

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>Foundation Degree in Christian Theology for Ministry</i>
5	Programme Title:	SWMTC Partner Programme in Theology
6	UCAS Code (if relevant):	
7	FHEQ Level of Final Award(s):	5
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 Foundation Degree in Theology for Christian Ministry is designed to meet the specific needs of students preparing for accredited ministry (lay or ordained) in the Church of England and the Methodist Church by a course of part-time study. Students wishing to gain the Foundation Degree in Theology for Christian Ministry will normally acquire 120 credits at each of Levels 1 and 2. Students may, however, claim the Foundation Degree in Theology for Christian Ministry on the basis of 240 credits spread across Levels 1 and 2, where they have at least 90 and not more than 150 credits at each level. Where students are exempted from Level 1 work by APL they will be expected to gain exactly 120 credits at Level 2. Students may apply for a maximum of 120 credits by APL in accordance with the Foundation Degree in Theology for Christian Ministry Programme rules for APL and the University's general Degree Regulations. Students who do not wish, or are unable, to progress all the way to the Foundation Degree in Theology for Christian Ministry may gain the Certificate in Theology for Christian Ministry. Such students will gain 120 credits at Level 1, with a maximum of 60 credits by APL, of which at least 30 must be in theology/religious studies.

#### Level 1 credits

Students will normally acquire the 120 Level 1 credits that comprise the Certificate in Theology for Christian Ministry with 50 credits of 'formational' modules, specifically geared to the exploration of ministerial identity and practice, 30 credits of modules in doctrine and ethics, and 30 credits of modules in Bible and Church History, together with 10 credits APL applied for on the basis of past experience or the process of candidating for ministry. *Foundation Degree Benchmarking Statement Para 29 refers.*

#### Modules in ministerial development

SWM1915 Ministry Development Module I (50 credits)

#### Modules in doctrine and ethics

SWM1811 & 1812 Introduction to Christian Doctrine I (10 credits or 20 credits)

SWM1821 & 1822 Introduction to Christian Doctrine II (10 credits or 20 credits)

SWM1831 & 1832 Introduction to Christian Ethics (10 credits or 20 credits)

#### Modules in Bible and Church History

SWM1841 & 1842 Introduction to the Bible I (10 credits – also available at 20 credits)

SWM1851 & 1852 Introduction to the Bible II (10 credits – also available at 20 credits)

SWM1861 & 1862 Introduction to Church History (10 credits – also available at 20 credits)

#### Level 2 credits

Students will normally acquire the 120 Level 2 credits that comprise the remaining component of the Foundation Degree in Christian Theology for Ministry with 90 credits of formational modules and 30 credits of modules on themes in biblical studies, systematics, liturgy and spirituality. Although there will be no choice of modules in any given year, the biblical modules will be offered on a four-year cycle, with the other modules being offered on a two-year cycle. The formational modules will be offered every year. The precise combination of formational modules will depend on the stage in the candidate's ministerial development at which they enter Level 2 study. A timetable of the modules offered in different years is provided at the end of this document.

#### Modules in ministerial development

SWM2925 & 2935 Ministry Development Module II (50 credits) (Mission and Sacraments versions run alternately)

SWM2924 & 2934 Ministry Development Module III (40 credits) (Mission and Sacraments versions run alternately)

SWM2973 Ministry Development Module IV (30 credits)

SWM2952 Reader Development Module II L2 (20 credits)

SWM2962 Reader Development Module III L2 (20 credits)

#### Modules in biblical studies

- SWM2831 Reading Galatians and 1. Corinthians (10 credits)  
SWM2841 Reading the Festival Scrolls (10 credits)  
SWM2871 Reading Mark (10 credits)  
SWM2881 Reading Psalms (10 credits)

#### Modules in systematics

- SWM2851 Reading the Modern Theologians (10 credits)  
SWM2861 Ecotheology and Ecojustice ((10 credits)

#### Modules in liturgy and spirituality

- SWM2821 Visible Words (on sacramental theology) (10 credits)

#### Independent study modules

- SWM2614 Dissertation (40 credits)  
SWM2631 Independent Study Module (10 credits)

The mission and sacraments versions of MDMII and MDMIII run alternately. Students take only one version of the module in any given year, and may gain the Foundation Degree without studying both themes.

The variable credit load for evening class modules for ministry students at Level 1 and the Independent Study Module and dissertation options at Level 2 are required in case students need to modify their pathway to meet specific ministerial needs. Students will not normally write a dissertation if intending to write one within the BTh(Min). All students must study at Level 2 a biblical, a doctrinal (includes liturgy and spirituality as above) and a ministerial topic – this may affect the choice of dissertation title.

#### **The Accreditation of Prior (Experience and) Learning: AP(E)L**

APL may be used to gain exemption from some of the credits required for the Foundation Degree (or the associated Certificate) on the basis of credit gained in study elsewhere of material deemed equivalent to some or all of our Doctrine modules, Bible modules, Ministerial development modules, or in study of other topics, as long as the following limits are kept to:

- No more than 30 APL credit exemptions may be from subjects other than doctrine or bible;
- 120 credits APCL may be applied for on the basis of the Certificate in Theology for Christian Ministry This enables candidates who have trained as Readers to undertake further study leading to the Foundation Degree. If these candidates are sponsored ordinands their pathways will be determined by SWMTC in the normal way.
- 120 credits APCL may also be applied for on the basis of the Certificate in Theology. This should be discussed with the Programme Director before application is made.

It has been agreed that students enrolling on the BTh(Min) in 2009-10 may transfer the credits and credit exemptions earned during that academic year to the Foundation degree. Marks for Exeter-taught modules for which credit has been transferred in this way will count towards the final classification of the Foundation degree.

1	Educational Aims of the Programme
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The Foundation Degree in Theology for Christian Ministry is specifically designed for part-time mature, 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 restricted to candidates accepted for lay or ordained ministerial training under the auspices of the South West Ministry Training Course. For such students it is an open-access programme, and therefore does not assume that students come with prior qualification.

The close integration between 'workplace' experience and academic learning involved in our approach to ministerial training fits extremely well with the ethos of the Foundation Degree. The 'employer' in this context is ultimately our two sponsoring churches. Ministerial students have all been working - usually in a voluntary capacity - in church settings for many years. APL arrangements will recognise that experience, and also the work done in preparing to candidate for ministerial training. 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. It is the policy of our sponsoring churches that the needs of training take priority over other work to be done in those ministerial settings. This ensures that SWMTC can set the pattern of the work-based learning taking place and regulate the extent of the student's overall commitment.

SWMTC, by providing the Foundation Degree in Christian Theology for Ministry, aims to enable students to explore

- 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 history of the Christian church, and of its denominational diversity, and the implications of that history for contemporary worshipping communities;
- 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;
- to introduce students to 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

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

	Programme Outcomes
<p><i>Confirmation of conformity with the relevant subject benchmark statement, or rationale for non-conformity</i></p> <p>This programme complies with the QAA benchmark statement for Theology and Religious Studies (given the level of the final award) and with the benchmark statement for Foundation Degrees.</p>	

	<p><b>Progression</b></p> <p><i>Stage 1 – normally 120 credits at Level 1</i></p> <p>By the end of Stage 1 students will be expected to be proficient at the clear written presentation of information, ideas, arguments, principles and theories, and in engaging in written form with a wide range of written and other sources, as appropriate for Level 1 modules. The assignments they undertake will allow them to work with limited autonomy within well-defined guidelines; the course material they cover will have surveyed the theological field, and introduced them to a range of methods of theological inquiry, together with key issues for the practice of contemporary Christian ministry.</p> <p><i>Stage 2 (Foundation Degree) – normally 120 credits at Level 2</i></p> <p>Students will normally be allowed to take Level 2 modules once they have completed satisfactorily 80 credits of Level 1 work. (This allows ordinands to take Ministry Development Module II in their second year of study, even if they are still studying Level 1 modules in the evening class programme.) Students will be advised that average marks below 50% at level 1 do not normally suggest the ability to flourish in study at Level 2. Ordinands withdrawing from training before completion of the Foundation Degree, but who have attained 120 credits at Level 1, will be awarded the Certificate in Theology for Christian Ministry.</p> <p>Reader candidates will not normally undertake Level 2 study, unless their prior qualifications (recognised in the award of APL) make this appropriate. Their programme is therefore covered by the programme specification for the Certificate in Theology for Christian Ministry.</p> <p>The assignments set at Level 2 will require students to undertake work within broad guidelines with some limited opportunities for independent study; they will study particular areas in more detail, and be introduced more thoroughly to the variety and conflict of theological ideas and methods in particular areas. Issues raised by ministerial practice in the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century will be explored in greater depth.</p>
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### Module choices

Every student will have an individual pathway negotiated with their Programme Director, in the light of their past experience and individual training needs for the ministry for which they are being sponsored.

It should be noted however that in any given year there is no choice of modules offered. At the end of this document indicative pathways are given for ministerial students proceeding to the Foundation Degree.

## 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. In addition, students are required to attend a number of dayschools (five per Reader Development module, two per Ministry Development module, one per evening class module and residential courses (six per Ministry Development module, one per Reader Development module). 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 modules on ministerial development all 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 formational modules 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. Home and placement ministers and congregations will participate in this assessment through feedback on the student's practice and through placement reports. Assignments may also include writing an appropriate pastoral letter or an article for a church magazine. A high premium is put on skills of observing and analysing local contexts, so assignments also include reports on placements, with the analysis of oral reports and published data

### *Feedback on Assignments*

All Stage 1 undergraduate students will receive within the first six weeks informal written feedback on an assignment. All students on Level 1 modules will receive informal written feedback during the course of the module, in time for it to assist with their final assignment for that module. 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 modules in ministerial development*

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.

<p>12 &amp; 13</p>	<p>Programme Outcomes and Teaching, Learning &amp; Assessment Methods</p>
<p>On successfully completing the programme, a graduate should be able to demonstrate:</p>	<p><b>NB These learning outcomes are based on those laid down by Ministry Division of the Church of England as appropriate to the point of ordination (the stage of attainment of the Foundation Degree)</b></p>
<p><b>1. Knowledge and critical understanding of biblical texts, including at least one text studied in some detail</b></p>	<p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies Lectures and exegetical sessions in the Level 1 sessions on the Bible, supplemented by biblical material in the formational modules. Level 2 modules focussing on a small number of texts in detail. 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.</p>
<p><b>2. Knowledge and critical understanding of the way contemporary systematic theologians approach one major issue in Christian theology</b></p>	<p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies Lectures in the Level 1 modules on doctrine will give students the grounding necessary to engage with the Level 2 material on the modern systematicians, on ecotheology, and on sacramental theology. Thus a range of issues receive focus, from the human vocation in respect of creation to understandings of the eucharist Assessment Essays in the modules detailed above will assess the student's ability to deploy reasoned, critical argument in conversation with major theological thinkers.</p>
<p><b>3. Knowledge of ethical theory and of the way one major issue is approached in theological ethics</b></p>	<p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies The lectures and case-studies of the module on Christian ethics will provide the grounding in this area. This is supplemented by practical ethical reflection during MDMI and RDMII. Assessment The assignments in the ethics module will assess both general understanding and the ability to apply ethical theory to a major issue in theological ethics.</p>

**4. Skills as a reflective practitioner, in leading public worship and in preaching.**

Teaching/learning methods and strategies  
Reflective journal in the formational modules supported by regular conversations with tutors. Annual self-assessment. Four assessed leadings of worship and four assessed preachments, supported by learning threads in preaching (RDMI, MDMI and MDMSacraments) and in liturgy (RDMII, MDMI, Visible Words module).  
Assessment  
Journal is assessed formatively and monitored throughout the module. Minister and congregation feedback must be included in student's reflection on practice in leading worship and preaching.

**5. Insight into the practices of other churches.**

Teaching/learning methods and strategies  
Training in the theology of worship (MDMI) and in sacramental theology (Visible Words module, lecture-based) conducted ecumenically.  
Assessment  
Essays in Visible Words module address the breadth of the Christian tradition.

**6. Insight, openness, maturity, integrity and stability in the face of pressure and changing circumstances, and the capacity to reflect on personal strengths and weaknesses.**

Teaching/learning methods and strategies  
These qualities are formed through the whole process of training while sustaining other life-commitments. They are reflected on within SWMTC residenceals and study days and in regular discussion with tutors.  
Assessment  
The learning journal and self-assessment, assessed formatively, provide evidence of the student's reflection on their personal responses to the challenge of ministry.

**7. Ability to develop and sustain healthy professional, personal and pastoral relationships as ministers**

Teaching/learning methods and strategies  
Groupwork within MDMII and MDMIII is a special focus for reflection on relationships.  
Assessment  
Students' quality of reflection on their participation in relationships within the learning group is assessed through their learning journal and self-assessment.

**8. Good practice in a limited range of pastoral relationships, and in being supervised.**

*Teaching/learning methods and strategies*

*Effective pastoral practice (and the self-care that must lie behind it) is taught in MDMMission and RDMIII.*

*Assessment*

*The long placement report in MDMMII contains reflection on pastoral visiting, under supervision.*

**9. Capacity to reflect on mission in a range of contexts.**

→ *Teaching/learning methods and strategies*

*The contextual work in MDMMI, and the whole of the main thread of MDMMission, introduces the student to missiology, anchored in reflection on the regional context and supported by a range of talks by practitioners. The module Ecotheology and Ecojustice also supports this learning outcome.*

*Assessment*

*The 'church in context' assignment within MDMMI assesses student's understanding in some depth, as will the journaling of MDMMission. Essays in Ecotheology and Ecojustice also raise missiological issues.*

**10. Understanding of how adults learn**

*Teaching/learning methods and strategies*

*Adult learning is also treated within RDMIII and MDMMission, using lectures and self-administered questionnaires.*

*Assessment*

*Adult learning is assessed through the exercise of teaching a course in the local church and reflecting of feedback received. (MDMMIII)*

**11. A secure grasp of exegetical and hermeneutical skills.**

→ **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

*A strong emphasis on reading strategies and understandings of interpretation is found in the Level 1 and 2 biblical modules, and in the (more interactive) sessions within the formational modules.*

**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. The weighing of different elements in theological evidence is a core skill of the reflective journal in MDMI-III. Ultimately this is an exercise in hermeneutics – reading the different resources of the tradition.*

**12. Understanding of the development of Christian beliefs and practices.**

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

*The development of Christian beliefs and practices is studied through the doctrine and church history modules at Level 1, the modules on systematic theology, sacraments and ecotheology at Level 2, and the teaching on liturgy in MDMI and RDMII.*

**Assessment**

*The essay assignments of the doctrine and church history modules will assess understanding of the development of the Christian tradition.*

**13. Reflective engagement with other faith traditions.**

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

*Other faith traditions are addressed through a field trip and debriefing sessions in MDMI, and more formally in the study day of a Level 1 Doctrine module, and a residential weekend in MDMMission..*

**Assessment**

*Engagement with other faiths is assessed through a special journaling assignment in MDMI.*

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>Students will be expected to have a defined set of basic IT skills in order to start the programme. They will receive briefing on the database and on-line resources available through Moodle. Students taking modules by distance-learning will receive further briefing on how to make best use of this mode of learning.</p> <p>In addition, students have access to the Disability Resources Centre of the University. 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 Foundation Degree at Level 1 is open to all those who have been sponsored for this form of training by the Church of England or the Methodist Church. It may also be open to those who have the past experience and present opportunities to enable them to undertake the work-related components of the degree. APL and progression rules apply to those seeking to enter the degree carrying past credit from other programmes. A defined level of competence in IT will be necessary to start the programme, and support will be offered to enable prospective students to attain this. Admission to Level 2 modules will normally require completion of 80 credits at Level 1. 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.

### Pathway to the Foundation Degree

	<b>Term 1</b>	<b>Term 2</b>	<b>Term 3</b>	<b>All year</b>	<b>APL</b>
Year 1 Level 1	Doctrine (or Bible) I: 10 credits	Doctrine (or Bible) II: 10 credits	Ethics (or Church History): 10 credits	Ministry Development Module I: 50 credits	10 credits - covering the work done as part of the candidat- ing

					process
Year 2 Level 1 and 2	Bible (or Doctrine)I: 10 credits	Bible (or Doctrine) II: 10 credits	Church History (or Ethics): 10 credits	Ministry Development Module II (Mission or Sacraments) 50 credits	

	<b>Term 1</b>	<b>Term 2</b>	<b>Term 3</b>	<b>All year</b>
Year 3 Level 2	Visible Words (on sacramental theology), or New Testament 10 credits	New Testament (or Modern Theologians) 10 credits	Old Testament (or Ecotheology) 10 credits	Ministry Development Module III(Sacrament s or Mission) 40 credits

The above table indicates how a candidate for ordained ministry, entering with no previous HE credit, would gain the Foundation degree in three years of part-time study.

However, the background and situations of those training part-time for the ordained ministry is very variable. Thus, some students may be admitted at Level 2 on the basis of their past study, and gain the Foundation Degree in two years part-time. Some students may do two years of initial training, as a stipulation of their sponsoring church,, but require to take Ministry Development Module IV in post-initial training to qualify for an award.

Modules offered every year: MDMI, MDMII, MDMIII, MDMIV, RDMII, RDMIII.

Modules offered in 2010-11, 2012-13, 2014-15: Doctrine I and II, Ethics, Visible Words, Reading Galatians and 1. Corinthians

Modules offered in 2011-12, 2013-14, 2015-16: Bible I and II, Church History, Reading Mark, Modern Theologians, Ecotheology.

Modules offered in 2010-11 and 2014-15: Reading the Festival Scrolls

Modules offered in 2012-13 and 2016-17: Reading Psalms

December 2008 (revised)