

STETS Programme Regulations

The Southern Theological Education and Training Scheme

Programme Regulations for the Certificate of Higher Education, the Diploma of Higher Education and the Degree of Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Theology for Christian Ministry and Mission

1. General

- 1.1. These regulations relate to the programme offered by the Southern Theological Education and Training Scheme leading to the award of the Certificate of Higher Education, the Diploma of Higher Education or the Degree of Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Theology for Christian Ministry and Mission of the University of Surrey.
- 1.2. The Southern Theological Education and Training Scheme reserves the right to amend or revise these Regulations from time to time subject to the approval of the University of Surrey.
- 1.3. These Programme Regulations should be read in conjunction with the appended Programme Specification, together with the *General Regulations for First Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates for Students Pursuing Modular Programmes of Study based at the University* and the current *STETS Course Handbook*, which includes time lines for the various pathways which may be followed.

2. Aims and learning outcomes for the programme

2.1. The programme has three primary and interrelated aims:

- 2.1.1. To *educate* students to engage critically, constructively and confidently with:
 - The resources of the Christian tradition and its relationship with other systems of belief,
 - the norms of Christian belief and practice,
 - and their own place in the worship, life and mission of the Church.
- 2.1.2. To *train* students to exercise an informed, skilful, reflective and empowering ministry marked by wisdom, empathy and compassion and exemplified in a capacity for collaboration, co-responsibility and mutual commitment to the growth, well-being and ministry of others.
- 2.1.3. To *form* students to participate responsibly in the mission of the Church by integrating their learning and ministry within the particularities, complexities and adversities of their own lives and the lives of their communities.

2.2. The primary learning outcomes are expressed in terms of these three central aims as follows:

- 2.2.1. After completing each phase of the programme, students will be better educated to:
 - discern God's ways in the world;
 - understand the dynamics of Christian faith (texts and interpretative practices; norms of thought and practice; ecclesial worship and polity) in the worship, teaching, life and mission of the Church both in local situations and in global mission;
 - understand their own denomination in its breadth and diversity;
 - determine the place of Christian ministry in relation to particular contexts;
 - analyse the personal, social, cultural and institutional practices by which people are formed in ordinary life.
- 2.2.2. After completing each phase of the programme, students will be better trained to:
 - serve God's purposes in the world;

- think of, experience and form church life and ministry in theological, missiological and ecumenical terms;
 - discern the form of ministry which is theirs (with an understanding of its appropriate roles and boundaries), consider its responsibilities, prepare to practise it and to reflect upon its performance;
 - discover possibilities for Christian formation in and through the practices of ordinary life.
- 2.2.3. After completing each phase of the programme, students will be better formed and equipped to:
- embody and express the ways of God in the life of the Church in the world;
 - draw on the resources of Church life, thought and worship for ministry and mission;
 - exemplify trust in God and expectancy for the kingdom of God through prayerfulness and Christian service;
 - order their lives, working co-operatively for the fuller realisation of God's mission in the world
 - develop sound habits of reflective practice, contributing to growth in wisdom in Christian ministry and mission.
- 2.3 As indicated in the attached Programme Specification, these global aims and learning outcomes apply to all the awards of the programme, Certificate, Diploma and Degree. The annex to the Programme Specification provides level-specific learning outcomes for the awards of Certificate and Diploma.

3. Admission and registration

- 3.1. To qualify for admission to the programme, applicants must satisfy the General Entrance Regulations for first degrees, diplomas or certificates pursued in the associated institutions of the University of Surrey.
- 3.2. At registration, students will normally register for the award corresponding to the time for which the church authorities have sent them to STETS, after account has been taken of any AP(E)L claims which have been allowed by STETS.
- 3.3. No student may gain more than one award from any programme of study. The University shall rescind the subsidiary award upon completion of the higher level award. (General Regulation 1.3)
- 3.4. OLM and Reader candidates of the Diocese of Salisbury may, with the approval of the Principal of Ordained Local Ministry and Integrated Education, register for the award of HE Certificate (CertTh). They will be eligible for receipt of this award on the successful completion of all HE1 modules, including the appropriate Reflective Practice modules and agreed Centre-Based Training as first set out in the Proposal lodged with the University of Surrey in May 2002. Current arrangements for this are set out in the *STETS Course Handbook*, together with the time lines specific to these pathways, provided by the Diocese of Salisbury.

4. Programme structure and study requirements by level

- 4.1. Students will register for *one* of the following awards:
- 4.1.1. HE Certificate in Theology for Christian Ministry and Mission (CertTh)
 - 4.1.2. HE Diploma in Theology for Christian Ministry and Mission (DipTh)
 - 4.1.3. Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Theology for Christian Ministry and Mission
- 4.2. Specialist formational training pathways

STETS provides training for nationally recommended candidates for ordained or accredited lay ministry in the Church of England, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church, ministry in the permanent diaconate of the Church of England and the Methodist Diaconal Order, and vocational exploration candidates for the Methodist Church, from the nine sponsoring bodies of STETS. Specialist formational training is offered to candidates for these different ministries, particularly in Developing Ministry modules (D1M, D2L and D2R), but the same core programme is followed by all.

4.3. Modules

Details of modules together with their credit value are given in the attached Programme Specification.

4.4. Modules per 18 month phase of part-time study (total hours: 1201)

4.4.1. Distance

- 8 tutor supported modules (800 hours)
- 1 reflective practice module (150 hours)

4.4.2. Centre

- 9 residential weekends (153 hours)
- 1 residential school (80 hours)
- 4 study days (18 hours)

4.5. Modules per year of part-time study:

4.5.1. Distance

- 6 tutor supported modules
- Part of 1 reflective practice module

4.5.2. Centre

- 6 residential weekends
- 1 residential school (over three years of part time study, students do one additional residential school to fulfil church validation requirements)
- 3 study days

4.6. Core/compulsory modules

4.6.1. The reflective practice modules (D1 or D1M, D2, or D2R, D2L, and D3), which run concurrently with the tutor-supported modules and the centre-based training periods, are all compulsory for particular pathways, as indicated on the Time Lines published in the *Course Handbook*.

4.7. Pre-requisite, or co-requisite for further/higher level modules:

- 4.7.1. A7 is a pre-requisite for C2-3;
- 4.7.2. D1 (or D1M) is a pre-requisite for D2;
- 4.7.3. C2-3 is a pre-requisite for C9-10.

4.8. Accredited Prior Learning and Experiential Learning

4.8.1. *Terminology:* Unless otherwise indicated, the generic term AP(E)L here refers to prior formal academic learning and prior experiential learning. All provision for AP(E)L by STETS is intended to be fully consistent with the policies being developed by the University of Surrey, while at the same time ensuring that all the educational, training or formational requirements of the participating churches are met.

4.8.2. *Provision for AP(E)L falls broadly into two categories:*

- First, students with recent prior theological learning at HE1 that substantially matches the learning outcomes of the modules offered. “Recent” normally means completed within the last five years. Such candidates should be entitled to credit enabling them to

proceed immediately with the study of HE2 modules. Students eligible for such credit are not automatically advised to apply for such credit. Sometimes there are sound educational or formational reasons for advising students to consider beginning the programme at HE1 in order to gain maximum benefit from its integrated and missiological character. Starting at HE1 also makes it more likely that students will be able to be allocated a local tutorial group with more than one student in it.

- Second, students with recent prior theological learning at HE1 and HE2 that substantially matches the learning outcomes of the STETS modules are entitled to credit enabling them to proceed immediately with HE3 study. Such students preparing for ordination normally register with STETS for a period of two years with the requirement that they complete the compulsory Placement module (C2-3, which is offered at HE2 and HE3) during this period.
- Students who have already completed and been awarded the Diploma through STETS are not required to repeat the Placement module but complete the full programme of HE3 modules. (This trajectory is illustrated in the *Time-Line for HE3, after completion of HE1 and HE2.*)

4.8.3. *Procedures for claiming AP(E)L:* If a candidate wishes to be considered for AP(E)L, he or she will inform the STETS Director of Studies and complete a STETS AP(E)L Assessment Form by a specified date which allows sufficient time for the proper assessment of the claim. This statement of APL will need to be supported by full syllabi for the work described and a transcript for any completed parts of a degree programme, together with names of academic referees from the institution(s) concerned. Where a supplementary claim for APEL is also necessary, the Director of Studies will specify additional means of assessment appropriate to the candidate in question, such as submission of a portfolio, submission of special assignments, or an interview with a member of the STETS core academic staff in accordance with guidelines agreed by the STETS Board of Studies. If necessary, the Director of Studies will request the candidate to provide additional evidence. This evidence is then assessed by the AP(E)L Subcommittee of the STETS Board of Studies.

4.8.4. *Criteria for awarding AP(E)L:* In order to be awarded exemption on the basis of AP(E)L candidates will have to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Board of Studies that they can substantially satisfy the specific learning outcomes of the modules or level of study for which they are claiming exemption. In the case of APL, exemption would not normally be given for study completed more than five years ago.

4.8.5. *Evaluation of claims:* AP(E)L evidence will be verified and reviewed by the AP(E)L subcommittee of the STETS Board of Studies, taking the following factors into account:

- Are the claims independently verified?
- Is the AP(E)L current?
- Is it of sufficient quality?
- Is there a sufficiently close fit between the specific content of AP(E)L and the work for which the candidate is seeking credit exemption?
- Will the AP(E)L offer a proper basis for study at this level?

4.8.6. *Recommendation and ratification:* On the basis of its review, the subcommittee will recommend to the Board of Studies a specific award of credit or advise that credit should not be granted in this instance. When necessary, this committee may seek the advice of the Chair of the STETS Board of Studies.

4.8.7. *Extent of AP(E)L award:* Because of the integrated nature of the distance-learning programme credit will only be given for a whole level of study. However, candidates may submit evidence of AP(E)L which amounts to more than the number credits required. In

no instance will more than 240 credits be awarded towards degree study (with no more than 20 credits awarded at HE3), or more than 160 credits be awarded towards diploma study (with no more than 40 credits awarded at HE2). The Placement (C2-3) and Developing Ministry Modules (D1, D1M, D2, D2L, D2R and D3) are not usually eligible for exemption, and must be taken by all students. The centre-based training periods are also part of the Church Validation requirements; no exemption is granted from any of them.

4.8.8. *Right of appeal:* The candidate has the right of appeal to the Board of Studies on grounds of procedural irregularity. The candidate also has the right to resubmit their AP(E)L evidence, providing that additional relevant evidence is adduced and that it is made available in time for consideration by the STETS AP(E)L Sub-Committee before the December meeting of the STETS Board of Studies.

4.8.9 Final adjudication lies with the STETS Board of Studies.

5. Expectations relating to attendance

Attendance at all centre-based training periods is compulsory and students are expected to make every effort to attend all local tutorials.

6. Rationale and aims for each module

Shortened module descriptions based on the rationale and aims are given in the *STETS Course Handbook*.

7. Assessment requirements for each module

7.1. The programme employs a process of continuous assessment. Academic modules A1-9, B1-9 and C1-10 are all assessed by means of written assignments, usually due at the end of each module.

7.2. Developing Ministry Modules D1-D3 are assessed by means of a combination of portfolio and reflective assignment. Assignments are marked as any other, but portfolios will be graded as satisfactory (50%), good (55%), good/very good (60%), very good (65%) or excellent (70+%). The portfolio work will include work already assessed formatively by Training Ministers, such as sermons. Work that cannot be graded as (at least) “good” needs to be rewritten, to meet the standards acceptable for those training for authorised ministry.

7.3. Learning from centre-based training periods is assessed by means of journal profile and personal interview.

7.4. All summatively-assessed, written course work is graded according to the following system

Percentage	Class Mark	Diploma/ Certificate Classification	Level of Achievement
100-70	First	Distinction	Excellent
69-60	Upper Second	Merit	Very Good
59-50	Lower Second		Good
49-40	Third		Satisfactory
39-25	Fail		Reassessment normally permitted. Penalised resubmission mark.
24-0	Fail		Reassessment not normally permitted

- 7.5. Assessment criteria for all assignments are given in the *STETS Course Handbook*.
- 7.6. Where there are a number of parts in assessment requirements, the grade awarded is the aggregate pass-mark, calculated according to the relative weighting of the components.
- 7.7. The derivation of marks from methods of assessment: The forms of assessment used in the course are designed to test the specific learning outcomes of each module. Work will be graded according to the degree to which these learning outcomes have been demonstrated.
- 7.8. The assessment criteria for particular learning outcomes are indicated in the appended Programme Specification.
- 7.9. *Viva voce assessment*: The Board of Examiners may require any student to be examined *viva voce* in addition to taking the assessments prescribed for each module. (University General Regulation 5.13).

In addition, where illness or incapacity (such as a broken arm) prevents a student from submitting a written assignment a student may be examined *viva voce*, after prior approval from the External Examiner. In such cases this will be conducted either by the STETS staff member responsible for marking the written assignments or the one who has convened or written the module. For grading purposes, the same assessment criteria will be used as for written assignments.

- 7.10. *Pass Marks*: In order to obtain credits for a module students need to achieve a mark of at least 40%. However, in order to be recommended for ordination, a mark of at least 50% must be achieved for the Developing Ministry modules D1, D1M, D2R, D2L, D2 and D3.

Work below this standard may normally be resubmitted.

- 7.11. *Submission regulations*: Students are expected to adhere to the following guidelines for submitting written work for marking by Core Staff. All written work submitted for marking by core staff should be:
- typed or word-processed;
 - submitted on white A4 paper
 - double-spaced; printed on one side of the paper only
 - unbound;
 - laid out with a minimum left hand margin of 3 cm
 - accompanied by a completed *Assignment Learning Review & Assessment Form* (attached to the front).
 - Bibliographic referencing should follow the Harvard referencing system, as exemplified in the current edition of the *STETS Course Handbook*.
- 7.12. *Word-limits*: These should be strictly observed. Assignments longer than 10% above the word-limit will be penalised by up to 20%. Where unusual circumstances make it necessary to submit an assignment of greater length, permission must be obtained in advance from the Director of Studies.
- 7.13. *Reference to Sources and Plagiarism*:
- 7.13.1. Students are expected to acknowledge their use of all ideas or quotations adopted from another person, whether from a book, article, internet site, lecture or any other source. All assignments should therefore contain full and accurate references to sources and a

bibliography. Referencing should follow the Harvard system, as exemplified in the current edition of the *STETS Course Handbook*.

7.13.2. The inclusion of the words or ideas of another author in an assignment without proper attribution so as to lead the examiners to believe that they are the writer's own is plagiarism. Cases of alleged plagiarism will be dealt with by the Board of Examiners or a panel acting on behalf of the Board. Candidates facing such allegations shall be given a written statement setting out the grounds of the allegation and shall be permitted to submit evidence to the Board on their own behalf. Candidates found guilty of plagiarism shall forfeit the whole or part of the marks for the assignment in question as determined by the Board.

7.14. *Compensation*

In view of the integrated nature of the programme and the requirement of the churches that candidates for ordination should pass all modules, no compensation is allowed (University General Regulation 4.5).

7.15. *Late or non-submission of assignments*

7.15.1. STETS recognises that from time to time students studying part-time may need to be granted extensions to the submission deadlines for the submission of assignments. All such requests for extensions should be directed to the Director of Studies in writing, giving sound reasons for the request and a clear indication of when the assignment will be ready (Level 3 PQ students should direct requests for extensions to the Director of Learning Development). The new deadline agreed with the Director of Studies must be observed. No more than three such extensions of assignment deadlines will normally be given for modules in any single level.

7.15.2. Assignments submitted after the deadline without permission will be marked on a pass/fail basis only. Assignments which pass under these circumstances receive a grade of 40%. Work failing to attain this standard will be required to be resubmitted.

7.16. *The Assessment Process:*

7.16.1. *Assignment Writing:* Assignment titles and deadlines for each module are detailed within the distance-learning text. In addition students are given a list of assignment deadlines at the start of each academic year. The student writes the assignment and submits it to STETS by the deadline specified, or requests an extension from the Director of Studies, where special circumstances make this necessary. The Academic Secretary monitors the arrival of essays and notifies the Director of Studies of any assignments which remain outstanding after the deadline. Letters of reminder are sent to students who have not requested an extension.

7.16.2. *Internal Marking:* The internal marker (usually STETS staff member or course writer) starts marking after the deadline (or when at least 75% of the scripts have been received). In any event this should not be more than a week after the deadline. Because of the need for some flexibility with distance learners, internal markers are given four working weeks to complete the marking. The Academic Secretary collects late submissions and passes them on the first marker. To avoid delaying the moderation process, these are to be marked as soon as conveniently possible.

7.16.3. *Internal Second-Marking and Moderation by STETS Staff:*

This is done to a deadline, normally two working weeks after first marker's deadline. All projects or dissertations (C2-3 and C9-10) are second-marked, and an agreed mark is

awarded. The Director of Studies also reserves the right to have other batches of assignments second-marked, and awarded an agreed mark, if, in the Deputy Dean of Study's opinion, for any reason, the first marker has had difficulty moderating the assignments – for instance, because the marking process has been exceptionally prolonged.

A sample of all other assignments is moderated, to check that assignments have been classified appropriately. If significant discrepancies are identified the Director of Studies will require all the batch of assignments to be remarked . The first mark stands, whether it is higher or lower than that awarded by the moderator, except when the Director of Studies has required the re-marking of all the assignments to be re-marked.

In cases where the first marker has provided good feedback and accurate relative assessment, but has, in the opinion of the moderator, consistently under- or over-marked, normally within the appropriate classifications, the Director of Studies reserves the right to adjust all the marks by a given percentage to compensate for the under- or over-marking, having arranged for all assignments to be lightly reviewed. Where this would result in individuals moving between class categories, their scripts will be re-marked, and this second mark will stand. Whenever the procedure described in this paragraph is implemented, the Director of Studies will provide the external examiners with a written rationale, explaining how the moderation process has proceeded in this case.

As soon as the internally-awarded marks have been released to the students, they are encouraged to note feedback from the markers by studying the marked copies of their essays which are held in the STETS general office. These remain on file until the conclusion of the examination process and the completion of the course. Internally-awarded marks remain provisional until the conclusion of the examination process.

In all these cases, the Director of Studies will consult with other staff, as appropriate.

8. Rules for progression

- 8.1. Students may only proceed to the next Level/Phase when they have satisfied any requirements for modules, as specified in the Programme Regulations, and been awarded at least 90 credits at the appropriate level.
- 8.2. Students must also have satisfactorily completed the relevant Developing Ministry Module for that level.
- 8.3. Outstanding modules must be completed within twelve months.

9. Arrangements for reassessment

- 9.1. Students who fail a module (with a mark below 40%) may normally repeat the assessment (after revision or rewriting) on one subsequent occasion within one year of the first attempt (University General Regulation 5.1). However, if students fail the reassessment, given that because of the vocational requirements of the STETS Course no compensation is permitted and students have to pass every module, the Board of Studies may exceptionally, where appropriate, allow the assessment to be repeated once more. Because of the nature of the STETS course, students are normally expected to present their work for reassessment with six months.
 - 9.1.1. Students who fail a module (with a mark below 40%) may repeat the assessment (after revision or rewriting) on one subsequent occasion within one

year of the first attempt (University General Regulation 5.1). Because of the nature of the STETS course, students are normally expected to present their work for reassessment within six months.

9.1.2. At the discretion of the Board of Examiners, a student who shows strength in other modules may be permitted one further attempt at the assessment of not more than one component of assessment at each level beyond that provided by regulation 9.1. Such provision may be permitted, provided the student has:

either:

- (i) achieved an overall mark of 40% for the other modules so far completed for the level
- (ii) been awarded credit for all other components of assessment for other modules so far completed at that level
- (iii) achieved a mark of not less than 30% for the component of assessment for which a further attempt is being considered

or:

- (i) achieved an overall average mark of 50% for the level for modules completed thus far
- (ii) been awarded credit for all other components of assessment for other modules so far completed at that level BA
- (iii) achieved a mark of not less than 25% for the component of assessment for which a further attempt is being considered.

9.2. Students who successfully resubmit such assignments shall be awarded a mark which is the actual mark or the arithmetic mean of the actual mark attained and the pass mark for the award for which the student is registered, whichever is the lower. (University General Regulations 5.6).

9.3. At HE1 appeals against the joint decision of the internal examiner(s) and the external examiner will be dealt with by the STETS Board of Examiners. All appeals relating to final awards are governed by the appeals process of the University.

10. Mechanism for the determination of degree and other award classifications

10.1. The award of the Certificate is made on the basis of achieving an average pass mark of at least 40% for Phase 1. Students are required to pass all the modules.

10.2. The award of the Diploma is determined by the successful completion of Phases 1 and 2. The final mark is the average of the marks awarded for the *best seven modules* in Phase 2 only, although students are required to pass all the modules. The Diploma will be awarded with Merit for students achieving a final mark for Phase 2 of 60% or above, and with Distinction for students achieving an aggregate of 70% or above.

10.3. The Degree is awarded on the basis of successful completion of Phases 1, 2 and 3. The final mark, which determines classification, is the average of the marks awarded for the *best seven modules* in each of Phase 2 and Phase 3. The Board of Examiners may adjust the final mark (but only upward) to reflect the excellence of a student's performance. The award classifications are the same as those for individual assignments given in 7.2 above.

10.4. Only marks derived from 10-credit modules will be discounted in the calculation of the average mark for Level 2 and/or Level 3.

11. Arrangements governing absence from centre-based training periods because of illhealth or other pressing circumstances

11.1. Permission for absence from centre-based training periods must be sought from the Director in writing. Where ill-health or other circumstances makes this impossible beforehand, reasons for absence, with supporting evidence (such as a medical certificate, or letter from a tutor or training minister) must be supplied as soon as possible after the event. Students who miss centre-based training periods may be required to make arrangements for receiving similar training by other means.

12. Revision of programme regulations

12.1. Every effort has been made to ensure that the accuracy of the information concerning the programme of study contained in these Programme Regulations is accurate. The University reserves the right to introduce changes to the information given, including the addition, withdrawal or restructuring of programmes of study.

Agreed by the STETS Board of Studies: 11 March 1999; 26 September 2002.
Revised 30 June 1999; 11 July 2002; 1 August 2002; 28 July 2003; 5 September 2008.

Revised for Periodic Review 25 January 2004 and 9 June 2004.

Appendix: Programme Specification

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