3831/3722 Reading Galatians and 1. Corinthians (10 or 20 credits)

SWM3841/3742 Reading the Festival Scrolls (10 or 20 credits)

SWM3871/3772 Reading Mark (10 or 20 credits)

SWM3881 Reading Psalms (10 credits)

#### Modules in systematics

SWM3851/3752 Reading the Modern Theologians (10 or 20 credits)

SWM3861/3762 Ecotheology and Ecojustice (10 or 20 credits)

#### Modules in liturgy and spirituality

SWM3821/3722 Visible Words (on sacramental theology) (10 or 20 credits)

The New Testament modules Reading Mark and Reading Galatians and 1. Corinthians will be offered in alternate years. The Old Testament modules Reading Psalms and Reading the Festival Scrolls will be offered alternately in even-numbered years. The modules running in 2010-12 are available in 20-credit versions as part of the transitional arrangements from the previous programme.

#### Modules in ministerial development (formation)

SWM3924 & 3934 Ministry Development Module III (Level 3) (Mission and Sacraments versions run in alternate years) 40 credits

SWM3973 Ministry Development Module IV 30 credits

SWM3624 Ministry Project Module 40 credits

#### Modules based on independent study

SWM3631 Independent Study Module 10 credits

SWM3614 Dissertation 40 credits

Students will be expected to write *either*

- a dissertation at Level 3 or
- the Ministry Project Module.

Exceptions in extraordinary circumstances will be agreed by the Board of Studies.

The mission and sacraments versions of MDMIII run alternately. Students take only one version of the module, and may gain the BTh(Min) without studying both themes (or indeed either).

Every student pathway will include study of a biblical topic (either through a taught module, an independent study module, or a dissertation), study of a doctrinal topic (either through a taught module, an independent study module, or a dissertation), and study based on reflection on ministerial practice. The Independent Study Module is needed in case students need to modify their pathway to meet specific ministerial needs.

#### **The Accreditation of Prior Learning: APCL**

APCL at Level 3 may be used to gain exemption from some of the credits required for the Bachelor in Theology (Ministry) only on the basis of credits gained from past study on the Exeter Bachelor of Theology or Bachelor of Theology (Ministry) programmes. It has been agreed that modules taken within these programmes may be transferred into the new BTh (Min) programme. Marks for Exeter-taught modules for which credit has been transferred in this way will count towards the final classification of the new BTh (Min).

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1	Educational Aims of the Programme
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The Bachelor of Theology (Ministry) is specifically designed for part-time ministerial students studying through ministerial study days and residential events and at evening classes (distance learning alternatives being available for the latter). Admission to the programme is normally restricted to candidates possessing the Diploma of Theology or Foundation Degree in Christian Theology for Ministry (or equivalent), undertaking further ministerial training under the auspices of the South West Ministry Training Course.

The close integration between 'workplace' experience and academic learning involved in our approach to ministerial training fits extremely well with the ethos of this employer-co-funded Honours degree. The 'employer' in this context is ultimately our two sponsoring churches. The 'workplace' in this context consists of those ministerial settings to which past experience and the opportunities of training provide access. SWMTC, as 'programme provider', works in close collaboration with the ministers with responsibilities in those settings to ensure a rich learning experience for students, and one moreover that makes genuine connections with the realities of the ministries for which students are being trained.

SWMTC, by providing the Bachelor of Theology (Ministry), aims to enable students to explore at a sophisticated level, building on their past theological and ministerial education, some or all of the following:

- the contexts, development and meanings of the texts of the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, with particular reference to preaching and teaching in a church context;
- the history of Christian theological thought, including aspects of Christianity's relationship to other religions, and the implications of that tradition and that relationship for contemporary ministerial practice;
- the critical questions, philosophical, political, ethical and historical, raised in the modern and post-modern world about religion in general and the Christian religion specifically; also the critical questions, philosophical, political and ethical, raised by the Christian religion about the world, and the application of those questions to ministerial life
- the theology and practice of worship, liturgy, spirituality and prayer;
- the theology and practice of Christian ministry in a changing social and cultural context;
- the critical and personal issues raised by a process of formation for ministry

SWMTC aims:

- to provide a supportive, friendly and enjoyable context for the exploration of this subject matter;
- to enable students in this supportive environment to face critical questions about their own beliefs and practices, and the beliefs and practices present in the world around them;
- to fit students to be thoughtful and questioning ministerial practitioners, possessed of advanced capacities for reflection on ministerial situations and case-studies;
- to consolidate in students familiarity with a variety of methods of study of this wide-ranging subject-matter, and so to foster mental agility and adaptability;
- to develop academic and personal skills that equip students for a life of further study and reflection on ministerial practice
- to equip students to pursue a course of independent study of a theological or ministerial issue

SWMTC further aims:

- to provide high quality teaching that is innovative, engaging, and where possible collaborative, and that helps students to become active and independent learners in their own right.

Programme Outcomes
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*Confirmation of conformity with the relevant subject benchmark statement, or rationale for non-conformity*

This programme complies with the QAA benchmark statement for Theology and Religious Studies.

## Teaching and learning methods - General Comment

Modules are offered through a variety of means including face-to-face and VLE (Moodle)-supported distance learning. In order to foster autonomy in learning students are strongly self-directed (with timely and appropriate support as needed), with the flexibility to study when and where best suits them. This will include completion of either a dissertation and a ministry project (and often both). In addition, students taking the Ministry Project Module may be required to attend a number of dayschools and residential courses (the precise requirement being governed by their denominational affiliation), and those taking the MPM or MDMIV will be required to work with a consultant on their ministerial practice. Each student will have an individually negotiated learning pathway.

## Assessment

*Essays* The majority of assessment for the modules in Bible, doctrine, ethics, liturgy and spirituality will be by essay-type assignments, in which students can engage in extended reflection upon sources from or about a religious tradition, and can describe some of its forms in broad terms, describe and summarise its classical sources, demonstrate an awareness of key themes in its interpretation, and show their awareness of the complexity of that tradition, as appropriate to the module in question. The essays will give students an opportunity to represent the views of others, and (perhaps over the course of several modules) to use a number of methods of study. Essay titles will in every module be geared appropriately towards the ministerial skills the module aims to develop.

*Use of a Reflective Journal* The ministerial development (formational) modules require the completion of a learning journal to foster skills of reflection and self-awareness. These journals are part of the formative assessment for the relevant module; the progress of the journal will be monitored throughout the course of the module.

### *Other Forms of Assessment*

The modules on ministerial development and practice will contain assessment of the student's reflection on their performance at certain core ministerial activities such as leading worship, preaching, and teaching a short course of study. Assignments may also include writing an appropriate pastoral letter or an article for a church magazine. The Ministry Project Module is assessed partly through a powerpoint presentation.

*Feedback on Assignments* Students will receive first marker's marks and be given access to informal written feedback on *all* pieces of assessed coursework within four term-time weeks of the assignment's hand-in date.

### *Passing all elements of the ministerial practice modules*

Because these modules relate directly to learning outcomes that must be attained as part of the attainment of certain standards required for recognised ministry, all elements of the modules must be passed for an overall pass to be gained.

*On successfully completing the programme, a graduate should be able to demonstrate:*

***NB These learning outcomes are based on those laid down by Ministry Division of the Church of England as appropriate to the point of completion of initial training (the stage by which those going into posts of responsibility would be expected to have attained an Honours degree)***

***1. In depth knowledge and sophisticated critical understanding of biblical texts, including at least one text studied in considerable detail***

*Teaching/learning methods and strategies – range of possibilities includes Level 3 modules focussing on a small number of texts in detail. Independent study module focussing on the critical comparison of two contrasting interpretations of a part of the Bible. Dissertation focussing in depth on a critical issue raised by a part of the Bible. Assessment Exegeses (critical textual commentaries) will be set in the biblical modules as a core skill of the minister. Essays in those modules will assess broader understandings of specific biblical books and genres Sophisticated critical interpretation assessed in the marking of dissertation/independent study module.*

***2. In depth knowledge and sophisticated critical understanding of the way contemporary systematic theologians approach one major issue in Christian theology***

*Teaching/learning methods and strategies – the range of possibilities includes Level 3 modules on the contemporary systematicians, on ecotheology, and on sacramental theology and an Independent study module focussing on the critical comparison of two contrasting theological authorities. Dissertation focussing in depth on a critical issue raised by contemporary theological exploration. Assessment Essays in the modules detailed above will assess the student’s ability to deploy reasoned, critical argument in conversation with major theological thinkers. Sophisticated critical analysis assessed in the marking of dissertation/independent study module.*

**3. Sophisticated skills as a discerning reflective practitioner.**

→ **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**  
*Reflective journal in the modules on ministerial practice supported by regular conversations with tutors and consultants. Guided work on ministerial case-studies and project reports*

**Assessment**

*Journal is assessed formatively. The Ministry Development Module IV involves summative assessment of case-studies deriving directly from ministerial experience. The Ministry Project Module is assessed not only by an extended report but also by an oral presentation to a group of peers.*

**4. Insight, openness, maturity, integrity and stability in the face of pressure and changing circumstances, and the capacity to reflect in a wise and discerning way on personal strengths and weaknesses.**

→ **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**  
*These qualities are formed through engagement with the challenges of ministry, supported by the journaling exercises of the formational modules, and the input of tutors and consultants.*

**Assessment**

*The learning journal (and, for MDMIII, the self-assessment, assessed formatively, provide evidence of the student's deepening reflection on their personal responses to the challenge of ministry.*

**5. Capacity to engage in and reflect on mission in a range of contexts.**

→ **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**  
*Ministry Development Module III Mission provides in-depth treatment of a range of issues in contemporary mission. Ministry Development Module IV and the Ministry Project Module offer the opportunity to engage in and reflect on a variety of types of mission, and to devise innovative mission strategies in consultation with colleagues, tutors and consultants.*

**Assessment**

*The Journaling and case-studies for MDMIV, and the project report for the Ministry Project Module, allow the assessment of the student's understanding of the effectiveness and costs of different strategies in mission.*

**6. A sophisticated grasp of exegetical and hermeneutical skills.**

→ *Teaching/learning methods and strategies  
(6) A strong emphasis on reading strategies and understandings of interpretation is found in the biblical modules. It will also be intrinsic to the guidance given for the Independent Study Module and the dissertation.*

*Assessment*

*Biblical exegesis will be specifically assessed within the summative assignments of the biblical modules. An understanding of hermeneutics is assessed through the other assignments of those modules, and through one of the assignments of the ecotheology module  
(7) The development of Christian beliefs and practices is studied in depth in the modules on systematic theology, sacraments and ecotheology at Level 3 (and in MDMIII Sacraments). Where the independent study module of the dissertation is taken in a doctrinal topic, guidance given will emphasise the way consideration of this topic has developed within the tradition.*

**7. In depth understanding of the development of Christian beliefs and practices.**

*The essay assignments of the modules in systematics and sacramental theology, and the marking of independent study modules and dissertations in relevant areas will assess in depth understanding of the development of the Christian tradition.*

**8. the ability to identify, gather, and engage in a sophisticated and critical fashion with primary data and source material**

*Teaching/learning methods and strategies*

*Throughout the modules there will be an emphasis on engaging with primary sources – through for example exegesis of biblical texts, understanding liturgies in their context, and reading major theological thinkers.*

*Assessment*

*Intensive critical commentary on texts provides a particularly good assessment of engagement with primary sources..*

*Accurate engagement with primary sources will also be an assessed learning outcome in other modules, such as Visible Words, and Ecotheology and Ecojustice, and in particular in the Independent Study Module.*

**9. the ability to communicate information, ideas, arguments, principles and theories by a variety of means, for example essays of various lengths which are clearly organised and presented and show a critical and nuanced view of their subject;**

*Accurate and thoughtful communication of information, ideas and principles will be reinforced through class interaction (and on-line discussion) and in the feedback on essays and other assignments*

*Assessment*

*The essay format provides a demanding test of the accurate marshalling of information, arguments and theories, and will be the dominant mode of assessment for the BTh (Min). The Ministry Project Module powerpoint presentation will test succinct presentation of complex issues.*

**10. the ability to sustain an extended exploration of a theological or ministerial project, including appropriate management of time, compiling and managing an extended bibliography, and deploying an extended argument showing critical depth and the capacity to deploy the student's own thinking in dialogue with the literature.**

*Teaching/learning methods and strategies*

*The compulsory dissertation or Ministry Project, conducted with the aid of a supervisor and or tutor/consultant, offers the opportunity for the student to explore, with guidance, an extended piece of independent study*

*Assessment*

*Assessment criteria for the extended assignments will examine the student's capacity to sustain a prolonged independent exploration of a topic, and the extent of critical depth and innovative thought reflected in the piece as finally submitted.*



1 4	Support for Students and Students' Learning
<p>SWMTC holds a dedicated theological library of around 9,000 volumes, and makes available a postal service from its collection. It also has a reciprocal arrangement with the Bishop Philpotts Library in Truro. A VLE (Moodle) platform contains documents for each module, plus handouts and excerpts from published material.</p> <p>SWMTC's website <a href="http://www.swmtc.org.uk">www.swmtc.org.uk</a> is a more general source of news and resources connected with ministerial training in the region.</p> <p>SWMTC provides staff and personal tutors, and appoints placement ministers, to support students' learning and formation. These are persons with professional pastoral skills and experience able to support students through the profound experience that is formation for public ministry. Directors of ordinands and equivalent officers from the sponsoring churches visit Course residential and study day events regularly and advise students on their destinations after training.</p> <p>In addition, students have access to the Disability Resources Centre of the University. <b>However, library and VLE (Moodle) support will be provided directly by SWMTC.</b> A study skills service is provided.</p> <p>SWMTC events contain regular sessions for review, which also feed into the work of the Staff Student Liaison Committees.</p>	

1 5	Admission Criteria
<p>Admission to the Bachelor of Theology (Ministry) is open to all those continuing in ministerial training in the Church of England or the Methodist Church, who have already attained a Diploma in Theology or a Foundation Degree (or equivalent) associated with a course of pre-ordination training.</p> <p>SWMTC welcomes applications from those who hold the Diploma of Theology or equivalent, and who, though not accredited ministers in the sponsoring churches, have the necessary opportunities to complete one or more of the modules in ministerial practice. Such applicants should contact the Programme Director in the first instance. AP(E)L, APCL and progression rules apply to those seeking to enter the degree carrying past credit from other programmes.</p> <p><b>SWMTC will be responsible for the admission of candidates, subject to the overall rules of the University.</b> SWMTC does not reject appropriately sponsored applicants, and seeks to support all students irrespective of disability. SWMTC has an equal opportunities policy which can be consulted on its website.</p>	

1 6	Regulation of Assessment and Academic Standards
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Like all other academic programmes in the University, this one will be subject to an agreed School assessment marking strategy, underpinned by institution-wide assessment procedures. The security of assessment and academic standards is further supported through the External Examiners appointed for each programme. Their responsibilities are described in the University's code for external examiners and include access to draft papers, course work and examination scripts. The Board of Examiners is chaired by the University's Programme Co-ordinator. Attendance at the Board of Examiners and provision of an annual report are both required of Externals. Clear procedures are also in place for the monitoring of these annual reports at both School and University level. See the University's TQA Manual for details of these processes (<http://www.ex.ac.uk/admin/academic/tls/tqa/>).

In addition, SWMTC's ministerial provision will be validated by the Quality in Formation Panel of Ministry Division of the Church of England as part of its regular cycle of professional inspection and validation.

1	Indicators of Quality and Standards
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There will be regular review of the quality of provision, conducted under the direction of the University's Programme Co-ordinator, who reports to the Collaborative Provision Committee. The University and its constituent Schools draw on a range of data in their regular review of the quality of provision. The annually produced Performance Indicator Dataset details admission, progression, completion and first career destination data, including comparisons over a five year period.

1	Methods for Evaluating and Improving Quality and Standards
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These include the annual review of both modules and programmes which draw on feedback from such sources as external examiner's reports, student evaluation, student achievement and progression data. In addition, subject areas are reviewed every four years through a subject and programme quality review scheme that includes external input. These procedures are recorded in codes of practice contained in the TQA Manual.

### Indicative Pathway

Level 3	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	All year
Year 1	Visible Words (on sacramental theology) 10 credits			Ministry Development Module IV 30 credits
Year 2	Dissertation	Dissertation 40 credits		

<b>Year 3</b>				<b>Ministry Project Module 40 credits</b>
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Note: the circumstances of ministers in the fourth to seventh year of training, for whom this degree is principally provided, are very various, and the credit load they might attempt in any one year correspondingly variable. However, the table above gives a reasonable guide to the shape of such a 'top-up' degree programme. Some students will take only one of the modules on post-initial ministerial practice, MDMIV and the MPM, in which case they will take additional evening-class modules in order to complete the degree.

December 2008 (revised)