

THE COMMON AWARDS

Programme Specification

DIPLOMA of Higher Education in Theology,
Ministry and Mission

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1. Name of programme

Diploma of Higher Education in Theology, Ministry and Mission

2. Department

Theology and Religion

AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

3. Educational and Formational Aims

The educational and formational aims of the programme are described in terms of the people for whom it is designed, the pedagogy it embodies and the purpose it is intended to fulfil.

People

The aim of this programme is to equip Christian disciples and ministers to develop as competent and faithful reflective practitioners. To this end it provides an education in theology, ministry and mission in and for a variety of contexts.

1. Preparing people for professional ministry and mission within churches:
Many students will be preparing for recognised lay and ordained ministries in the Anglican, Methodist, Baptist and United Reformed churches. The programmes serve institutions representing Anglican, Methodist, United Reformed, Baptist, Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, as well as being open to students from other denominations.
2. Preparing people for lay ministry and mission in the world:
The programme also serves those who wish to be more fully equipped for Christian life and service in the world, or simply more informed about the Christian faith. Within this category, some students will be preparing for ministry and mission among children and young people within and beyond ecclesial structures. Typically, students will be preparing for service in third sector and statutory organisations as well as in churches.

The programme aims to offer education that is accessible to students with a wide range of educational backgrounds and professional and personal circumstances: many will be mature students, many will be employed and therefore studying part time, many will be in active ministry, while still others will be pursuing the programme as full time residential students. The programme will therefore be available in a variety of modes of learning and teaching, including traditional full time residential learning, part time and part-residential learning, and distance learning supported by online and face to face engagement.

Pedagogy

The aim of this programme is to provide an education in theology, ministry and mission that encompasses the development of character and the nurturing of virtues and spirituality alongside the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the development of cognitive and practical

skills. The programme aims to enable students to engage more deeply with themselves, others, the church, the world and God by offering learning and teaching that:

1. form students in various disciplines, but bring those disciplines together to inform and enrich one another;
2. are constantly oriented towards the ministry and mission for which students are being prepared; and
3. by their modes of assessment and methods of learning and teaching enable students to develop as lifelong reflective learners.

Purpose

The purpose of the programme is to offer personal and professional preparation for a range of Christian ministries as well as to satisfy the aspirations of those students who undertake their studies to enhance, broaden and deepen their discipleship and ministry in other contexts.

From a professional point of view, the aim of the programme is to

1. offer pathways of study that contribute to meeting the range of professional and vocational criteria for the public ministries for which students are being prepared;
2. satisfy the aspirations of those students who undertake their studies to enhance, broaden and deepen their discipleship and ministry in other contexts; and
3. provide a firm basis from which to pursue further study in theology, ministry and mission at degree level.

From a personal perspective, the aim of this programme is to develop dispositions that are congruent with, and necessary for, Christian ministry and mission in the church and the world. The aims of the programme are that learners completing the programme will have become

1. open to the questions, insights and ongoing formation generated by attentive study of Scripture, and be willing to go on being transformed by them;
2. aware of the skills and disposition needed to go on reading themselves, the church and the world in the light of Christian doctrine, and to explore Christian doctrine more deeply in the light of experience and practice;
3. deeply aware that they are heirs to a long and complex history, aware of their place in that history alongside many others, and attuned to the work of the Holy Spirit in the church and the world through history and in the present;
4. passionate and prayerful advocates for the mission of God;
5. clearer about their vocation in the church and the world and therefore more determined to pursue personal and corporate lifelong learning as disciples of Christ;
6. open to the insights and challenges that emerge from serious engagement and cooperation with others, in and beyond the church.

4. Programme Learning Outcomes

LEVEL 4

Subject Specific Knowledge (SSK)

On successful completion of the level, students will be able to:

1. discuss intelligently a range of biblical texts and various issues and methods related to their interpretation;
2. investigate and describe competently some major aspects of the Christian tradition and their development;
3. discuss knowledgeably some core aspects of Christian discipleship, such as worship, mission, spirituality or ethics, and the questions to which they give rise.

Subject Specific Skills (SSS)

On successful completion of the level, students will be able to:

1. identify the context and genre of selected biblical texts, and comment intelligently on their significance for the texts' interpretation;
2. engage in practices of Christian discipleship, mission and ministry in the light of theological and, where appropriate, other disciplines;
3. draw on appropriate methodologies and various relevant disciplines, with guidance from an experienced practitioner, to reflect on experience and practice in the context of discipleship, mission and ministry, and communicate this accurately and reliably in a range of contexts.

Key Skills (KS)

On successful completion of the level, students will be able to:

1. identify, gather and evaluate source materials for a specific purpose;
2. evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches, communicating their findings sensitively and respectfully, showing self-awareness about their own beliefs, commitments and prejudices;
3. carry out a guided task that involves: independent inquiry, management of time and resources; using IT; meeting deadlines; evaluating the task and learning from it;
4. recognise key issues in their own personal and professional development.

LEVEL 5

Subject Specific Knowledge (SSK)

On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:

1. engage in detail with selected texts of the Old and New Testaments in their cultural and religious contexts, analysing and using a range of approaches to interpretation, leading to an ability to articulate the texts' significance for the church and world and of the questions to which they give rise;
2. research and give a detailed account of aspects of Christian doctrine, ethics and church history in a range of historical and contemporary contexts, analysing significant developments and concepts;
3. describe practices of Christian discipleship, including mission and worship, analysing theological, ecclesial and contextual understandings of such practices and of the nature of discipleship, in relation to specific contexts in and beyond the church.

Subject Specific Skills (SSS)

On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:

1. apply different approaches to reading and interpreting biblical texts, communicating these with relevance and sensitivity to specialist and non-specialist audiences and contexts;
2. develop existing skills and acquire new competences and modes of inquiry in practices of Christian discipleship, mission and ministry, in the light of theological and, where appropriate, other disciplines, in new contexts;
3. draw on key aspects of relevant disciplines to begin developing a critical analysis of contemporary situations, reflecting on practice and experience, in the context of discipleship, mission and ministry, recognising the importance of knowing the limits of their knowledge.

Key Skills (KS)

On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:

1. identify, gather, analyse and evaluate textual source materials for a range of purposes;
2. undertake a critical analysis of information and arguments, communicating these effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences, showing critical self-awareness of their own beliefs, commitments and prejudices;
3. take responsibility for a task that involves independent inquiry; the management of time, resources and use of IT; meeting deadlines; evaluating the task and learning from it;
4. plan their own personal and professional development.

DELIVERY OF THE PROGRAMME

5. Learning and Teaching Methods

Teaching methods are to be specified by each TEI using the published guidance on modes of teaching and learning.

6. Summative Assessment Methods

Summative assessment to be specified by each TEI using the published guidance on assessment patterns for undergraduate modules.

7. Formative Assessment Policy

Formative assessment to be specified by each TEI using the published guidance on assessment patterns for undergraduate modules.

8. Assessment criteria

TEIs are required to use to the published Common Awards Assessment Criteria for all Common Awards programmes. The Common Awards specific assessment criteria is aligned to Durham University's generic assessment criteria and Level Descriptors.

STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAMME

9. Outline syllabus for the programme

Total credits overall:	Minimum credits at Level 5:	Maximum credits at Level 4:
240 credits	90 credits	150 credits

This programme may be studied full time over two years or part time over three or four years.

Each TEI will be responsible for developing pathways that ensure all students have the opportunity to achieve the programme learning outcomes.

At Level 4	At Level 5
At least 20 Credits from each of these categories: Biblical Studies Christian Tradition Ministry and Mission	At least 20 Credits from each of these categories: Biblical Studies Christian Tradition Ministry and Mission
At least 10 credits from the category: Theological Reflection and Reflective Practice	At least 10 credits from the category: Theological Reflection and Reflective Practice

At Level 4 students are introduced to the core areas of subject specific knowledge, namely biblical studies, the Christian tradition and ministerial theology. The modules at this level offer a survey of subject specific knowledge to enable students to progress to level 5 within a clear framework for further study of theology, ministry and mission. Students are also introduced to the subject specific skill of relating their knowledge to experience and practice in the context of mission and ministry. This might take place in direct relation to the student's practical formation, or in interdisciplinary modules with a professional and/or denominational focus, or in other ways. In addition, students are introduced to the subject specific skill of theological reflection.

At level 5 students study the core subject areas at greater depth. The depth of study may take the form of a more focused area of subject specific knowledge and/or a more deeply contextual approach to an area of subject specific knowledge. Students will also broaden their study, for example ensuring that by the end of the level students will have engaged with a range of texts from both Old and New Testaments. Subject areas that were studied as interdisciplinary modules with a professional and/or denominational focus at level 4 will continue to be studied in this mode, embodying a 'spiral' approach that enables increasing depth of learning in these subject areas.

Students will continue to hone subject specific skills at a higher and more critical level, engaging with more complex situations related to their profession and/or practice either through a short-term placement, through work-based learning or through a sustained placement that lasts throughout

the student's programme of study.

In addition students will have the opportunity to study specialist subjects in areas such as inter faith engagement, environmental theology and education, or to specialise further in a subject area. Students may offer an independent study module and/or an integrative learning module that further enhances the breadth of study available to them.

At one or both levels, the programme offers students the opportunity to engage with their profession and/or practice either through short-term placements, through work-based learning or through a sustained placement that lasts throughout the student's year or programme of study.

10. Indicate which modules are pre- / co-requisites within the programme

In order to achieve the flexibility required by TEIs to construct their own pathways through the programme, very few co-requisites have been stipulated centrally. Instead, these co-requisites will be defined and decided by each TEI in relation to their individual pathways and will take the form of supplementary regulations that will be approved as part of the TEI validation process.

TEIs are required to refer to the Common Awards core list of pre and co-requisites, and details of excluded module combinations, when designing their pathways.

11. Typical Admissions Requirements

Entry to this programme is flexible, depending on the student's experience, employment and education. In general, applicants – especially those with little or no employment history – would normally have at least two A-levels (Grade E or above) or equivalent. However, for mature students, relevant work experience may be considered in lieu of formal academic qualifications. Applicants will need to demonstrate their potential to benefit from a Diploma (HE) in Theology, Ministry and Mission.

In general, up to a maximum of 80 credits of accredited prior learning may be granted to students who have evidence of, or can demonstrate learning that fulfills the relevant learning outcomes of the Diploma programme (by completing a portfolio of work, for example).

Students who have successfully completed the Diploma are eligible to apply to continue to the BA(Hons) in Theology, Ministry and Mission programme.

Students for whom English is their second language should have achieved a score of 6.5 with no component under 6.0 in an IELTS examination, or equivalent.

Each TEI has an Admissions Policy and is responsible for proposing its own specific entry requirements, in line with the generic entry requirements for Common Awards.

12. Field trips, placement and related opportunities

TEIs should refer to the published guidance on field trips, placements and other related opportunities.