



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

## **Ministry Council**

# **Inspection Report and Reader Moderation**

**St Mellitus College  
and  
Dioceses of Chelmsford  
and London**

January-March 2009

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## GLOSSARY

SMC	St Mellitus College
NTMTC	North Thames Ministry Training Course
SPTC	St Pauls Theological Centre
SEITE	South East Institute for Theological Education
HTB	Holy Trinity Brompton
CME	Continuing Ministerial Education
FOAG	Faith and Order Advisory Group

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## THE INSPECTIONS FRAMEWORK

On behalf of the sponsoring churches, inspection teams are asked to assess the fitness for purpose of the training institution for preparing candidates for ordained and licensed ministry and to make recommendations for the enhancement of the life and work of the institution.

Within the structures of the Church of England, this report is prepared for the House of Bishops acting through the Ministry Council.

In coming to their judgements, inspectors are asked to use the following outcomes with regard to the overall outcome and individual criteria:

### **Confidence**

Overall outcome: a number of recommendations, none of which question the generally high standards found in the inspection.

Criteria level: aspects of an institution's life which show good or best practice.

### **Confidence with qualifications**

Overall outcome: A number of recommendations, including one or more of substance that questions the generally acceptable standards found in the inspection and which can be rectified or substantially addressed by the institution in the coming 12 months.

Criteria level: aspects of an institution's life which show either (a) at least satisfactory practice but with some parts which are not satisfactory or (b) some unsatisfactory practice but where the institution has the capacity to address the issues within 12 months.

### **No confidence**

Overall outcome: A number of recommendations, including one or more of substance which raise significant questions about the standards found in the inspection and the capacity of the institution to rectify or substantially address these in the coming 12 months.

Criteria level: aspects of an institution's life which show either (a) generally not satisfactory practice or (b) some unsatisfactory practice where it is not evident that the institution can rectify the issues within the coming 12 months.



# THE REPORT OF THE INSPECTION OF ST MELLITUS COLLEGE WITH READER MODERATION FOR THE DIOCESES OF LONDON AND CHELMSFORD

April 2009

## SUMMARY

### Introduction

St Mellitus College (SMC) began in September 2007 when two existing institutions, North Thames Ministerial Training College (NTMTC) and St Paul's Theological Centre (SPTC), joined forces in providing non-residential training for ordination within the Church of England and for the licensed ministry of Readers, as well as for other lay students.

The College operates across the dioceses of London and Chelmsford with centres in South Kensington, East London and Chelmsford. At the time of the inspection, January – March 2009, there were 72 ordinands in training.

Training for Readers in the diocese of Chelmsford is delivered in partnership with SMC. The first year of training is fully integrated, with Reader students studying alongside ordinands and there were 12 such Readers in training at the time of the Moderation. The second year of Reader training is delivered in the diocese and there were 11 such Readers in the second year of training. At the time of the Moderation there were 23 Readers in training in total from the diocese of Chelmsford.

The diocese of London has an independent Reader training scheme which has not had any involvement from St Mellitus. This is based on the five Episcopal Areas, Edmonton with Two Cities (two areas combined); Kensington; Stepney and Willesden. In the papers submitted for the Moderation, there were 23 Readers in training in the autumn term of 2008. Actual numbers during the time of Moderation, as the following term's programme got underway, were 29 with a further ten in training still within the discernment process. The variance related to the methods of gathering statistics and timing of formal selection as well as to the nature of Area programmes. New training structures are being considered for the future.

## Summary of outcomes

The inspection team regards St Mellitus College and Reader Training in the Dioceses of London and Chelmsford as fit for purpose for preparing candidates respectively for ordained and licensed ministry.

<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>OUTCOME : ST MELLITUS</b>
A. Aims, Objectives and Evaluation of the Institution	Confidence
B. Relationships with Other Institutions	Confidence with qualifications
C. Governance, Management, Constitution and Organisation	Confidence with qualifications
D. Accommodation	Confidence
E. Community and Corporate Life	Confidence with qualifications
F. Common Worship	Confidence with qualifications
G. Ministerial, Personal and Spiritual Formation	Confidence
H. Teaching and Learning: Content, Method and Resources	Confidence with qualifications
J. Practical and Pastoral Theology	Confidence
K. Training in Public Worship	Confidence
L. Teaching Staff	Confidence
M. Administrative Staff	Confidence
N. Students	Confidence

<b>Overall Outcome</b>	<b>Confidence with qualifications</b>
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<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>OUTCOME : CHELMSFORD READER TRAINING</b>
A. Aims, Objectives and Evaluation of the Institution	Confidence
B. Relationships with Other Institutions	Confidence with qualifications
C. Governance, Management, Constitution and Organisation	Confidence with qualifications
D. Accommodation	Confidence
E. Community and Corporate Life	Confidence with qualifications
F. Common Worship	Confidence with qualifications
G. Ministerial, Personal and Spiritual Formation	Confidence with qualifications
H. Teaching and Learning: Content, Method and Resources	Confidence with qualifications
J. Practical and Pastoral Theology	Confidence
K. Training in Public Worship	Confidence
L. Teaching Staff	Confidence
M. Administrative Staff	Confidence
N. Students	Confidence

<b>Overall Outcome</b>	<b>Confidence with qualifications</b>
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<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>OUTCOME : LONDON READER TRAINING</b>
A. Aims, Objectives and Evaluation of the Institution	Confidence with qualifications
B. Relationships with Other Institutions	Confidence with qualifications
C. Governance, Management, Constitution and Organisation	Confidence with qualifications
D. Accommodation	Confidence
E. Community and Corporate Life	Confidence
F. Common Worship	Confidence with qualifications
G. Ministerial, Personal and Spiritual Formation	Confidence
H. Teaching and Learning: Content, Method and Resources	Confidence with qualifications
J. Practical and Pastoral Theology	Confidence
K. Training in Public Worship	Confidence
L. Teaching Staff	Confidence
M. Administrative Staff	Confidence
N. Students	Confidence

<b>Overall Outcome</b>	<b>Confidence with qualifications</b>
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### **General observations**

SMC is an exciting new venture. It combines the wealth of experience of NTMTC in non-residential training for ordination with the energy of SPTC for new forms of theological education such as mixed-mode training.

There has been a period of considerable transition since the last inspection for NTMTC, including the move from Oak Hill and staff changes which involved the present Director covering two roles, with the help of other staff, for some time. It is to their credit that this part of the Course has emerged in renewed form and that there is energy for continuing development.

Overall we were impressed by the breadth of training and quality of teaching available at SMC. This belied the stories about a predominance of one tradition, particularly in the mixed-mode training based at SPTC, because of the strong links with Holy Trinity Brompton.

The Inspection was combined with Reader Moderation for the dioceses of London and Chelmsford. We highlight a number of areas where training for Readers needs to be given more prominence within SMC and diocesan training programmes.

### **Response to the last inspection**

This is the first inspection for SMC. Some of the recommendations of the last inspection for NTMTC no longer apply with the move from the Oak Hill campus. Others on management issues are now contained within SMC. The need for chaplaincy provision was dealt with and for a staff member responsible for worship. There are now two chaplains.

All the recommendations of the previous Chelmsford Reader Moderation were assiduously tackled, enabling the course to become a 2 year course, through the link with SMC and the inclusion of Readers in Year 1 residentials. A programme for tutors and for integrating post-licensing and post-ordination training has been pursued in the diocese.

The response to the 2002 Moderation in London was mixed. Progress was made with the common selection procedure. However, the area courses have continued virtually independently and vary in their approach. Significantly the Moderation took place just as the diocese was considering new options for the future. We comment on these at paragraph 22.

## **Strengths**

The strengths of **St Mellitus College** lie in

- the opportunities for new forms of training (mixed-mode) to suit 'fresh expressions' of church life;
- the ability to provide this alongside training for more traditional forms of ministry, ordained and lay;
- the breadth and quality of staff and teaching;
- the mixed community of staff and students across age, gender, church tradition;
- the commitment to excellence and fulfilling a new vision for training for ministry in London and Chelmsford;
- the active backing and participation of both diocesan bishops;
- the energy of a young institution.

The strengths of **Chelmsford Reader Training** lie in:

- the integrated training with SMC;
- the comprehensive nature of the training pre and post licensing;
- the educational standards;
- the commitment of diocesan staff to the training of Readers.

The strengths of **London Reader Training** lie in:

- the quality of Reader formation in the area schemes;
- the ability of local teaching staff;
- the commitment to a more integrated approach with SMC for the future.

## **Areas for attention**

The areas for attention by **St Mellitus College** are:

- the completion of work on compliance issues and personnel matters for all staff, core and non-core;
- the increased provision of role models for Readers and, particularly at SPTC, for women in training as priests;
- a greater focus on formation for Readers;

- Chaplaincy provision for SPTC and greater clarity about the role of the chaplains;
- the need for the daily office as a compulsory provision during residential elements of training;
- improved academic administration by teaching staff for marking of work and course planning to ensure fewer delays;
- the inclusion of spouses and families in the wider college community;
- provision of staff development in methods of adult education;
- the use of teaching space;
- the finance and fundraising required to meet the vision and provide new premises for all staff.

The areas for attention by Chelmsford Reader Training are:

- the role of the tutor in both years of training;
- the balance of the second year of training
- the need, with SMC, to address formation and role modelling for Readers.

The areas for attention by London Reader Training are:

- the need for more coherence, sharing of resources and quality control across the diocese, given the number and small size of the area schemes;
- the wisdom of integration with SMC for the delivery of part of the teaching programme;
- with SMC, the logistics and location of training centres in any proposed new scheme;
- governance, administrative and personnel issues at diocesan and area level;
- the place and purpose of Reader ministry in the diocese's mission.



## INTRODUCTION

- 1 St Mellitus College (SMC), named after the first Bishop of London (died c. 624), whose diocese then included Essex, is a recent initiative of the Bishops of London and Chelmsford. Their aim is to bring together resources for theological teaching and ministerial training across the region covering their two dioceses. This is clearly in line with current directions in theological training.
- 2 Effectively SMC came into being in September 2007 when the two existing institutions, North Thames Ministerial Training College and St Paul's Theological Centre, joined forces in providing non-residential training for ordination within the Church of England and for the licensed ministry of Readers, as well as for other lay students. The link became more formal in March 2008, when the two institutions became the Constituent Members of SMC with the adoption of a dedicated Memorandum and Articles of Association.
- 3 The partnership is distinctive in providing mixed-mode training for ordination, including Ordained Pioneer Ministry as well as the more standard forms of non-residential training. These students train in effect full time. They attend one teaching day per week at the St Paul's Centre and all the residentials (7 weekends and one week). They are encouraged to put aside at least one day a week for private study. The remainder of their time is spent on placement under supervision, sometimes in a context which is a new expression of church.
- 4 Of those in training as Readers from the Diocese of Chelmsford most first undertake the two-year Christian discipleship course in the diocese. Occasionally students progress to the next stage after one year of the Discipleship Course. Exemption from both years is given to those who have completed an equivalent, or higher level, of theological study. There follows a foundation year at SMC training alongside those in the first year of ordination training. Separate provision is then made within the diocese for a further year of training.
- 5 The Diocese of London makes provision for the training of Readers in four separate courses, based on its Episcopal Areas. Some of this is alongside others in training for other forms of lay ministry. However, at the time of Inspection and Moderation, discussions were already advanced about new possibilities and best practice for the future. The results are likely to include some integration with SMC (see para. 21-2).
- 6 There are 72 ordinands in training for Church of England ministry at SMC and one ordained person sponsored by a bishop from another province, as well as 23 Readers in training from Chelmsford and 3 students on private study. There is an almost even divide between women and men amongst the ordinands with 38 women and 35 men. The Readers in training are less balanced with 22 women and 1 man. There are a further 4 students

formally registered but a number of other non-ordinands, up to 28, train jointly at the weekly sessions for other forms of lay ministry or audit courses at SPTC in whole or part.

- 7 In the diocese of London there are 29 Readers in training with a further 10 in training still within the discernment process. In the diocese of Chelmsford as well as the 12 in their first year with SMC, there are 11 in their second year.
- 8 The Inspection and Moderation has been a complex exercise given the nature and stages of the various institutions. As a Team of six Inspectors/ Moderators we have worked from written submissions and visits to the institutions, including observation of teaching, interviews with individuals and other relevant meetings. There was a Team presence at each of the three residential weekends.
- 9 Prior to the Inspection a meeting was held with the relevant staff of Ministry Division and local Moderators to clarify the Moderation of Reader Training, given the size of the task and the amount of territory to be covered. It was agreed that the Moderation should cover SMC as a deliverer of Reader training; comment on the plans of the Diocese of London to make increasing use of SMC in the future; the differentiation of Reader and ordained ministry and training; training in the diocese of London, including samples from the Area schemes; and training in the diocese of Chelmsford as delivered by SMC and including the diocesan additions. We do not, therefore, comment in depth on each individual scheme within London. We do draw significant attention to the needs of Readers within the context of training in the region.
- 10 We noted the special topics identified in the National Moderation Report for comment in any Reader Moderation – ‘ministering in a mission church’; the Reader in a listening and learning church; the Reader in worship; the Reader in Education. These emphasise the context for Reader ministry of a mission church, with worship at its heart.
- 11 It was also agreed that one report was preferable and, therefore, the structure used should be the format for Inspections with Reader material interwoven and additional paragraphs focused on Reader training as required.
- 12 Given the nature of the exercise we have worked as one team, not two, one for Reader and one for ordination training. This also helped to ensure the appropriate checks and balances, as the team included one Reader Moderator and one Inspector from the Diocese of London and another Moderator from the diocese of Chelmsford.
- 13 We are very grateful for the open welcome by staff and students in the College and in the two dioceses; for the comprehensive documentation; and for the assiduous response by SMC and others to requests for further information.

- 14 The resulting evidence which we were able to consider, in addition to the requisite SMC Submission (in accordance with the Handbook for the Inspection of Theological Colleges, Courses and Schemes, updated 2008 (*Inspections Handbook 2008*)) and the formal documentation required for Reader Moderation included:
- Feedback from students via year group meetings, email contact and individual interviews with a small cross section including student officers;
  - Observation of teaching and an interview with each of the core and associate staff teaching at SMC during the Inspection period. This involved coverage of each of the three teaching centres of SMC - St Paul's Onslow Square, Shadwell and Chelmsford and included community meal times and worship;
  - Interviews with the Dean of SMC, the Directors of NTMTC and SPTC, the Director of Finance for SMC, the Bursar for NTMTC, all the administrative staff; the Vicar General for the London College of Bishops, the London Diocesan Director of Professional Development, the Director of Reader Training for Chelmsford, a sample of placement supervisors and students on placement ;
  - Attendance at SMC full and core staff meetings, SPTC staff meetings, meetings of SMC Governing Body, of its Executive, and of its Academic Board as well as meetings of Directors of Reader Training in both dioceses and meetings and teaching sessions at each of the London Reader training centres, including contact with the relevant Warden of Readers and Director of training;
  - Exchanges with Moderators and examination of samples of students work.
- 15 Throughout the Inspection we have worked to the Criteria and praxis outlined in the *Inspections Handbook 2008*. We have included comment, as appropriate, on the special topics prescribed for Reader Moderation. We have also borne in mind the 'Learning Outcomes' listed in *Shaping the Future: New Patterns of training for Lay and Ordained* (Ministry Division of the Archbishops' Council 2006), pages 68-72 and a vision for good practice for Reader education (pages 33-58)
- 16 The Report that follows is written in relation to the Criteria (*Inspections Handbook 2008*, pages 50-55). The paragraphs follow the Criteria, which are printed in *italic* type. The Inspectors' comments are printed in normal type. The Recommendations are in **bold** type. In places we also **encourage** that action be taken.

## A AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE INSTITUTION

*Inspectors will consider to what extent the declared aims and objectives, strategies and policies of the institution correspond to the needs of the Churches, to the institution's own curriculum validation proposals and to accepted public and legal criteria.*

*A.i The aims and objectives of the institution should be appropriate to the preparation of ordinands for public ministry within the breadth of traditions of the sponsoring church.*

- 17 As a newly formed institution for the region, the aims of SMC are rightly ambitious in their desire to address the need for theological literacy, Christian mission and ministerial formation on a broad canvas. This applies to training methodology and the preparation for a variety of ministries, traditional and pioneer. The College's aim is to offer immersion in the Biblical story (and the centuries of Christian engagement with this), and contextual learning for students throughout a region which covers one of the world's great cities, one of the country's greatest expanding areas of housing, and rural Essex. (cf SMC submission page 3f) To meet this SMC continues to provide non-residential training for ordination and for Readers, as the original NTMTC did, and in addition adds mixed-mode training and some resources for CME for authorised ministry, as well as education and training for independent lay students.
- 18 We were impressed by these opportunities for breadth in training and by the enthusiasm of students, staff and members of committees for this task. SMC's submission document for Curriculum Validation (2008) presents a clear theological rationale for the aims of the curriculum. We were particularly impressed by the way in which the Church is understood as a herald, an anticipation and a sacramental sign of the kingdom of God, offering an outward looking, mission oriented understanding of the Church.
- 19 For Readers in training from Chelmsford this is amplified by the second year which is spent on placement and in tutorial groups, giving opportunity for more localised learning and formation.
- 20 In London the picture is more complicated. As the last Moderation report indicated, there is a lack of a clearly agreed and well communicated vision and praxis for the diocese as a whole, given the separate focus on the Episcopal Areas and the small numbers in training in each scheme. At the time of the Moderation the breakdown of numbers across the areas was:
  - Edmonton and Two Cities: 9 in total over a three year entry period sharing training for other lay ministries with a further 29 people;
  - Stepney: 12 in total on a rolling programme, 5 of whom began in 2007 and 6 in 2008 on a programme focusing solely on Readers;

- Kensington: technically only 1 in training who is in the first year, but a further 10, who are still in the discernment and selection process, are training alongside this candidate;
- Willesden: 7 in total with five of those due to be accredited and licensed later in 2009, leaving only 2. Six other lay people have been studying the doctrine module this last term but they are not intending to become Readers.

However, there was evidence in the papers and from the discussions about the future of more integrated aims and objectives with the possibilities of offering some training in combination with SMC. Our overall focus has therefore been on these.

21 Three options have been considered by the Diocese and SMC for Reader training:

- a) a variation on the present system of area schemes which are virtually independent of one another, of SMC and of other training bodies, but linked to area mission and ministry policy;
- b) a training scheme of three years which builds on the area system with some teaching and formation in each area and some with SMC;
- c) a variation of the two year Chelmsford route for Reader training with one year fully integrated with SMC training for ordinands in their first year, including all residentials, and the second year of formation managed by the diocese.

The aim is to address the questions of quality control for training across the diocese; to draw on the wider resources available as well as high quality local resources; to follow up the encouragement for accreditation of Reader Courses in *Shaping the Future*; to produce Readers competent as lay theologians and adult educators for mission and ministry; and to do all this within reasonable financial criteria.

22 From various discussions of the diocesan working group, the College of Bishops, SMC, Reader staff and officers, option (a) was the clear favourite with one area having seriously considered option (c). We saw the advantages of option (b), which allows integration with SMC and across the diocese, without losing the local expertise and emphasis, which are strengths of the present system (see paras 107-10). It does increase the current budget, but it is a more cost effective way of addressing the issues than option (c). It also struck the Inspectors as the most realistic in terms of SMC teaching resources and numbers in year groups; and in terms of the ministerial aim for Readers in the diocese. Choices will have to be made as a result by SMC and the diocese on the number and location of teaching centres (see para 55 and 57). Ideally the whole diocese would follow the same pattern. If one area chooses differently, practical questions of location and finance will need to be faced as well as the rationale for the different type of training. The Chelmsford model of training for example,

unlike London, encompasses a diocesan vision which foresees some Readers in charge of parishes.

## Recommendation 1

**We recommend that SMC invite the London College of Bishops to explore together the provision of a three year training scheme for Readers, building on the present area system, with some teaching and formation in the Episcopal Areas and some with SMC; and that any exceptions should have a clear ministerial rationale underpinning them.**

*A.ii There should be evidence that the current, published statements on training policy produced by the various denominational bodies have been suitably integrated into the training programme.*

- 23 SMC by its very nature is a response to *Formation for Ministry in a Learning Church* (CHP 2003), commonly known as the Hind Report. Through its constituent members it forms its own cluster within the region and relates to a number of the other educational institutions in the area such as King's College London, Middlesex University and centres within London diocese such as St Ethelburga's Centre for Peace and Reconciliation. Relationships are being built at the conversational level with Oak Hill College.
- 24 The main characteristics of ordained and other public ministries, described in the SMC submission, page 7ff, Character, Spirituality, Knowledge and Skills, form the basis for a well-balanced curriculum. This builds on theological foundations which are the emphasis of Year 1 and goes on to develop in Years 2 and 3 an action-reflection, contextual model of learning. This is in accord with current policy for selection and training for Reader ministry as well as for ordination.
- 25 In describing the threefold order of ministry, the priest is seen as representative 'of Christ to the world and the church, a public reminder of Christ who is the kingdom embodied' (SMC Submission page 5).
- 26 The central theme of the diaconal ministry is traditional, focusing on a service and an enabling ministry. We **encourage** SMC to engage with recent scholarly thinking about the diaconate, especially in the thought of J.N. Collins, who questions the emphasis on 'humble service'. This thinking has been taken account of in the recent revision to the Church of England's rite of ordination of deacons, and is also discussed in the very recent FOAG publication, 'The Mission and Ministry of the Whole Church'. The shift in thinking is away from understanding 'diakonia' as 'humble service' to 'commissioned agency'. The focus is on authorisation of the ministry, not its specific content. We also **encourage** SMC to develop more explicitly the way in which the principles behind the threefold order of bishop, priest and deacon and the ministry of the whole people of God are applied to the ministry of Readers. The SMC Submission concentrates on

ordained ministry in much of its discussion of these issues (SMC submission page 4ff).

- 27 We acknowledge the achievement of the College in developing mixed-mode training, particularly in the way in which it engages with new forms of church and new patterns of training. Through its distinctive approach, it more than realizes the aims of the curriculum.
- 28 We **encourage** the College to ensure that the balance of reflective learning for formation and theological study is maintained throughout the delivery of curriculum. We believe that the theological undergirding and the overall pattern of the curriculum can enable students to become the good reflective practitioners of contextual theology which is the College's aim.
- 29 *Shaping the Future* and its recommendations on patterns of training for lay and ordained ministry are explicitly at the root of the Diploma in Higher Education Ministry (DipHE Ministry) which was initially validated in 2006. This is integrated into the whole model (Diocesan and SMC) of Reader training for Chelmsford and forms part of the discussion for training Readers in London for the future.

*A.iii There should be evidence of action taken in response to the previous inspection Report and any follow-up.*

- 30 This is, of course, the first inspection of St Mellitus as a College, though the North Thames Ministerial Training Course was inspected in 2002. Some of the recommendations in 2002 arose from the relationship between the Course and Oak Hill College on whose premises the Course met. These recommendations are no longer relevant. Recommendations about financial management, contracts, the pattern of residential weekends and the student workload are now covered within SMC, and similarly the roles of administrative staff are now part of the overall management processes of SMC. As recommended, there is now chaplaincy provision and a member of staff with responsibility for supervising worship.
- 31 Chelmsford Reader moderation last took place in 2002 and all the recommendations were met. As a result the length of the course has been reduced to two years. There are now lay tutors. There are plenary days for tutors and a programme of integrating post licensing and post ordination training was planned as a result..
- 32 The previous London Reader moderation took place in 2002 and the response has been mixed. A common selection procedure was put in place and the financial implications of training have been made clearer. The administration of the courses in the Episcopal areas has been tightened but it is dependent on those running courses and varies accordingly. The proposed substantial partnership with SMC will have implications for sharing with the training of other ministries in the areas (see para 126 and Recommendation 16). CME, which is at present provided locally with some diocesan events at SPTC, provides a foundation to be developed further in the integration with SMC and across the diocese. There is an

ongoing task of developing the role of Readers and the ways in which they are used in the diocese. With between 850 and 1000 priests in the diocese there has been less impetus to use Readers. There is now, however, a need to raise the profile of Reader ministry and develop their capacity for adult education and mission.

**The inspection team has confidence in SMC and the Diocese of Chelmsford's Reader training and confidence with qualifications in the Diocese of London' Reader training with regard to Criterion A, Aims, Objectives and Achievements of the Institution.**

## **B RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER INSTITUTIONS**

*Inspectors will examine how the institution relates to other educational provision (including any partner university) and to the Churches and secular organisations in its locality, with particular reference to regional groupings of providers of theological education.*

*B.i The terms of academic and validation/accreditation arrangements with universities should be fair and appropriate to an institution offering training and formation for candidates for ordained ministry.*

33 SMC, and through it the diocese of Chelmsford, relates to a variety of training partners within the region. For validation or the provision of accredited courses the principal institutions are Middlesex University and King's College London. The BA/Dip HE in Contextual Theology/DipHE Ministry are taught in SMC and accredited by Middlesex, with a link tutor. A number of students study for the MA in Theology and Ministry at King's College, London. This course is taught and administered by King's, where three of the SMC staff are also Visiting Lecturers and teach on this programme. There is a full discussion of academic arrangements in Section H. We noted the question raised by SMC about a potential need in the future for a greater variety of pathways.

34 Of the individual schemes in the diocese of London, only the course for Edmonton and the two Cities is validated externally, with accreditation from the University of Lampeter. Relationships are good. As the Area Bishop of Edmonton commented in his submission, there is benefit from 'a constant monitoring by staff from a well respected and well established department of theology, access to the universities library and other resources and some extra finance'. We understand his concern that the quality and emphasis of this training should not be lost in any new proposals.

*B.ii The institution should show signs of drawing as much benefit as may be possible from the demands and resources of universities in teaching quality assessment, staff development and the promotion of research.*

35 Further co-operation happens with the King's Department for Education and Professional Studies. The associate staff, a body which continues to

grow, includes distinguished visiting professors, two of whom who were teaching during the period of Inspection. There is an excellent breadth of teaching and academic standard. SMC make good use of its neighbouring universities and central position. More attention should be paid to staff development in adult education to ensure that the education design matches the academic quality (see para 123).

*B.iii There should be evidence of effective engagement with Churches, other faith communities and secular organisations in the locality such as to enhance preparation for public ministry.*

36 In the reorganisation of courses, care has been taken to ensure that the teaching on multifaith issues and on spirituality, some of which previously formed part of Year 3 for NTMTC, has been incorporated into the new system. The desire, articulated in the Criterion above, for effective engagement with others in the locality needs to be interpreted mainly in the context of placements and students' local churches, where such engagement is encouraged, given the limited amount of centre based time for all students whether in one of the London centres or in SMC with Chelmsford.

37 At the same time we saw good use of local contacts in the seminar slots at residential weekends as well as in the commitment to growing relationships with the London Centre for Spirituality, the Contextual Theology Centre in East London and St Ethelburga's Centre for Peace and Reconciliation. SMC identifies part of its ecumenical task as to enable relationships between the older and newer churches, in particular the African and Asian churches in the capital. We saw this in embryo at the weekly mixed-mode meetings at SPTC.

*B.iv The institution should demonstrate commitment to effective partnership with the other providers of theological education in the region.*

38 Of the other bodies involved in theological education Oak Hill is the most evident within the region and, in the wider area, the South East Institute for Theological Education (SEITE). Relationships with Oak Hill are developing and the door is open from SMC with an expressed hope for collaboration in the future and an example such as a graduate seminar quoted. We wish to **encourage** such cooperative ventures and further action on the open door approach. Some shared staff development already happens with SEITE.

39 In each of the diocese of London's schemes we saw good use of able clergy and lay people as theological educators. We are pleased that there are options for this to continue in the various new proposals. However, we believe those teaching from the diocese would benefit from a more structured approach to staff development and more contact with others teaching in related areas. The new proposals will widen the learning community for staff and students. It will also offer opportunities for further staff development for SMC and the training staff of the dioceses (see para 123 and Recommendation 15). We were impressed by the relationships of

all three training bodies under Inspection and Moderation with this one area of qualification.

**The inspection team has confidence with qualifications with regard to Criterion B, Relationships with other Institutions.**

## **C GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT, CONSTITUTION AND ORGANISATION**

*Inspectors will examine the role of the Governing Body and other bodies in the oversight and administration of the institution, taking particular note of the way decisions are made and implemented at different levels of the institution.*

*C.i There should be evidence of effective financial, administrative and management structures that facilitate the stated aims and objectives of the institution.*

- 40 The structure of SMC is in its formative years and still has a degree of complexity. The SMC Trust was formed in August 2007, taking over from the North Thames Ministerial Training Partnership which governed NTMTC. This brought together NTMTC and SPTC. However, SPTC retains a separate Board of Trustees as it engages in a number of other educational activities with Holy Trinity Brompton and the Alpha Network via, for example, SPTC's Saturday 'School of Theology' for lay students. SPTC teaching and any activity related to ordination training comes under the authority of the SMC Trustees as the body recognised by the House of Bishops for this purpose.
- 41 The Governing Body is appointed by the diocesan Bishops with one representative appointed by the General Synod and chaired jointly by the two Bishops. A number of people, staff and trustees, drew attention to the fact that both Bishops usually attend. Such commitment has been significant in setting up a new college and helps ensure that the dioceses as well as the college are building on a common vision of theological education. **We encourage** this to be noted with the impending appointment of a new Bishop of Chelmsford.
- 42 The related structures of the Executive Committee of the SMC Board, and, for Academic Governance, the Academic Board, the Board of Studies and the Assessment Board are robust and meet both ecclesiastical and university requirements, but they are very new. Some boards, such as the Academic Board, though a continuation of the NTMTC Academic Board, only had their inaugural meeting as the SMC Board in the autumn of 2008. So it will be helpful to keep these under review. There is good representation of the dioceses; appropriate staff members are in attendance; and attention has recently been paid to student representation. As a result we were surprised that gender balance and ethnicity seem to have had less attention at this level. The main board has only one woman member. Understandably representation has been a key feature of appointments.

However, attention also needs to be paid to the range of expertise required. Greater clarity on the skills and experience, as well as representative functions needed for good governance will be important as the College develops. An audit process would help this.

## **Recommendation 2**

**We recommend that those appointing the Board of SMC and other structures of governance should give due consideration to:**

- **representation in terms of gender balance, ethnicity and Readers;**
- **a skills audit pending future appointments.**

- 43 In the diocese of Chelmsford, SMC is supplemented by a cohesive structure of governance in the Readers Committee and the Diocesan Ministerial Advisory Group. The Director of Reader Training is a key link both to these structures and to SMC where he is also a member of staff. Care needs to be taken not to overstretch the demands on his role. This will need to be noted if London Readers come into SMC in case there is an assumption that he can subsume responsibility for all Readers in training with SMC, including those from London, into his supervisory role.
- 44 Governance and management are more difficult in the diocese of London with four separate schemes for Reader training, however well each of those may function in their own right. This makes communication across the diocese complex. At its simplest level, getting accurate overall statistics centrally was not easy. We sensed this was symptomatic of the larger problem of general governance and oversight. We were glad to see a will to address this in the discussions for the future. As with Chelmsford one staff job is a key link, in this case the Vicar General for the London College of Bishops, who is also Director of Ministry, Director of Ordinands, Warden of Readers and a trustee of SMC. The post of Diocesan Co-ordinator of Readers disappeared in 2002 with the retirement of the post holder and the Vicar General does not have a secretary. His role is assisted by that of the Diocesan Director of Professional Development who convenes diocesan meetings of directors of training and by the Readers' Secretary.

## **Recommendation 3**

**We recommend that, for the governance of Readers in the diocese of London, the College of Bishops address and monitor:**

- **the role of Area Wardens and Directors of Training with the Warden of Readers and Director of Professional Development, paying particular attention to communication, administration and quality control across the diocese and in any future links with SMC ;**
- **the resulting governance and administrative needs for the area schemes, for example at the secretarial level.**

- 45 A Finance Director for SMC was appointed immediately prior to the beginning of the Inspection. This is a part time appointment, nominally one

day a week, and supplements the Bursar of NTMTC who, likewise, is employed for one day a week. The two appointments provide continuity for NTMTC and the necessary additional experienced staff oversight, as SMC becomes established and the medium to longer term needs become established (see para 153).

- 46 The financial task is considerable with fund raising of £5 to 6 million required for the proposed new centre at St Jude's Courtfield Gardens as well as the start up costs of SMC which are part of any new venture. The formation of SMC has depended upon the already existing resources of its two constituent parts, NTMTC and SPTC. This is as true of its financial base as its staff and student bodies. The shared premises with SPTC, and the willingness of SPTC to be the main arm of fundraising, are paramount for future plans. The current financial arrangements, including the way the Ministry Division grant is allocated within SMC and the balance of any shortfall in the accounts, are testimony to the commitment of SPTC to ordination training and to SMC. Success for the future is dependent on this approach to the partnership continuing and on meeting the financial goals.
- 47 Mixed-mode training and the comparative costs of office and teaching space in London have also raised new financial questions for staff and governors in terms of statutory grants handled by the Ministry Division. We witnessed an ongoing confusion about student costs in relation to contact teaching time and to comparative awards. The uncertainty for SMC focused on whether the distinctive nature of mixed-mode training and the amount of contact teaching time merited further consideration by the policy body. We appreciate the time spent by staff of the Ministry Division in discussion with SMC on this and the notice given of the conclusion by the financial panel. However we **encourage** SMC to ask the Finance Panel of Ministry Division to clarify in more detail the rationale behind the decision and look at whether there is any new question arising from the comparative contact hours and the level of grant.
- C.ii There should be evidence of a structured contribution made by the student body so that it plays an effective role in decision-making processes.*
- 48 Students are appropriately included in Governance and in feedback on course work (see para 160).
- C.iii There should be evidence that tutorial and administrative staff are able to fulfil their job descriptions both individually and corporately and are resourced to do so.*
- 49 Contracts and job descriptions are gradually being redrawn as staff become employed by SMC. Differences, for example of accountability, occur in some cases where the contract includes SPTC, such as for the Dean of SMC and the Director of SPTC. Staff members are generally able to fulfil their roles and are supported in this.

50 The system for non core staff/tutors is less robust and needs addressing. They lack detailed working agreements or job descriptions and they lack an appraisal system. This also applies for Reader training in both dioceses, where recruitment, working agreements and appraisal are often handled informally. (See Recommendation 4 below.)

*C.iv There should be a well-designed and operative appraisal system for all staff.*

51 We were provided with full papers on the appraisal systems in use and given evidence that appraisals regularly took place for administrative and core academic staff. Different formats are used for SPTC and for NTMTC *qua* SMC. For the future we see a need for a sharing of good practice and the production of a common system.

*C.v The training institution should meet the current legal requirements, for example, with regard to Fire prevention, Health and Safety and Child Protection.*

52 The Director of Finance also has a responsibility for personnel issues. He has immediately addressed compliance and personnel issues, noting the need for a new Staff Handbook, which he was in the process of drafting when we met. He has been able to draw on the resources of HTB for the handbook and for HR issues given the connection with SPTC. This has saved starting afresh. As a result we were given the draft outline of handbook before the end of the Inspection.

#### **Recommendation 4**

**We recommend that the Dean of SMC and the Director of Finance, aided appropriately by staff and governors, should oversee:**

- **the completion of current work on personnel and finance issues**
- **the provision of job descriptions and working agreements for non core staff and a common appraisal system for all staff (including non core staff)**
- **the staff and officer for Readers of the two dioceses should focus on more structured provision of working agreements and appraisal systems**

53 Further issues of compliance for the Reader training and the dioceses are dealt with by diocesan handbooks and policies.

<p><b>The inspection team has confidence with qualifications with regard to Criterion C, Governance, Management, Constitution and Organisation.</b></p>
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## D ACCOMMODATION

*Inspectors will examine the suitability of the accommodation for teaching and residence.*

*D.i The teaching and residential accommodation should be fit for the purpose of enhancing the community and corporate life of the Institution and of facilitating good adult learning.*

- 54 Three centres are used on a week to week basis by SMC. St Paul's Onslow Square provides office space (for staff contracted to SMC and/or SPTC) and teaching facilities for the weekly meetings of the mixed-mode training course. St George's in the East Shadwell provides office and teaching accommodation in the Crypt for the NTMTC constituent with worship in the church. Chelmsford Cathedral provides office and teaching space as well as the Cathedral itself, which is used for weekly evening sessions for the other NTMTC style part of the course. Residential are held at All Saints London Colney, although it is planned to transfer the residential week to a conference centre near Lille from autumn 2009.
- 55 Each centre has strengths and weaknesses. St Paul's offers spacious accommodation in the main church building but other rooms and offices are more cramped. The dominant style of teaching involves lecturing to large numbers of students. Whilst we appreciate the excellent lecturing we have seen, we believe it would be educationally desirable to have a more balanced approach and more teaching in smaller groups alongside the lectures. St George-in-the-East is badly lit at the Crypt entrance on winter evenings and the church is felt to be large for worship in a smaller group. With regard to teaching, the staff recognises that the Shadwell site is probably taking as many students as it can. The layout of the building leads more naturally to teaching in small groups. Chelmsford has probably the most evenly balanced facilities with its teaching rooms as well as Cathedral worship space. Not all the teaching rooms at London Colney were ideal for the numbers, whether too small or too large. In larger rooms students were not ideally placed for learning with groups using laptops at the back and others spaced out all over the room. We encourage staff to look at the use of space for each teaching session and ensure the best set up of rooms for learning.

### Recommendation 5

**We recommend that the use of teaching space and the need for some teaching in small groups be reviewed by SMC staff**

- 56 It was generally agreed that there is a significant need for the teaching and administrative staff to be on one site to enable cohesive team work, whilst maintaining teaching at different centres. The plans for a move to St Jude's will achieve this and will offer good teaching facilities, provided funds can be raised.

- 57 However, a further complexity lies in any integration of Reader Training for London. At present teaching at St Paul's Onslow Square takes place during the day. Evening sessions are at Shadwell or Chelmsford. If London Readers are added, there is understandably a strong lobby for a West London teaching centre to be available in the evening. Staff resources of SMC cannot cope with teaching at three evening centres and one daytime centre as opposed to two evening and one daytime venue. There are some heartfelt issues, as there is also a strong commitment to East London and to Chelmsford. Choices will have to be made to maintain the quality of the courses.

### **Recommendation 6**

**We recommend that, in any partnership for the delivery of Reader training between the Diocese of London and SMC, the SMC Governing Body clarify how best to match staff resources with the number of teaching centres and the needs of students, both ordinands and Readers in training.**

*D.ii There should be an awareness of perceived inadequacies, and a policy and programme for addressing them.*

- 58 The planned move to St Jude's, despite the fundraising required, is tangible evidence of the commitment to good practical resources. Premises used for the training of Readers by the diocese were adequate, but none of the London venues were suitable for larger numbers or to provide an alternative evening centre for SMC.

<p><b>The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion D, Accommodation.</b></p>
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## **E COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE LIFE**

*Inspectors will consider how the institution understands and structures community life, and interprets the role of corporate life in training for ordained ministry; also how far corporate life is evident in the relationships between members of the institution.*

*E.i The institution should offer a clear statement of how it understands its corporate life, including issues of gender, ethnic grouping and disability and other matters of natural justice, in a way, which harmonises with its aims and objectives in preparing candidates for public ministry.*

- 59 It has not been an easy task to bring together the staffs and students of three very different bodies: the Chelmsford Centre and the Shadwell Centre, from NTMTC, and the St Paul's Centre, each from a very different background and history. The latter has a different type of course with mixed-mode training, meeting for a whole day each week (instead of an evening) with a distinctive style of worship, and a mainly young student

body made up of people already working part time for churches in community and youth work, and studying part time alongside this work experience. We were heartened to find a lively community, and much progress in integrating the three into one college.

- 60 Within each of the centres there are different groups: in the North Thames centres the ordinands form the majority, but there are also trainee Readers in Year 1, in one year group outnumbering the ordinands. The pattern at St Paul's centre is different: the ordinands are in the minority, and there are 28 students who are youth workers or other people working for the churches. These students are studying or auditing courses for the most part in the same lectures as the ordinands.
- 61 We observed tensions for those teaching over-large and over-diverse groups, sometimes in small rooms. Sometimes the ordinands were a small minority of those being taught and it was difficult for the lecturer to do justice to the nine ordinands for example, when there were up to 28 other students in the same course. See Criterion H.
- 62 One feature which helped students to build a community and corporate life, is the provision of cooked suppers (at Chelmsford and Shadwell) or sandwich lunches (at St Paul's Centre) which encourages students to sit down and eat with each other and with the staff, in a relaxed way.
- 63 Although the courses are taught in different centres, all the ordination students meet together at the residential week ends and weeks, and students have been challenged to get to know and appreciate one another. We observed that many of them are responding well to this challenge, though others were still unable to leave their own groups. We have witnessed Fellowship Groups being used effectively to build communal cohesion. The Fellowship Groups, composed of students from all three centres and all three years, meet together on the Saturday evening of any residential week end. From our observations, we detected growing friendships and discovery and appreciation by students of differing viewpoints and approaches to ministry.
- 64 Some staff teach only in one centre, but all the core staff teach in more than one, sometimes in all three, and there is constant meeting between staff members which is strengthening corporate life. We also saw evidence of staff modelling good relations and communion which positively contributes to the life of the college.
- 65 A 'Families Day', held for SPTC students in 2008, will be repeated in 2009 and an event is planned for NTMT students in the next academic year. But we did not see much evidence, in the student handbook or in practice, of students' spouses and family engagement with the corporate life of the college. Some families arrived at the end of residential weekend and informally mingled with students as the community dispersed.
- 66 London Reader training takes place in comparatively smaller groups. In our limited observation in each of the areas we did see positive

expressions of community and we noted the effort made by core staff to encourage corporate life. For example in the Edmonton & Two Cities training area the provision of good quality sandwich suppers at sessions not only addressed practical issues of students coming straight from work but also provided an opportunity for students and tutors to meet informally. The manner in which students on the Stepney course related to each other in sessions is evidence of a communal life that is inclusive, accepting and meaningful. The student body were, for example, able as a group to give meaningful plenary feedback to a student who had just preached a sermon during a brief act of worship at the beginning of a session. The manner in which the feedback was given and accepted, in part, demonstrated a mature communal identity and life.

- 67 We find in Section 13 of the Student Handbook a description of SMC as a diverse community, and this was praised by many of the staff and students with whom we spoke. This theme is developed and applied on pages 69-71 of the Student Handbook. In the following chapter several of the policies on compliance issues are relevant to the corporate life of the college, for example Equal Opportunities (pages 79-82) which includes race and skin colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, HIV status, social class, marital status, membership of a trade union or political affiliation. Other policies relevant to the College's corporate life include those on harassment and bullying, and student complaints and grievances. We have confidence that this part of the criterion is well covered.

*E.ii The institution should show evidence that the structures, requirements and practice of the institution reflect the stated policy.*

- 68 We were satisfied that in many ways this is the case, but there are points related to the need for greater visibility of Readers, of women in ministry and in governance which affect the make-up of the community. Students also remarked on the lack of a chaplain's presence at St Paul's. Although most trainee Readers were enjoying their year at the college, and gaining from it, there was some unrest and criticism of the lack of emphasis on Reader ministry and formation (see para 82). The structure of SMC makes contact with families less easy; nevertheless an exploration of ongoing opportunities to include spouses and families of students in some of the communal life of the college is important. In the diocese in London the small group community life worked well but suffered the limitations of the area system.

## **Recommendation 7**

**We recommend that the Dean and SMC staff and governors address the needs of working with diverse cohorts of students, including:**

- **the requirement for priests who are women as role models for SPTC students**
- **the benefits of chaplaincy provision for SPTC**
- **ways of including families and spouses occasionally in community life**

- **focus on the role and ministry of the Reader in formation and in the community.**

**The inspection team has confidence in the Diocese of London's Reader training and confidence with qualifications in SMC and the Diocese of Chelmsford's with regard to Criterion E, Community and Corporate Life.**

## **F COMMON WORSHIP**

*Inspectors will consider the arrangements for common worship and the policy underlying them, noting the use of the authorized and other forms of worship, and how worship is conducted.*

*F.i The spaces designated for prayer and worship should be appropriate for their purpose.*

- 69 There is a wide range of experience and approaches to worship among both staff and students at SMC. At the Chelmsford site the worship before the evening sessions takes place in the chancel of the cathedral. It was generally led by students in our experience, with the cathedral organist providing a hymn. This is felt to be satisfactory by the staff; we have been able to be present at this worship many times, and have seen good evening prayer services from a variety of traditions, with in every case a sermon from a student, with a range of quality, which is to be expected. At the end of the evening sessions we observed a form of Compline, for a small group, in a classroom. Staff lead worship in the first half of the autumn term and on special occasions in other terms to model good practice.
- 70 At the Shadwell site worship is held in St George-in-the-East Church; we were told that this was rather more problematic as it was not possible to move furniture with ease, and it is at times very cold. However, a good solution seemed to us to be the use of the apse, behind the altar, with the worshippers sitting in a semi-circle on the stone bench. This was done on occasion and seemed to work well. It was less successful when the students were allowed to spread themselves out all over the large church. The cold is only a problem for part of the year: and since the worship is short, and people know to wear their coats, this seems to us to be acceptable; it is a very beautiful and historic Hawksmoor church, well restored for use by smaller numbers.
- 71 At SPTC the church has been remodelled and furnished for use for informal worship and since this is the dominant style at this centre, the building is very suitable, and well-equipped with microphones and musical instruments. At the end of the day there was a small gathering for a guided meditation in a classroom.
- 72 At All Saints London Colney, the Comper Chapel, while very beautiful, can be used, with some adaptation in where the liturgy is conducted from.

During the weekends we observed worship in the ante-chapel. It was rather cramped but this is probably the best use of the chapel given the numbers. The chapel was very cold when we were there but students were prepared for this. However, one act of worship, a meditation, was significantly marred by the noise of heaters. The alternative worship area is the large hall which also can be adapted suitably for worship. The college is probably doing the best it can in the circumstances.

73 We attended worship on all three weekday teaching sites, and also at the week ends at All Saints London Colney. Apart from St Paul's, the worship areas are not under the control of the College, but in general we had confidence in their suitability for worship.

*F.ii There should be a publicly stated policy on, and arrangements for, corporate worship. The policy and arrangements should take account of, and equip candidates to work within, the variety of practice within the sponsoring church.*

*F.iii There should be a policy concerning balance of worship, including authorized and innovative forms, and of denominational worship in ecumenical situations*

74 We found a clearly stated worship policy, in Section 13 of the Student Handbook, and the worship we saw at all the sites was consistent with that policy, and showed a variety of practice, for example we participated in Eucharistic rites from *Common Worship*, a Celtic liturgy, BCP Evening Prayer, a specially devised liturgy and Compline (in an adjusted form of the rite in *Common Worship*), 'free' meditations of varying quality, one a very delightful visualisation led by a student

75 Much of this worship was of a high quality, especially high church traditions when led by staff. We also saw some skilled training and guidance of students including a detailed feedback sheet used with students. We had some questions such as, How was any awareness of the Christian Year shown? To what extent was awareness of the Lectionary brought out? What is the policy on the wearing of robes? Are the intercessions outward-looking enough to the world? When may the Lord's Prayer be omitted? See paras 81 and 133.

76 The place of music in worship is described in the Student Handbook (page 74) and we experienced worship songs at St Paul's and on the weekends, as well as traditional hymns at Chelmsford Cathedral. There was less music available at Shadwell as the group lacked musicians amongst staff or students. We **encourage** the College, within the obvious constraints, to continue to use all available resources to enhance the place of music in worship.

77 The Student Handbook (page 74) gives the pattern of worship for week-ends and NTMTC midweek services. We believe that this gives a very balanced 'menu', doing justice to authorized, traditional and innovative forms of worship.

*F.iv In the light of preparation for public ministry, there should be provision to address the tension between worship as an activity of the Church and as a vehicle of professional training.*

- 78 Inevitably all worship will to some extent be a vehicle of professional training. But this can be mitigated – both by teaching which draws connections with active worship and by formation of the spiritual life of the students. In this context we commend the teaching of liturgy in a residential week close to the beginning of the course. By enabling the students to learn to reflect on worship early in the course, it enables them to make connections between their own worship and what they are learning. We also commend highly the teaching of spirituality and liturgy to the Year 3 students at the North Thames centres: this syllabus is now ending, but we are assured that this teaching will continue and be increased within the new syllabus in Years 1 and 3. Teaching on liturgy will permeate all three years. We **encourage** those responsible for the new syllabus to ensure that this is continued, and extended to all centres.
- 79 The inspectors were particularly impressed by acts of worship which were led by those who were at home in the particular tradition. These acts of worship were especially alive, modelling high quality liturgy. We note that as a means of professional training in worship, students are given many opportunities to lead prayer and worship, the vehicle for planning this being their fellowship groups, which are a valuable mixture of students from all sites, and all years, as well as trainee Readers. This gives valuable experience of different kinds of worship to students who are not familiar with them. Useful guidance is given to students beforehand, as well as detailed feedback afterwards. However for students at Chelmsford and Shadwell a balance should be struck between training students in styles of worship which they have not beforehand experienced and grown to love, and an opportunity for students, from time to time, to lead the type of worship which is familiar and speaks to them, from whatever background and experience they come. This is already done at St Paul's Centre. The inspectors recognise that students need to have opportunities to lead acts of worship which are not of their own tradition but think that a better balance needs to be struck between the two.

### **Recommendation 8**

**We recommend that in addition to learning how to lead acts of worship in a tradition not their own, SMC should ensure that students have the opportunity to lead worship in the style of their own tradition**

- 80 We observed the planning and delivery of a modern catholic Eucharist which struck an excellent balance between training and sacred activity. We also commend the use of Personal Development Questionnaires, at the beginning of each year, and at the end of the third year when the students are leaving, which help students to form and commit to their own habits of daily prayer and of worship.

- 81 Within this section we considered particularly what was being modelled for the students by the staff's own prayer and worship during residential and training days. We were concerned that the daily office, morning and evening, even when this took place, was not always publicly visible to the students; in some cases prayer in the evening occurred at a later time, and so a form of Compline was used; this was a suitable alternative in the circumstances, though on one occasion Compline was said much earlier and was not suitable as a start to the evening. Whilst we understand the difficulties of timetabling for residential, we believe that the Daily Office, in whatever form, should not be compromised.

### **Recommendation 9**

**We recommend that SMC staff should ensure that the daily office of morning and evening prayer is said by the staff and students, at all residential meetings, and that their times are clearly announced and students expected to attend.**

- 82 We found several good examples of staff modelling and enabling high quality worship, and of a high standard of preaching by staff. But we saw little attention being paid to the presence of Readers among the student body.

### **Recommendation 10**

**We recommend that the Staff of SMC ensure that a licensed Reader is invited to preach from time to time, to model this role for the Reader trainees, and also to bring Reader ministry to the attention of the clergy and ordinands.**

*F.v There should be a policy about expected attendance at public worship and evidence of its outworking.*

- 83 This is implicit but not stated in the section on Worship in the Students' Handbook; but it seemed to be quite clear that students should attend the main services, and it was also clear when some act of worship was voluntary. However, attention needs to be paid to Recommendation 9 on the Daily Office. We **encourage** SMC to clarify expectations about attendance at worship in the Students' Handbook.

<p><b>The inspection team has confidence with qualifications with regard to Criterion F, Common Worship.</b></p>
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## **G MINISTERIAL, PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION**

*Inspectors will consider how the institution helps candidates in their ministerial, personal and spiritual formation, and how candidates are encouraged or enabled to deepen their spiritual life and their self-awareness.*

*G.i The policy regarding ministerial formation should be easily available and communicated to candidates.*

84 The SMC Student Handbook sets out a clear and comprehensive vision for the formation of students in Section 5 (The Core Curriculum). Much of the supporting detail of the policy is given in Section 9 (Personal Development), although Section 13 (Common Life) is also relevant.

*G.ii The institution through its common life and through the way it guides and supervises candidates should enable them to grow in Christian discipleship with a view to exercising a public role in ordained ministry.*

85 We are satisfied that SMC makes effective provision for the formation of students in the framing of its common life and that it provides well for the direction of individual students (see G.iv). We note that SMC is currently formally reviewing this provision.

86 A major part of the specific provision for ministerial formation in leadership is the Spiritual Leadership Formation Course which is the largest element of the residential week in Year 2. In October 2008 this took the form of the 'Undefended Leader' course, which challenges people to discover what 'leading out of who they are' means for them as potential Christian leaders. Many students expressed their appreciation for the course, but a minority found it troubling, particularly in the way it confronted them unexpectedly with difficult personal issues. Some of these students (but by no means all) have since come to value what they learnt, however painfully. We are satisfied that SMC have carefully reflected on this experience, and note that more advance preparation will be given to the students for the course in future, and that those who may need to give pastoral support (including particularly the chaplains) will be better briefed. It is also intended to offer an alternative for those who prefer not to undertake this course and who may be less able to benefit because of the particular learning style or the stage of their own personal development.

87 We endorse the stated aim of the SMC formation review that any alternative to the Undefended Leader course should include an equal element of personal challenge as an essential part of preparation for leadership in the church. We understand the need to offer an alternative for some students. We **encourage** staff to look carefully at the method of assessment for who does which course.

*G.iii The institution should enable candidates to be immersed in the traditions of their own churches, together with an empathetic understanding of strands other than their own. It should also increase candidates' understanding of the traditions of other churches and deepen their sense of their ecclesial identity.*

88 The student body of SMC represents a wide range of the Anglican spectrum of traditions. Students express their enthusiasm for this aspect of their common life, which they see as having been enriched by the bringing

together of the constituent elements of the College. SPTC differs from the two NTMTC sites, however, in that its student body largely comes from a more limited segment of the church, and the worship offered there reflects that fact. For SPTC students especially, therefore, the residential elements of training and the choice of placement churches will assume a crucial role in developing an understanding of and empathy for other traditions. In a similar way, at present the SPTC students will not experience the ministry of a woman priest at SMC other than on residential weekends or weeks (see Recommendation 7).

- 89 We welcome the clear effort of the College to reflect the breadth of traditions in shaping its worship and common life.

*G.iv The institution should provide corporate and individual guidance and supervision for candidates. There should also be encouragement to seek confidential spiritual counsel.*

- 90 SMC offers individual guidance to students via the provision of Personal Tutors and in the use of annual Personal Development Questionnaires. Students are encouraged to reflect on their growth in Christian discipleship and preparation for ministry, for instance by keeping a learning journal as part of the Personal Development Module. There is provision for the appointment of a consultant to assist in the helping the student to profit from reflection upon his or her training where necessary.

- 91 Students are encouraged to find a spiritual director outside the institution and their home church in order to assist in their spiritual and personal formation. At the two NTMTC centres (but not at SPTC) a chaplain is part of the pastoral provision, and the two chaplains both play a part in assisting the spiritual formation of those students who avail themselves of what they can offer. We believe more clarity is needed about this and other pastoral aspects of the chaplain's role, and that chaplaincy provision should be extended to SPTC (see Recommendation 18).

- 92 Students expressed a range of views about the effectiveness of the system of Personal Tutors, particularly when tutors are not core staff. We **encourage** SMC to review the way in which staff are prepared and trained for this important role (see para 104ff and Recommendation 11).

*G.v The institution should enable candidates to reflect on the breadth of Christian spiritual tradition and its engagement with the world, and to work with the personal issues arising out of the whole process of training.*

- 93 There is substantial provision for teaching and reflection on the breadth of the Christian spiritual tradition in the summer term of Year 1, and one of the themes of the residential week in the third year is personal spirituality. Competing pressures on time limit the space students have for working through these issues; one possibility might be for the chaplains' potential as a resource to assist in this to be more clearly emphasised and utilised

by the institution, as part of the review of chaplaincy needs and job descriptions (see Recommendation 18).

- 94 Provision is made for a retreat each year for each student. The formation review is examining ways of ensuring that full benefit is derived from this opportunity and that students will experience a variety of approaches.
- G.vi The institution should enable candidates to develop as people, as future public ministers and as life-long learners, able to look forward to working effectively in the context of traditions other than their own, both within and beyond their own church.*
- 95 We are confident that SMC provides an environment which nurtures the formation of students as individuals and as future public ministers. Some students queried whether sufficient attention was given by the college to the formational needs of those preparing for the distinctive diaconate and Self Supporting Ministers whose main focus of ministry will be in the work place. We **encourage** SMC to give careful consideration to this.
- 96 The teaching staff offer a good model of commitment to life-long learning. Several of them are engaged in research and others have published books and articles in the last two years.
- 97 The breadth of traditions represented by the teaching staff, and by the student body as a whole and by the NTMTC students in particular, is one of the strengths of SMC. We have noted above (para 88) the particular importance to SPTC students of the residential elements of the course and to well-chosen placements away from their home church and their natural comfort zone in terms of ensuring their experience of traditions other than their own and enabling them to work effectively within them.
- G.vii Candidates should be encouraged to make time for private prayer and to explore the expectations on the ordained in the areas of corporate and individual prayer, of general conduct and of lifestyle.*
- 98 We observed some good practice in this area, specifically in addressing the expectations placed on clergy concerning public and private prayer, especially in the current Year 3 NTMTC course on spirituality.
- 99 We recognise the difficulties in modelling a daily pattern of corporate and private prayer for future clergy in training which is largely non-residential. This places all the more importance on those elements of the course which are residential, and we suggest that fuller and more systematic use of these opportunities be made (see Recommendation 9).
- 100 We are confident that the issue of wider expectations on the ordained are addressed by SMC, and we observed this happening in a variety of contexts,

## **Reader Formation: Chelmsford**

- 101 As the first year of the training pathway for Chelmsford Reader trainees is within SMC many of the comments under sections G.i to G.vii apply. In particular, Reader candidates expressed the same appreciation of the enrichment offered to them by the residential elements of the course and by the wide spectrum of traditions and backgrounds represented in the institution and its corporate life and worship (G.iii). Some were also appreciative of the provision made for directing students in personal and spiritual formation (G.iv), particularly through the chaplains.
- 102 However, the reservations about the effectiveness of the partnership between the institution, the students and their appointed personal tutors apply with special force to Reader trainees. Students expressed their frustration at the requirement that they spend still more time (on top of the stringent demands of their SMC training) travelling to their tutor group when the outcome in terms of assistance with study and formation was unsatisfactory; and they were not clear about what the tutors were 'for'.
- 103 Frustration was also expressed at the invisibility of Reader ministry and the needs of formation for Reader ministry in the teaching, the worship and the corporate life of SMC. We recognise that formation for ministry cannot be encapsulated entirely in a systematic syllabus or curriculum. We also recognise that many aspects of formation are the same for Readers as for other ministers. However, where Readers are trained alongside other ministers a deliberate and systematic effort should be made in the training programme and corporate life to understand and value the distinctiveness of Reader ministry. This should be in evidence beyond personal tutor groups, for example by modelling good practice in inviting licensed Readers to preach and by considering issues relating to ministry in the workplace more deliberately in the teaching programme.
- 104 The second year of the training pathway requires separate comment. The small tutor groups of three or four students each become the unifying central focus of the process of formation. The students meet in their year group only once or twice during the year compared to the weekly group sessions in term time in the first year. The extreme contrast with the first year was described by one student as like 'falling off a cliff'.
- 105 We saw encouraging evidence of good practice in tutor groups of candidates being equipped for their future ministry in a listening and learning church, with biblical studies, preaching theory and practice, placement and home church projects strongly related to each other, and the students drawing the connections. The role of the tutor as the one unifying strand of the second year provision is clearly crucial here. Home incumbents and placement supervisors are clearly also vital in this process. The peer group plays an important role, and the students we spoke to regret the lack of contact with their fellow Reader trainees beyond their own small tutor group.

- 106 We draw attention to Recommendation 7 with regard to a systematic effort being made in the training programme of SMC to model Reader Ministry and to value its distinctiveness.

### **Recommendation 11**

#### **We recommend that :**

- **the staff of SMC and the Diocese examine the role of tutor to Reader candidates with a view to clarifying and enhancing their role in enabling formation. The review should also embrace support of the tutor role by both SMC and the diocese.**
- **The diocesan staff review the balance of the second year of the Reader training pathway, with a view to including more regular opportunities for corporate formation.**

#### **Reader Formation: London**

- 107 Edmonton & Two Cities: Formation is addressed throughout the three year programme with a particular emphasis in the third year with modules on ethics, preaching, spirituality, ministry and mission and parish placement. We witnessed good practice in a mission & ministry teaching session where aspects of Reader formation were deliberately addressed and explored. We also noted the good practice of assigning mentors to students needing additional practical support or where issues of formation need encouragement and strengthening. Formation is mostly informally assessed through regular contact with a relatively small number of trainees and through the successful encouragement of reflective learning by the students.
- 108 Stepney: Formation is encouraged and guided through annual interviews, frequent and close contact by the Warden of Readers and through the weekends away, placements and modules like 'Being a Pastor, Prayer and Spirituality'. We commend the good practice of the Stepney Reader post licensing review scheme which deliberately addressed issues of ongoing formation.
- 109 Kensington: The present cohort of Reader candidates in Kensington are all in the first year of their training, Year A. This year is not assessed and there is no required written work. A general foundation is begun in terms of biblical studies, doctrine, important figures in the Anglican tradition, introduction to liturgy and spirituality. But full on engagement with the requirements of formation for Reader ministry takes place in Years B and C. This has limited our ability to comment in this area. However, the course handbook shows the clear intention of interweaving the academic and the formational aspects of training throughout.
- 110 Willesden: We saw evidence of good practice in the teaching we observed, in particular of the effective modelling of ways to relate theology and ministry, scripture and pastoral practice.

- 111 We note the strengths of the diocesan training in the area of formation and **encourage** that this strength is incorporated into any new system of training with SMC.

**The inspection team has confidence in SMC and the Diocese of London' Reader Training and confidence with qualifications in the Diocese of Chelmsford's Reader training with regard to Criterion G, Ministerial, Personal and Spiritual Formation.**

## H TEACHING AND LEARNING: CONTENT, METHOD AND RESOURCES

*Inspectors will attend a representative sample of different teaching and learning activities, noting their quality and effectiveness and the methods used. They will examine the adequacy of educational resources, especially libraries, and will look at samples of students' written work.*

*H.i The content and process of the educational programmes should equip candidates for beginning public ministry, in line with denominational guidelines.*

- 112 We are satisfied that the courses are structured and taught in accordance with the expectations of the Ministry Division and expressed in *Shaping the Future*. We are satisfied that the courses prepare ordinands for the start of their ministry not only in theological understanding but also in the practical skills of ministry and equip them with the ability to reflect on 'being church' in contemporary society.

*H.ii Principles concerning what is included in pre-ordination/authorisation training and left to post ordination/authorisation training should be available and consonant with any denominational requirements.*

- 113 The principles underlying pre-ordination training are determined by the view that the mission of the Church is to act as a herald, an anticipation and a sacramental sign of the Kingdom, and as such is oriented to the future rather than the present. To proclaim the kingdom entails the naming and opposing of the claimants and abusers of power and relates to the culture and context of contemporary society. In this context the College sees the core of its task as being the formation of ordinands into a way of being. To that end forming character and spirituality are crucial to its work as well the provision of a sound basis of theological understanding and the development of appropriate ministry skills. These elements find expression in an Action-Reflection model of learning which is appropriate for a course that is based on placements or is part-time. This entails that theological reflection is rightly at the heart of the programme.

*H.iii Teaching and learning programmes should serve the aims and objectives of the institution and the educational programmes of which they form a part. They should demonstrate a proper balance*

*between the academic, formational and practical aspects of teaching.*

- 114 The basic programme of the College is a BA and Dip HE in Contextual Theology (Middlesex University). The programme matches the expectations of *Shaping the Future* moving from foundational studies in the first year through a transitional second year and a final year wholly of contextual studies. The ultimate aim is the preparation of reflective practitioners with a good grounding in theology and theological method. In addition ordinands take part in a programme entitled 'The Undefended Leader' designed to promote growth in leadership, faith and spirituality.
- 115 We note that the syllabus of the NTMTC is being changed and **encourage** the College to keep in mind the need to maintain the quality of teaching and formation given in the present 'spirituality' and 'other faith' courses.
- 116 At present there are no optional courses in the basic programme though we saw initial proposals for new modules in Spirituality; Church, Mission and Ministry; Worship, Liturgy and Preaching; Evangelism; and New Testament Greek and welcome the move to offering options in the programme.
- 117 There is a two year course for those who are normally theology graduates working in a local church/mission placement. This pathway involves completion of the mixed-mode course and as such covers the formational and spirituality aspects of the training programme as well as the programme leading to a MA in Theology and Ministry at King's College, London.
- 118 Both the London and Chelmsford Reader Courses aim to meet the national specifications contained in *Shaping the Future* although in London there are Episcopal Areas where the courses are not validated by an HE institution. We heard concerns from Reader trainees in Chelmsford about three matters:
- a) communication and administration have been unreliable both from SMC and the Diocese and the causes need identifying and dealing with;
  - b) the abrupt change in mode of training after completing the first year of the NTMTC course and the lack of information about the second year in the diocese;
  - c) the lack of recognition of vocation to Reader ministry at SMC whether in lectures where the tendency is to refer to examples of ordained ministry or in projections forward into the curriculum for year 2 which is not undertaken by Readers.

## **Recommendation 12**

**We recommend that the diocese of Chelmsford and SMC improve communication and administration procedures for Readers and that SMC address the need for greater recognition of Reader Vocation at SMC.**

*H.iv Units of teaching should have clear and appropriate aims, be well structured and enable students to achieve appropriate learning goals. Teaching programmes should introduce students to appropriate knowledge and learning processes, while drawing on student experience.*

- 119 We found that units of teaching are well structured with appropriate aims and learning outcomes. However we noticed that some units are taught by visiting lecturers and members of the core team each taking a particular topic. The result was a series of individual lectures which lack coherence and which did not enable students to 'contrast and compare' the different parts of the course from a coherent programme. We heard that where possible members of the core team try to place their own contributions between those of the visiting lecturers in order to provide coherence to the course. We do not wish the College to lose the contributions of its eminent visiting theological teachers but attention needs to be given to the problem that this form of organisation presents.

### **Recommendation 13**

**We recommend that the staff of SMC review all courses to ensure their coherence and the opportunity for critical reflection between the sessions.**

*H.v The educational methods employed and the balance of methods within the educational programme, should underpin the stated aims of the programme.*

- 120 Among the teaching sessions we observed at both St Paul's and Shadwell, we saw examples of outstanding teaching which related well to the student body and recognised the diversity of ability among the students. Power Point was much in evidence though at times we wondered if it was educationally necessary. Handouts were relevant and helpful and there was some very good interactive teaching. We found that members of staff were concerned to relate their material to contemporary society and on one occasion saw a session specifically addressing current issues. We warmly commend such practices. However in one session we were surprised to see that the tutor's intention that students interact to provide a joint reflection was being defeated by the use of laptops by students to get external answers.
- 121 As is to be expected the mixed-mode course includes a major element of practice and experience in placements and we saw that experience well used in teaching sessions and in sessions of theological reflection. We were disappointed to see that although there are logistical difficulties students following the part-time NTMTC course had such limited opportunities for developing skills in theological reflection, particularly in a programme that has an avowed Action-Reflection model of learning.
- 122 One of the educational principles of the College is that there should be an 'apprentice' model of learning and we can recognise that in the use of

placements. However we noted that whilst students are led in reflection on the sermons of their peers, there were no opportunities for similar learning from the sermons of members of staff who modelled the homiletical teaching that students receive. We believe this would be a valuable application of the 'apprentice' model.

#### **Recommendation 14**

**We recommend that staff design a format to allow students to engage in structured reflection of sermons preached by members of staff as exemplars of the teaching of preaching in the College.**

- 123 We saw some outstanding teaching and only one session by a visiting lecturer when the teaching was thought to be unsatisfactory. Although we were present at some sessions when other members of staff were also there, we believe there is a case for more observation of good practice among the staff. We recognise the practical problems inherent in this but there are considerable skills in Adult Education among the staff that could be utilised in staff development. We strongly believe that there are good reasons why members of the core team and those teaching the Reader courses should develop their teaching skills:
- a) the core team are to be professional teachers within the Church we believe they should have professional skills to use in their work;
  - b) Even though some of the teaching is excellent, we believe it could potentially be further enhanced in some cases by staff with a wider range of skills;
  - c) We are not convinced that groups of students are so similar in educational background as to all benefit from the same style of teaching.

#### **Recommendation 15**

**We recommend that SMC draws on the expertise of its validating University and other institutions with expertise in Adult Education in order to develop further the teaching skills of its core staff.**

*H.vi Teaching programmes should be complemented by structured opportunities for students to learn, as individuals and as groups.*

- 124 At times we heard lectures that had the good intention of including group work, but in practice, on occasions there was limited time available for such groups to interact with each other. The response of the students on the occasions when they had time, suggested that time for groups to interact would have been profitable.
- 125 At St Paul's Theological Centre the student body includes both ordinands taking the mixed-mode route and non-ordinands, though we understand that some of them are in Christian service of some kind. We observed that on some occasions when the large group divided for group work, the ordinands formed groups and the non-ordinands did likewise, whilst on

others they were mixed. We understand the wish to give ordinands the opportunity to discuss the matters under discussion together but we believe that ordinands and non-ordinands can gain from being in a group together. This should not be the case on all occasions and also it should not be in a group that is too large for group work – as we have seen – or where the ordinands are greatly outnumbered by the others. It is important that the balance of these needs is kept under review. We therefore **encourage** the College to review the effects of mixed group teaching as it affects ordinands whilst recognising the needs of non-ordinands.

- 126 In moderating the training programme of Readers in the London diocese we found that in some areas there were few trainees and there are rolling programmes in order to form groups that would provide good educational experiences for Readers and those exploring various forms of lay ministry. We realize that if the areas concerned follow a common programme and wish to maintain some training in the areas recruitment will need to be addressed.

### **Recommendation 16**

**We recommend that, given the likely greater use of SMC, the London Diocese review the implications of this development for the delivery of training for lay discipleship in the Areas.**

*H.vii Staff should provide formal and informal feedback to students and assessment of work and candidates' progress, both in terms of academic progress and in terms of preparation for beginning public ministry. There should be both affirmation and constructive criticism, as appropriate, of students and of work.*

- 127 We saw samples of work marked during the past two years and noted that there has been a marked improvement in the feedback to students' written work following workshops on marking. However we heard student complaints about delays in receiving marked work back even though the Student Handbook speaks of the intention to return work within five working weeks from the submission deadline. We also observed the way in which feedback on such practical aspects of the training such as preaching and leading worship are handled and are satisfied that there is an adequate and effective system in place.
- 128 We heard that there were delays in course planning that left students uncertain what the programme for the coming period was. The programme needs to be clear well in advance for both staff and students.

### **Recommendation 17**

**We recommend that SMC staff:**

- **review the procedures for the administration of marking worked to ensure that delays are reduced and material is returned within an agreed period of time;**

- **complete course planning earlier than at present and circulate the details to students as well as staff.**

*H.viii Published assessment criteria should be used by the teaching staff and be available to students.*

- 129 The assessment criteria are published for students and we noted the improved use of them by staff when marking.

*H.ix The educational programmes offered should be supported by an appropriate learning environment. This should include adequate provision of resources, library and ICT, placements and practical opportunities.*

- 130 There is a developing library resource at St Paul's Church, Onslow Square, with access to more extensive resources at The Maughan Library, King's College, London; Atla Online Journal Access; Questia (an online library); Chelmsford Cathedral Library; Sarum College Library; Dr. Williams's Library. The use of online facilities has limitations but with guidance appears to be working well. The lack of a central library at times presents problems in obtaining recommended books and this places an onus on teaching staff to accept that students may be using literature that is insufficiently academic.

- 131 We saw clear guidelines for supervisors and students on the operation of mixed-mode placements and heard that the training days for Supervisors were helpful. We noticed that many of the 'placements' are churches where the student is working before joining the course. Whilst we understand the needs of such churches for a continuation of the ministry of their student, particularly where there is financial and practical support, we **encourage** the College to monitor them with a view to the complementing any weaknesses as training locations by paying attention to suitable placements or complementary experiences. In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to question the suitability of these churches as environments where the aims of the programme can best be met.

<p><b>The inspection team has confidence with qualifications with regard to Criterion H, Teaching and Learning: Content, Method and Resources.</b></p>
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## **J PRACTICAL AND PASTORAL THEOLOGY**

*Inspectors will consider the way in which the institution understands the relation between theory and practice, how it enables students to develop skills in their integration, and how the overall programme of training is effective in preparing candidates for ordained ministry.*

- J.i The training institution should have a policy on how the curriculum integrates theory and practice and should communicate it to students.*

132 The Inspection Document directed us to the student handbook for all the information relevant to this policy. A philosophy for the integration of theology and practice is implied by some of the introductory material in the handbook and embodied in general terms in the 'Aims and Objectives' of the curriculum (handbook, p. 28). However, we **encourage** SMC to provide a more explicit, detailed and consolidated account of how the curriculum is designed to enable theory and practice to reinforce one another throughout training and to ensure that this is clearly communicated to students.

*J.ii The structures for learning - courses, seminars, groups, placements, private study, marking, feedback - should be configured so as to facilitate this integration.*

133 Students expressed their appreciation of the increasing emphasis within SMC of the integration between theological and practical aspects of formation and of the way that the revised curriculum provides for this.

134 Reports on the quality of student experience and learning via the placement system, which SMC regards as central to the process of integrating theology and practice, were generally good and sometimes excellent. We heard some very impressive accounts from final year students about their placement experience showing us clearly the integrative effect of the curriculum. We discovered some concerns on the part of a minority of placement supervisors about the clarity of SMC's expectations of them and about the amount of contact and feedback they receive to support them in their role.

135 Some students also expressed the view that the important relationship between home incumbents and the College needs more attention.

136 We believe that SMC has the right structures in place to encourage an integrated approach to theological formation. The questions raised apply to a minority of instances, not the overall picture. However, we **encourage** the College to review its procedures for the selection, training and support of placement supervisors and its communications with home incumbents.

137 From our limited sampling the relationship of theory and praxis is a strength in the training of the Diocese of London, alongside that of formation (see paras 107-111). In observation of teaching we saw effective examples in the relationship of scripture to pastoral practise, for example, in Willesden Area and in the Stepney post licensing review scheme. The Kensington Course Handbook effectively outlined the balance of theory and practise. There were some questions in samples of assessed work about the need for more concentration on theological reflection rather than description, but overall we were satisfied.

*J.iii The institution should demonstrate how it is enabling candidates to develop an appreciation of the pluralist and multifaith/cultural society in which we live. There should be evidence in the work of students that they are becoming theologically reflective practitioners within it.*

- 138 We observed an awareness of the pluralist and multifaith environment in SMC in general. Issues arising from this aspect of the Church's environment were regularly raised and addressed in the course of the teaching sessions we observed—and this was true of sessions in very different areas of the curriculum. The students demonstrated their ability to reflect theologically in this area on a number of occasions, although one of the sessions specifically earmarked for this process that we observed was disappointing in its educational design.

**The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion J, Practical and Pastoral Theology.**

## **K TRAINING IN PUBLIC WORSHIP**

*Inspectors will note the ways in which students are trained to plan, prepare and conduct public worship.*

*K.i The institution should have a policy, available to candidates, on Training in Public Worship. It should ensure that candidates plan, prepare and effectively conduct public worship, including preaching.*

- 139 The Student Handbook contains a statement on 'Worship' and 'Music and Worship'. This gives a clear description of how worship is organized at the various centres during the week and on residential weekends. Worship is planned by students in fellowship groups although at weekends staff involvement is greater because of time constraints. There are guidance documents on leading and planning worship. We had evidence that the pattern of worship, incorporating various forms and traditions of worship, is adhered to.

- 140 Training in worship, including preaching, is also covered by worship in home and placement churches. What is required from placement parishes in terms of worship and preaching is clearly set out and communicated to students and placement supervisors.

*K.ii The institution should ensure that the policy is adhered to and that proper oversight is exercised over this part of the programme of formation.*

- 141 From our observation of worship at the SMC teaching centres we can confirm that the policy is adhered to.

*K.iii There should be an appropriate policy and practice for reviewing and assessing the leading of worship.*

*K.iv The student should receive critical and constructive comment, attending to performance, content and process from staff and peers*

- 142 Designated staff members are on hand to give feedback to students immediately following the act of worship. Feedback forms are also used

both for the conduct and leading of worship and also for preaching. At staff meetings time is also taken to reflect on any issues which need addressing in worship.

- 143 We observed a fellowship group planning and rehearsing a final act of worship for a residential weekend. This process was well guided by a member of staff with the full involvement of the group members.
- 144 As the policy document acknowledges, musical resources for worship vary according to students' ability. The worship we observed used students' musical gifts. We think, however, that consideration might be given to how in BCP worship students might be introduced to singing the versicles and responses. In particular we **encourage** the College to think of ways in which guidance could be given to the saying and/or singing of psalms. Several examples of psalm saying which we observed meant that they came across more as lessons and less as the 'songs of the Church' which is what they are in a liturgical context.
- 145 On more than one occasion at a celebration of the daily office, the Lord's Prayer was omitted. We encourage the staff to ensure that fundamental elements of authorized acts of worship are included.
- 146 On occasion, particularly at Shadwell, we thought that the worship lacked a truly corporate sense, being more a collection of individuals worshipping, and we **encourage** the College to find ways in which 'the shared identity of the learning community' (Student Handbook, p.74) could be better expressed in worship at this centre.
- 147 Some of the lesson reading at services was less than satisfactory and we would **encourage** the college to look at ways of helping students in this area.
- 148 Although our observations of worship were necessarily limited, we observed good examples of staff preaching and presiding at worship. Individual staff members have different styles and emphases in both these aspects of worship, but we would **encourage** the staff team, itself a valuable liturgical resource not to be underestimated, to reflect together how they can best model good liturgical practice.

<p><b>The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion K, Training in Public Worship</b></p>
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## **L TEACHING STAFF**

*Inspectors will consider the provision of teaching staff and the policy underlying it, the procedures for appointment of teaching and other staff, and provision for staff development.*

- L.i Appointments should involve appropriate consultation with the relevant sponsoring Churches and partner institutions, and the*

*method for making appointments should be clear and fair to all concerned.*

*L.ii Recruitment and selection should be in line with current good practice. Job descriptions and conditions of service should be clear at the time of appointment and should be revised at regular intervals.*

149 As a young institution SMC has further work to do to ensure a coherent set of policy documents and job descriptions for the College, as opposed to what it has inherited from its predecessors and constituent parts. This work is in the early stages (see para 52, Recommendation 4). The approach of the latter and their history on recruitment and selection practise, as well as current appointments, for example that of the Assistant Dean/Director of NTMTC, reassured us overall that the resulting work should meet the necessary requirements. However, we were not convinced that the nature of the chaplains' role had been fully thought through. The two chaplains are not referred in the Student Handbook. They are unpaid. In practise their role is understood pastorally and they are available for all students, but with little opportunity, as they see it, for a part in the formation for spiritual development. They have no presence at SPTC. They have come under heavy pressure at particular points, for example after the first Undefined Leader course.

### **Recommendation 18**

**We recommend that the Dean and SMC staff review the role of the chaplains as well as achieving availability across the teaching centres.**

*L.iii The number, field of expertise, scholarly and teaching competence of the staff should enable the educational programmes of the institution to be offered at the appropriate levels, both in terms of academic achievement and of preparation for public ministry.*

150 SMC offers considerable breadth in its staff team. The associate model is a good one for a course of such variety and has enabled quality academic teaching and preparation for ministry. The core staff work well together as evidenced from our observations of meetings. These are well coordinated in terms of SMC staff meetings, chaired by the Dean; NTMTC and SPTC staff meetings chaired by the respective Directors/Assistant Deans but with the Dean in attendance as required. If anything hampers further development it is the geography with staff on two sites - inevitably one can feel cut off. There is a danger of this applying to Shadwell.

*L.iv The gender, lay/ordained and denominational balance among staff members should enable the institution to offer appropriate models of learning and of ministry, and should comply with denominational guidelines.*

151 As indicated by the breadth of staff and associate system SMC generally does well on models of learning and ministry. However, there is a need for

greater balance in role models of Reader ministry and in other areas such as women in priesthood and the need for the extension of the Chaplaincy team to include SPTC weekly meetings. See Recommendation 7.

*L.v The institution should have in place an effective framework and programme for the continuing professional development of its staff. All staff are to have annual appraisals.*

- 152 Comment is made elsewhere in the report on needs related to the appraisal system, working agreements and job descriptions, and to professional development (Recommendation 4). These apply both to the programmes in the two dioceses and to SMC. Arrangements in the four London schemes are informal in these areas.

*L.vi Staff should model an appropriate pattern of spirituality, continuing learning and reflection on practice.*

- 153 Overall we were impressed by the enthusiasm, commitment and professional discipline at an educational and spiritual level of the staff body of all three institutions.

<p><b>The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion L, Teaching Staff.</b></p>
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## **M ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

*Inspectors will consider the provision of administrative staff, the policy underlying it, and procedures for their appointment.*

*M.i There should be an adequate number of administrative staff for the type of institution and its way of working.*

- 153 The administrative staff at both centres work hard and are committed to the aims and ethos of SMC. Where there are administrative functions to be addressed, for example (para 118 and 128) these are more to do with timelines and production of work than the numbers of staff required. The new post of Director of Finance is for only one day per week. Although this is complemented by the Bursar at NTMC, who is also on a day per week contract, we **encourage** SMC to monitor the needs over the next two years.

*M.ii The institution should establish and make known clear lines of responsibility and accountability for its administrative staff.*

- 154 Lines of management and accountability are clear. Where we saw uncertainty was about the future, for example, in questions from staff such as, 'how will the administration work if and when all staff are on one site?' or where administrative staff saw more opportunities for cooperative working but feel hindered by being on different sites. This is also reflected in questions of co-ordination of the two site offices and in overlapping areas

of work between SMC and SPTC, such as academic administration, essay submission and contact with students.

*M.iii Recruitment and selection should be in line with current good practice. Job descriptions and conditions of service should be clear at the time of appointment, be revised at regular intervals, and include opportunities for professional development. Staff contracts should be provided.*

155 Comment is made at paragraph 149 on work in this area.

*M.iv The institution should ensure that administrative staff know how they can contribute to the decision-making processes of the institution*

156 As with the teaching staff, we were impressed by the involvement of the administrative staff team in meetings of the whole staff and of its constituent parts on a weekly basis in term time. There is clarity and opportunity to contribute to a lot of the decision-making. Anxiety about how the institution will work when on one site sometimes clouds this.

157 As indicated above (para 32 and Recommendation 3) there is further work to be done on administration in the diocese of London as the new proposals are pursued.

<p><b>The inspection team has confidence in SMC and confidence with qualifications in the Diocese of London's Reader training with regard to Criterion M, Administrative Staff.</b></p>
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## **N STUDENTS**

*Inspectors will examine procedures for admission and suspension or dismissal, for assessing progress during training, for reporting to the sponsoring Church, and for arranging first appointments.*

*N.i Written information for students about admission, welfare, complaints, discipline, assessment, reporting to sponsoring Churches and arrangements for first appointments should be publicly available.*

158 As already indicated, the Student Handbook gives a detailed account of the necessary information or how to access it. However, it lacks a section on reporting to sponsoring churches and arrangements for first appointments. Although procedures may be clear it would be helpful to include this information in the handbook. We therefore **encourage** the addition of sections on reports to sponsoring churches and arrangements for first appointments for Readers and ordinands to the Student Handbook.

*N.ii The Institution should show evidence of compliance with its own policies, and denominational policies where they exist.*

159 Nothing arose in the Inspection which raised questions about the institution's praxis in this area. We observed thoughtful and disciplined judgements, for example, on individual applications for leave of absence.

*N.iii The decision-making structure of the institution should enable students to take an appropriate part in the institution. Students should take responsibility for their own participation in the institution.*

160 The inclusion of students in governance has already been mentioned. We were very grateful to the student body for the time they gave during residential weekends to meet with the Inspectors in year groups and in individual interviews. This feedback, from both Readers in training and ordinands, contributed significantly to our findings. The demands of non-residential training and the difficulties of juggling demands or levels of tiredness were emphasised by many. However, students consistently described SMC as an institution which listened to feedback and was prepared to act upon it and referred to the training community as one which was worth the effort.

**The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion N, Students.**

## **O CONCLUSION**

161 We were impressed by the breadth of provision and capacity to train for a variety of ministries in SMC. As it is a young institution, there are not surprisingly a number of areas for development, hence our judgement of confidence with qualifications. We are in no doubt about its fitness for purpose.

162 There is scope for more focus on Reader ministry for students from the diocese of Chelmsford on SMC and for a tighter development of the second year in the diocese. However, the sense from students of how much they gain from both parts is testimony to its fitness of purpose.

163 There is an excellent opportunity for development of Reader training in the diocese of London with integration of resources across the diocese and with SMC at the same time as opportunities for more local provision in the area.

**Overall outcome: The inspection team has confidence with qualifications in SMC and the dioceses of London and Chelmsford's Reader training schemes for preparing candidates for ordained and licensed ministry.**



## **LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Recommendation 1**

**We recommend that SMC invite the London College of Bishops to explore together the provision of a three year training scheme for Readers, building on the present area system, with some teaching and formation in the Episcopal Areas and some with SMC; and that any exceptions should have a clear ministerial rationale underpinning them. (paras 21 - 22)**

### **Recommendation 2**

**We recommend that those appointing the Board of SMC and other structures of governance should give due consideration to:**

- representation in terms of gender balance, ethnicity and Readers;**
- a skills audit pending future appointments. (para 42)**

### **Recommendation 3**

**We recommend that, for the governance of Readers in the diocese of London, the College of Bishops address and monitor:**

- the role of Area Wardens and Directors of Training with the Warden of Readers and Director of Professional Development, paying particular attention to communication, administration and quality control across the diocese and in any future links with SMC ;**
- the resulting governance and administrative needs for the area schemes, for example at the secretarial level. (para 44)**

### **Recommendation 4**

**We recommend that the Dean of SMC and the Director of Finance, aided appropriately by staff and governors, should oversee:**

- the completion of current work on personnel and finance issues**
- the provision of job descriptions and working agreements for non core staff and a common appraisal system for all staff (including non core staff)**
- the staff and officer for Readers of the two dioceses should focus on more structured provision of working agreements and appraisal systems. (para 52)**

### **Recommendation 5**

**We recommend that the use of teaching space and the need for some teaching in small groups be reviewed by SMC staff. (Para 55)**

## **Recommendation 6**

**We recommend that, in any partnership for the delivery of Reader training between the Diocese of London and SMC, the SMC Governing Body clarify how best to match staff resources with the number of teaching centres and the needs of students, both ordinands and Readers in training. (para 57)**

## **Recommendation 7**

**We recommend that the Dean and SMC staff and governors address the needs of working with diverse cohorts of students, including:**

- the requirement for priests who are women as role models for SPTC students**
- the benefits of chaplaincy provision for SPTC**
- ways of including families and spouses occasionally in community life**
- focus on the role and ministry of the Reader in formation and in the community. (para 68)**

## **Recommendation 8**

**We recommend that in addition to learning how to lead acts of worship in a tradition not their own, SMC should ensure that students have the opportunity to lead worship in the style of their own tradition. (para 79)**

## **Recommendation 9**

**We recommend that SMC staff should ensure that the daily office of morning and evening prayer is said by the staff and students, at all residential meetings, and that their times are clearly announced and students expected to attend. (para 81)**

## **Recommendation 10**

**We recommend that the Staff of SMC ensure that a licensed Reader is invited to preach from time to time, to model this role for the Reader trainees, and also to bring Reader ministry to the attention of the clergy and ordinands. (para 82)**

## **Recommendation 11**

**We recommend that :**

- the staff of SMC and the Diocese examine the role of tutor to Reader candidates with a view to clarifying and enhancing their role in enabling formation. The review should also embrace support of the tutor role by both SMC and the diocese.**
- The diocesan staff review the balance of the second year of the Reader training pathway, with a view to including more regular opportunities for corporate formation. (paras 102 - 106)**

### **Recommendation 12**

**We recommend that the diocese of Chelmsford and SMC improve communication and administration procedures for Readers and that SMC address the need for greater recognition of Reader Vocation at SMC. (para 118)**

### **Recommendation 13**

**We recommend that the staff of SMC review all courses to ensure their coherence and the opportunity for critical reflection between the sessions. (para 119)**

### **Recommendation 14**

**We recommend that staff design a format to allow students to engage in structured reflection of sermons preached by members of staff as exemplars of the teaching of preaching in the College. (para 122)**

### **Recommendation 15**

**We recommend that SMC draws on the expertise of its validating University and other institutions with expertise in Adult Education in order to develop further the teaching skills of its core staff. (para 123)**

### **Recommendation 16**

**We recommend that, given the likely greater use of SMC, the London Diocese review the implications of this development for the delivery of training for lay discipleship in the Areas. (para 126)**

### **Recommendation 17**

**We recommend that SMC staff:**

- **review the procedures for the administration of marking worked to ensure that delays are reduced and material is returned within an agreed period of time;**
- **complete course planning earlier than at present and circulate the details to students as well as staff. (paras 127-128)**

### **Recommendation 18**

**We recommend that the Dean and SMC staff review the role of the chaplains as well as achieving availability across the teaching centres. (para 149)**