

SOUTH WEST MINISTRY TRAINING COURSE

Reader Training Handbook

2011-2012

READER TRAINING HANDBOOK

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READER TRAINING HANDBOOK

Welcome to SWMTC!

You are part of an exciting and challenging journey over the three years of the SWMTC Reader Training programme, as you prepare for ministry as a Reader in the Church of England.

This handbook has been prepared to give you an overview of the training that lies ahead of you, but it also serves to put your training into the wider context within the South West Ministry Training Course and to give you a sense of the theology that lies behind our approach to forming men and women for both Reader and ordained ministry in the Anglican Church.

Considering any form of public and authorised ministry in Christ's Church is always a daunting prospect and nothing can, nor should, take away that sense of fear and trembling, joy and elation by which the human heart responds to God's call.

SWMTC warmly welcomes you to this new training programme, and wishes you every blessing in this period of training and formation.

The Revd Preb David Moss
Principal

A Reflection on Ministry

It helps, now and then, to step back and take the long view.
The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts,
it is even beyond our vision.
We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction
of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.
Nothing we do is complete,
which is another way of saying that
the Kingdom always lies beyond us.

No statement says all that should be said.
No prayer fully expresses our faith.
No confession brings perfection,
No pastoral visit brings wholeness.
No programme accomplishes the church's mission.
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about.
We plant the seeds that one day will grow.
We water seeds already planted,
knowing that they hold future promise.
We lay foundations. that will need further development.
We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything,
and there is a sense of liberation in realising that.
This enables us to do something,
and to do it well.
It may be incomplete,
but it is a beginning,
a step along the way,
an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter
and do the rest.

We may never see the end results,
but that is the difference between
the master builder and the worker.
We are workers, not master builders,
ministers, not messiahs.
We are prophets of a future that is not our own.

Archbishop Oscar Romero

The Route to Readership

The route to becoming a Reader is sometimes seen as a long process, but it must be thorough, rigorous and challenging. We live in a society that owes no favours to the Church. Ministers today must be able to witness to the Faith effectively, lead the people of God in their locality, and be able to give an account of the hope that is within them. None of this comes quickly to anyone and the Church has always recognized that those it authorises to teach and preach in the name of Christ must undergo a proper period of preparation.

St Paul took several years after his conversion to think through what his encounter with the risen Jesus meant before he set out on his astounding missionary journeys. This does not mean that Readers-in-Training will be simply sitting and waiting until they are admitted and licensed in order to begin ministry. Much is possible before that day; but this training is undertaken in the belief that much more will become possible through a proper formation of mind and heart.

Those who lead the courses for Readers believe fervently that every candidate deserves the very best in teaching, and that every candidate is called in turn to give of his or her best for God.

Have a look at the introduction to the Reader Licensing Service:

Readers are called to serve the Church of God and to work together with clergy and other ministers. They are to lead public worship, to preach and teach the word of God, to assist at the eucharist and to share in pastoral and evangelistic work. As authorized lay ministers, they are to encourage the ministries of God's people, as the Spirit distributes gifts among us all. They are called to help the whole Church to participate in God's mission to the world. (Common Worship)

The Diocese of Exeter requires its Readers to be prepared and trained to fulfil the attributes laid out in the Licensing Service noted above. In this diocese there is a particular emphasis upon the development of 'lay theologians' who will be deployed in the established mission communities to work collaboratively with other ministers.

Consequently, you will be involved in three interrelated areas of Reader training:

1. **Academic** study of the Bible, doctrine and theology
2. **Formational** study in preaching, teaching, mission and pastoral theology centred upon individual and group reflective practice
3. **Ministerial practice** and collaborative involvement in parishes and mission communities.

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To work towards achieving this 'blend', your training will consist of:

1. A course of study on Christian doctrine and ethics in one year and the Bible and church history in another
2. Two residential weekends and a series of Reader Development Days held on Saturdays (four Day schools per year), and in years 1 and 2, four meetings per year with a Journal Tutor
3. Three placements (including opportunity to spend time in a parish other than your own).
2. and 3. together constitute the 'Reader Development Modules', numbered in Roman numerals I, II, and III, depending on the year of study.

It is envisaged that after the successful completion of the first two years of your training you will be admitted to the office of a Reader and be given a one-year licence from the Bishop. In your third year, your training will continue with attendance at the RDM Days and placement work. Successful completion of this results in your being given a full licence by the Bishop.

While the RDMs remain the common core of all patterns of training, there are a number of different ways in which your biblical and theological study can be undertaken. SWMTC will need to consider carefully the most appropriate pathway that your training will follow, taking account of any significant prior theological training.

Academic Study

You will be introduced to biblical and theological knowledge through an academic course of part-time study at evening classes or through a similar course at the University College Plymouth St Mark and St John, Plymouth. This course ordinarily lasts for two years - one year concentrating on Biblical Studies and church history, and one year on the study of Christian doctrine and ethics at Certificate level. The course can be studied in two different ways.

- You can attend either at the SWMTC Library or University College Plymouth St Mark and St John for three (9 week) terms of lectures and seminar work a year.
The Course in Exeter takes place on Wednesdays at 7-9 pm in the SWMTC library, currently located in the Amory Building, University of Exeter.
The Course at University College Plymouth St Mark and St John^{Error! Bookmark not defined.} takes place on Tuesdays at 7-9 pm on University College Plymouth St Mark and St John campus; room to be confirmed.

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- You can also sign on to receive the Part-time Theology course by distance learning, but this is not encouraged as face-to-face interactive study is preferable.

For those with a Certificate in theology or higher award there are various possibilities available for further study. Please contact the Dean of Studies of SWMTC, Dr Christopher Southgate, (c.c.b.southgate@ex.ac.uk) for details.

A very good provision of library books relevant to ministerial training is available to you through the SWMTC library. The catalogue is available on-line at <http://swmtc.heritage4.com>, and a postal service is available (see below for further details).

Formational Study

The RDM days and the Reader Residential focus on preaching and teaching, spirituality, the theology and history and leading of worship, listening and group skills, the context of contemporary society and its challenges to ministry, pastoral care and theology, and good practice in all aspects of your ministry. Throughout each of these the RDMs seek to help you:

- develop your sense of vocation further
- theologically reflect upon your training experiences
- integrate your studies into your faith journey and your future ministry
- to affirm the distinctive character of Reader ministry

For each of your three years of training you will be part of a RDM learning cohort. This will provide an environment for learning with and from others, for broadening your experience, for making new friends and, all being well, having good fun together. The pattern of the RDM days will be the same every year and there will be an optional Reflective Day in January of each year which will be a facilitated chance to reflect together upon the ups and downs of the course and its impact upon you.

Currently, the RDM days are being taught at the Mint Methodist Church in Exeter and the Residential weekends take place at University College Plymouth St Mark and St John.

You will realise that the work load is considerable at certain times during the course, but we do need you to make a real commitment to the RDMs in particular; this is where you relate your studies to the task of being a Reader. From our side, we are committed to making sure the days are well-structured and focused.

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A typical shape of an RDM day:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
10.00	Welcome and Opening Worship		
10.15 -11.30	First Teaching Session	First Teaching Session	First Teaching Session
	Coffee Break		
11.45 -12.45	Second Teaching Session	Second Teaching Session	Second Teaching Session
	Lunch break		
13.30 -14.00	Group Reflection Session	Group Reflection Session	Group Reflection Session
14.00 -15.15	Third Teaching Session	Third Teaching Session	Third Teaching Session
	Coffee Break		
15.30 -16.30	Fourth Teaching Session	Fourth Teaching Session	Fourth Teaching Session
16.30	Final Notices and Closing Worship		

Ministerial practice

As well as your continued involvement in your local church, during each year of your training you will undertake a placement of some form. **It may well be that in order to meet the demands of these placements you will have to cut down on other church activities.** You should discuss this with your incumbent.

Year 1 Preaching placement:

The first part of the placement takes place in your home parish and is focused on preparing, preaching and reflecting upon a sermon. In addition you will need to show that you have actively participated in another act of worship. To help you (and those responsible for the assessment) gauge the response of members of the congregation, we will provide you with a short form which we would like you to give to selected members of the congregation and ask them to complete after the service. This form can be found on the SWMTC website on www.swmtc.org.uk. You may also want to arrange a time when you can meet with your incumbent or mentor and those members of the congregation whose response you have requested for verbal feedback - but this should not replace the completion of the form.

The second part of your placement still focuses on preaching, but takes you out of your own context to a church that differs from your own through tradition or social context. Your task there is to observe by attending two different acts of worship with sermon and to reflect in particular upon the style, use of scripture and theology of those sermons in the context of the worship.

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Year 2 Long Placement

You will have a substantial parish placement in a parish other than your own. The focus of your placement will be worship (this relates to the RDM II modules). As part of your placement you will be expected to devise and lead an act of worship, and you may be invited to preach. Besides that you will also have an opportunity to get an insight into pastoral work, outreach, committee and group work and the social life of your placement parish, and reflect thereon. The protocol for this placement and the incumbent's feedback form can be found on the SWMTC website.

Year 3 Pastoral Placement

You will have an opportunity to explore the role of a Reader in pastoral practice. Besides the task and duties you have taken on in your working agreement you will undertake and journal four pastoral contacts; at least three (or all four) of these will take place in your own context, organised and supported by your incumbent. There is also the opportunity for one of the contacts to take place in a sector ministry, for example a school, prison, hospice or hospital.

The experiences of the Year 3 placement will flow into a particular assignment focussing on Theological Reflection and the Pastoral Cycle.

A Simple Overview

Year 1 (RDM I)

Main Focus

- Formation and Spirituality
- Preaching
- Listening Skills
- History of Church of England
- *Either* biblical studies and church history *or* Christian doctrine and ethics depending on the year study begins. In 2011-12 the study will be of Biblical studies and church history.

Assignments (*full details in assignment package*)

- The Role of the Reader
- Preachment
- Observation Placement report
- *Either* biblical studies and church history *or* Christian doctrine and ethics depending on the year study begins.

Placement

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- Short Observation Placement

Journal

- Four journal entries and meetings with Journal Tutor

The following list provides an indication of reading materials appropriate to the module.

Church of England, *Mission-Shaped Church*, (London: Church House Publishing 2004)

Church of England, *Reader ministry and training: 2000 and beyond*, (London: Church House Publishing 2000)

Kuhrt, G and Nappin, P (eds.) *Bridging the Gap: Reader Ministry Today*, (London: Church House, 2002)

Day, D., *A preaching workbook*, (London: Lynx, 1998)

Rowling, C. and Gooder, P., *Reader Ministry Explored*, (London: SPCK, 2009)

Sykes, S and Booty, J (eds.) *The Study of Anglicanism*, (London: SPCK, 1988)

Thompson, M., *Soul Feast*, (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1995)

Wright, S., et al (eds) *A Preacher's Companion: Essays from the College of Preachers*, (London: Bible Reading Fellowship, 2004)

Year 2 (RDM II)

Main Focus

- Worship and Liturgy
- Contemporary Culture
- Mission and Fresh Expressions
- History of Church of England
- Either Biblical studies and church history or Christian doctrine and ethics

Assignments (full details in assignment package)

- Worship
- Mission
- Long Placement report
- Either Biblical studies and church history or Christian doctrine and ethics

Placements

- Long Placement

Journal

- Four journal entries and meetings with Journal Tutor

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The following list provides an indication of reading materials appropriate to the module:

- Church of England, *Mission-Shaped Church*, (London: Church House Publishing, 2004)
- Elliott, C., *Comfortable Compassion*: (London: Hodder 1987)
- Foster, R., *Prayer*, (London: Hodder, 1992)
- Jones, C., et al (eds) *The Study of Liturgy*, (London: SPCK, 1978)
- Sykes, S. and Booty, J. (eds.), *The Study of Anglicanism*, (London: SPCK, 1988)
- Early, M. and Myers, G. (eds), *Common Worship Today - An Illustrated Guide to Common Worship*, (London: HarperCollins, 2001)

Year 3 (RDM III)

Main Focus

- Pastoral Care and theology
- Adult Learning
- Grief and Loss

Assignments (*full details in assignment package*)

- Adult Learning
- Pastoral placement report including journal entries
- Grief and Loss

Placement

- Pastoral Placement

Journal

- Four journal entries

Literature:

- Ballard, P. and Pritchard, J.: *Practical Theology in Action. Christian Thinking in the Service of Church and Society*,. (London: SPCK, 1996.)
- Green, L.: *Let's do Theology. A Pastoral Cycle Resource Book*, (London: Mowbray, 1990)
- Tidball, D., *Skilful Shepherds. Explorations in pastoral theology*, (Ebbw Vale: Apollos 1997 Second Edition)
- Woodward, J. and Pattison, S. (Ed.), *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 2000)

Assessment

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Assessment during the entire period of your training will take a series of different forms and will include feedback reports from your home incumbent and placement incumbent.

Assessment on the Certificate of Theology evening class modules will involve the presentation and marking of essay and assignment work as set through the module concerned.

Assessment on the RDMs will be based on the presentation of a portfolio of learning consisting of a journal reflecting on your formation, reports on placements undertaken and a set of assignments.

Both elements of this assessment process count towards the successful completion of the Certificate course. Please be sure to keep to the deadlines for assignments, and not to exceed the specified word-count by more than 10%. Under the rules of our validating university, late or over-length submission attracts penalties. For full details of these regulations see the 'Moodle' database at <http://swmtc.moodle.overnetdata.com>.

At the end of the first year of training there will be an informal review of your formation with the SWMTC Director of Reader Training. At the end of your second and third year SWMTC will write a formal report of which you will have sight before it is forwarded to the Diocese.

SWMTC Marking Policy for RiT Assignments

In order that a piece of work can be satisfactorily marked:

Tutors marking assignments will undertake

- To mark according to the University of Exeter Undergraduate Generic Mark Scheme as applied to Certificate (Level 1) work
- To assess work with close regard to the expectations and advice laid out in the assignment guidance
- To mark in such a way as to encourage and facilitate continued learning
- To provide full written feedback on the SWMTC cover sheet appended.
- To give/send the hard copy back to the RiT having given the mark to the Dean of Studies
- To mark the work within four term-time weeks of its being submitted or by the next RDM day.

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RiTs submitting work will undertake

- To the best of their ability to follow the guidelines laid out in each individual assignment
- To submit an electronic copy of the assignment to the SWMTC Academic Administrator (academic@swmtc.org.uk) by the deadline date (Placements assignments which require feedback forms do not need to be submitted electronically and can either be submitted to the Director of Reader Training or the SWMTC Office.)
- To submit all of the Journal entries and Self-assessment form to the Director of Reader Training at the last RDM day of the year (12th May 2012).
- To follow the guidelines about coversheets, bibliography and referencing attached to each assignment
- To be in touch with the Director of Reader Training as directly and promptly as possible if a deadline is missed.

The Learning Journal and Journal Tutor

Theological reflection is a constructed, ordered, reflective enquiry on the interaction of one's self (person and role) and one's context (God, the world, neighbour) which produces a conceptual framework which leads to action. Wesley Carr (1997).

The purpose of keeping a learning journal is to help you to reflect in depth on your experience and learning during your training. Keeping the journal is in itself an act of theological reflection.

'Theology' is essentially about the relationship between God, human beings and the world. Traditionally 'doing theology' has been seen as a cerebral activity - about seeking understanding through reason - theology as science. However, a solely cerebral or rational approach leaves out whole areas of what it means to be a human being - emotional, psychological, sexual, social, political, and institutional. Through the learning journal you are asked to reflect on the whole of your experience - *feelings, thoughts, actions and context*.

Your journal is your personal learning record, but you will also be able to use it in your conversations with your journal tutor to help you both reflect on your 'learning journey'. You will be assigned a Journal Tutor for your first two years and you will receive contact details at the beginning of the course. It will be your responsibility to make contact with your Journal Tutor and meet up with him or her four times a year. Before your meeting you are expected to send or email your latest journal to him/her.

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The role of the Journal Tutor is to:

- encourage the Reader-in-Training to reflect upon his/her personal development, growth in personal awareness, relationships with others, and spiritual life
- explore the impact of the Course on the faith of the Reader-in-Training and her/his understanding of the Church, vocation, and ministry
- enable a learning process to take place as the Reader-in-Training responds to and reflects on the experiences of training and preparation for Reader ministry
- Journal Tutors will not be responsible for setting or marking any written work, nor for the care of the candidate's family.

It should be clear therefore that this is not a private confidential devotional journal (though you may also want to keep one of those). We regard it as a piece of 'formative' work, which is part of your RDM (Reader Development Module) work - it needs to be done because it is important, but it will not be given a mark.

Keeping a learning journal is an accumulative process - commenting and reflecting on the changes and developments in your learning over the year whilst focussing upon specific events, encounters and theological learning. It is a way of helping you to integrate your learning by asking you to make connections and links between different aspects of your training.

You will be asked to reflect upon the Residential weekends and three other specific aspects of the course. You will hand in the completed copy to the Director of Reader Training at the end of the year so that the Reader Training Team can confirm - to both the Board of Studies and the Warden of Readers - that it has been completed satisfactorily. In Year 1 each entry will be 450 words and in Year 2 entries of 500 words. Further details will be given at the start of the year.

The Learning Threads of the RDM modules I-III:

Holding the Reader Training course together are what we understand to be 'threads' that stitch together and underpin the modules and sessions you will be involved in. There are four clear threads that weave in and around your experience as a RiT.

THREAD 1: Spiritual Formation

Core Aim

To introduce you to some of the areas in which formation and growth occur during the lifelong journey of Christian discipleship so that you will be able to engage maturely and appropriately with your own personal faith story and in so doing enable, encourage and nourish spiritual growth in others.

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This strand picks up the area of formation. It is about the growing of the inner person into the fullness of God's call, responding with every aspect of our lives. Training is a complex process which involves many areas of learning, development, growth, challenge and change. This strand in particular integrates theological learning and development, spiritual and ministerial formation and the practical realities of Reader Ministry. The RiT is encouraged to develop and further his/her own sense of vocation, learning to reflect theologically on the breadth and depth of experiences and situations

THREAD 2: Preaching, Liturgy and Teaching in a Learning Church

Core Aim

To introduce you to some of the issues surrounding preaching, liturgy and adult learning so that you will be able to engage in skilful reflective practice on these key aspects of your ministry.

This strand picks up the core skills of licensed Reader ministry: preaching, teaching, devising and delivering acts of worship, and encourages an exploration of these skills relating them to context and tradition. How far is communication an aspect of power and control? What about the idea of authority? Should we preach at all? How can we work with others in preaching and (especially) liturgy. What are the connections between preaching, liturgy, teaching and pastoral care? In what other ways is careful communication relevant to a learning church and a caring church?

THREAD 3: Good Practice

Core Aim

To introduce you to good practice in all aspects of your ministry.

This strand deals with the central issue of good practice in all aspects of ministry. It recognises and addresses areas of vulnerability and challenge and sets down guidelines and introduces tools which will help Readers to engage with a wide range of pastoral issues in their ministry.

THREAD 4: Reading the world and relating it to the mission of God

Core Aim

To introduce you to some of the skills involved in making connections between the Christian faith and the contemporary world, especially as it impacts on the mission and ministry of the Church of England.

This hermeneutical strand deals with the practical question of exploring the contemporary context for theology. It links closely with Thread 2 in that many of the issues will be used to create the basis for preaching (RDMI), other acts of communication (RDMII) and contextualising pastoral ministry (RDMIII). It will

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also firmly locate the Church in England in its historical and liturgical roots, while showing the connection between these roots and our present situation.

MOVEMENT OF THE THREADS

As far as possible each thread should move from stressing the understanding of the individual trainee (RDMI), to collaboration with others and appreciating the diversity of positions on contentious issues (RDMII), and on to the enabling of others (RDMIII).

Post Licensing Training & Working Agreements

At the end of your second year of training, before your admission and licensing, you will be asked to establish a working agreement with the parish, team or mission community in which you will serve. This working agreement covers your first year of licensed ministry, which is also your third year of training with SWMTC. This will be arranged with, and guided by, the Archdeaconry Warden of Readers and the Reader Administrator.

When you have completed your third year of training, you will then be invited to become a member of a post-licensing training group in your archdeaconry. These groups provide an opportunity to reflect upon the experience of ministry and offer support amongst other newly licensed ministers. You will also become eligible to participate in elements of the Continuing Ministerial Education programme of the Diocese.

Library resources

SWMTC's library is serviced by the Administrator and Honorary Librarian. You will be issued with a library card which enables you to borrow from this library, and Bishop Phillpott's Library in Truro. There is a £10 annual fee for this membership which widens access to books and resources. For Readers-in-Training, this fee is paid by the Diocese. By planning your work in advance you can order library books by phoning or emailing the office, and these can then be brought to a Course event. If books are needed urgently they can be posted to you, but if postage rises to more than £10 per year we will have to charge you the excess. Books can be returned either in person, or through your Staff Tutor. The loan period is usually two months, but if a book is in demand you are asked to consider other users. Books can be recalled if they have been issued for more than four weeks. All books must be returned at the end of the June unless specific arrangements are made with the Librarian for an extension. This is in order to allow a stock take to be done in July.

There are currently two theological libraries in the library group:

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The Bishop Phillpotts Library, Diocesan House, Truro (c 8,000 volumes).
Opening hours: Monday to Friday, 9.00 - 5.00. Tel: 01872 262228
Librarian Sue Smith.
Email: phillpott.library@ukonline.co.uk or for urgent attention BPLib@aol.com

The South West Ministry Training Course Library (c 8,000 volumes).
Honorary Librarian David Robottom. Email: library@swmtc.org.uk
The Librarian normally works 9.00 - 5.00 on Tuesdays. The library is often used for meetings and teaching, so it is wise to phone the administrator to check that it is free when you want to visit.

Books - finding, borrowing and returning:

The combined library catalogue is available online at <http://swmtc.heritage4.com/> and can be searched for book availability. At each evening class or RDM Day, there is a person nominated to operate the computer catalogue on behalf of those students present. He/she will be pleased to log the issue or return of books to you or to reserve a book which is currently on loan.

Protocol on the use of the Internet and email

All students are expected to have access to the Internet and email services. All written work should be word-processed. Please see our website for a range of information and resources: www.swmtc.org.uk.

SWMTC uses Moodle™ as its course management system for course resources and records: <http://swmtc.moodle.overnetdata.com/>.

The Course is dependent on electronic communications for its efficiency. It is essential that you can construct, send and receive emails with attachments and that you regularly check your mailbox. Email is an effective means of dispersing information to all those associated with the Course and is a valuable means by which matters can be discussed. This is particularly helpful as staff and students are spread over a wide geographical area.

The following code of good practice has been adopted by the staff of SWMTC, and students are asked to follow the same protocols:

1. All emails must have clear and concise heading about their subjects.
2. All emails about students must be headed, 'Strictly confidential, student note' or some such phrase. The name of the student should not be revealed until the email has been opened.
3. Emails should normally be confined to a single student.

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4. Attachments should be placed in an obvious, standard place.
5. Where an email and/or attachment is to be forwarded, the email should clearly state the names of those to whom it is to be circulated.
6. Emails and attachments should only contain such information as we would be prepared to show to any of the persons mentioned in the transmission.
7. The 'Blind copy' function should be used when sending out group emails.
8. The following disclaimer should be included on all emails generated by the Course and added to all emails to be forwarded by the Course:
'The information contained in this email message is intended only for the named person, firm or company to whom it is addressed. Such information may be confidential and privileged and no mistake in transmission is intended to waive or compromise such privilege.'

If you have received this transmission in error, please destroy the email and any copies of it, and notify us immediately by telephone on 01392 724404 or by email at admin@swmtc.org.uk. Your co-operation is appreciated.'

For ease of use, this disclaimer should be entered in the 'signature' function of the email program.

9. Every email and attachment must be read thoroughly to ensure that it conforms to the above.

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USEFUL NAMES AND ADDRESSES:

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