

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION**

**Title: BA (Hons) top-up in Theology for Christian Ministry and Mission**

**Faculty: The Southern Theological Education & Training Scheme, in collaborative partnership with the University of Winchester**

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**Date (revised): 27/07/2011**

**1) PROSPECTUS INFORMATION**

<b>Awarding Institution</b>	The Southern Theological Education & Training Scheme (STETS), in collaborative partnership with the University of Winchester
<b>Teaching Institution (if different)</b>	The Southern Theological Education & Training Scheme (STETS)
<b>Programme also accredited by (if relevant)</b>	The Church of England and The Methodist Church
<b>Title of Final Award/s (detail all, e.g. Cert Ed, Dip HE, etc.)</b>	BA (Hons)
<b>Language of Study</b>	English
<b>UCAS code (or other code if relevant)</b>	N/A
<b>QAA Subject Benchmarking Group</b>	TRS

## 2) EDUCATIONAL AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

a) The aims of the Programme are:

The STETS BA (Hons) top-up in Christian Theology, Ministry & Mission provide professional training that meets the criteria of our sponsoring churches and helps prepare students for public ministry.

The courses aim to:

- Educate students about the resources of theological study and reflection, and encourage them to engage critically with these resources in their ministerial practice;
- Equip students to become skilled and reflective practitioners, whose professional conduct is marked by wisdom, empathy and compassion and exemplified in a capacity for collaboration and a commitment to the growth and wellbeing of others;
- Extend students' experiences of the Christian faith, providing opportunities for them to encounter other traditions and faiths, and to work in unfamiliar contexts;
- Develop students' understanding of the importance of context in theological reflection, so that they can serve as ministers who can hold the particularities of the situations in which they are placed alongside an appreciation of the resources of Christian faith;
- Enhance student's skills as pastors, preachers and worship-leaders, and nurture their own prayer lives and spiritual formation;
- Establish habits of lifelong learning, and provide opportunities and resources for ongoing theological reflection in diverse ministerial contexts.

b) The Learning Outcomes of the Programme (indicate by level if appropriate)

By the end of this programme, students will be able to:

- Serve their sponsoring Church effectively as a public minister in posts involving some personal responsibility;
- Satisfy their sponsoring Church's criteria for the skills and attributes of ministers at the point of ordination/licensing;
- Relate their study of theology and the Bible to the practical contexts of Christian ministry and mission;
- Compare and contrast different approaches to theology, ministry and mission;
- Speak with confidence about their vocation, and understand its implications for their contribution to Church life;
- Embody appropriate values and standards in ministerial life;
- Explain and appraise their own denomination in its breadth and diversity;
- Engage in critical reflection upon values and standards in ministerial life;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of different approaches to theology, ministry and mission;
- Identify connections between different theological sub-disciplines, and relate them to their own ministry and mission.

c) On successful completion of this programme, students will be able to demonstrate

### **Knowledge and understanding**

As a result of practical experience and academic study, students successfully completing the courses should be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of academic materials relating to the study of theology, ministry and mission, and engage in critical reflection on these sources;
- Show familiarity with key themes and ideas in biblical studies;
- Understand the different ways in which people learn, and build such knowledge into their own teaching and preaching;
- Interpret Christian faith in a pluralist world;
- Understand different approaches to theology, biblical studies, ecclesiology and missiology;
- Engage in study of theology, ministry and mission that is informed by the latest research in these fields;
- Identify the different ways in which people learn, and offer critical analysis of theoretical models which underpin such knowledge;
- Evaluate different approaches to theology, biblical studies, ecclesiology and missiology;

### **Intellectual and cognitive skills**

As a result of practical experience and academic study, students successfully completing the courses should be able to:

- Gather information about theology, ministry and mission from a variety of sources, and use it in the service of a critical discussion of such sources;
- Make sound judgments about the selection of information in academic writing, and in their practical activities as Christian ministers;
- Work with some guidance in developing academic arguments;
- Devise and sustain academic arguments that are well-informed and relevant to their professional activities as public ministers;
- Appreciate the ambiguity and limits of human knowledge about God;
- Manage their own learning, with minimal guidance from others.

### **Professional skills and other attributes**

As a result of practical experience and academic study, students successfully completing the courses should be able to:

- Demonstrate their attainment of the professional skills and competencies identified by their sending churches for candidates at the moment of ordination/licensing;
- Function as skilled reflective practitioners in ministry;
- Integrate their theological learning with their ministerial practice;
- Analyse, and appreciate the importance of, different contexts for theological reflection and ministerial practice;
- Offer appropriate pastoral care and hospitality to other people, and develop strategies for effective self-care;
- Communicate effectively in their preaching and worship leading, taking due regard of congregational diversity and biblical and theological resources;
- Be prepared to undertake further learning and training, which builds upon the skills developed at this level;

- Discover possibilities for Christian formation in and through the practices of ordinary life;
  - Evaluate their own ministry, and help others in doing likewise;
  - Display a range of ministerial skills in a variety of contexts.
- (cf. *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)*, 2001. Available online at:  
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/fheq/EWNI/default.asp#framework>)

d) Learning for the Workplace: the programme addresses the graduate employability skills of students in the following ways:

- The programmes prepare students for public ministry in the Church of England and Methodist Church, and meet the professional requirements set down by these churches;
- The programmes are designed to satisfy the learning outcomes of the Hind Report *Formation for Ministry within a Learning Church* (2003). Available online at:  
<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/lifeevents/ministry/workofmindiv/tetc/safwp/hindreport2003.html>.

### 3) LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

a) Learning and Teaching:

Consistent with the University of Winchester's Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy (LTAS), STETS aims 'to provide high quality, creative and challenging learning experiences,' respecting and taking account of students' diversity, within an educational milieu designed to develop 'criticality, autonomy and capacity for life-long learning' (LTAS).

STETS is committed to providing:

- Regular staff development sessions, to 'ensure that a highly qualified, motivated and valued body of staff has the capacity to be fully engaged in the enhancement of the student learning experience' (LTAS). Please see our statement on staff development, below, for further information;
- Study skills support to both whole cohorts of students and, where necessary, to individuals, to 'support students throughout their learning experience while taking into account a diverse range of student needs' (LTAS). For example, students take part in an essay-writing skills session during their second STETS weekend, which is delivered by a member of core academic staff. Students are also given full necessary support when writing assignments by module leaders and local tutors (see below for more information about the role of local tutors);
- Research-informed teaching, through 'the active engagement of ... staff in relevant research, knowledge exchange, consultancy or professional practice' (LTAS). STETS staff regularly publish papers in peer-reviewed journals of national and international importance, as well as producing academic monographs and contributing to mainstream media such as radio and national newspapers;

For instance, current staff research in the following areas has been of direct benefit to the development of our current and new Course (see *curricula vitae*

for full publication details - relevant modules in parentheses):

**Providence; identity; life beyond death** – Vernon White (3E)

**Historical and contemporary ecclesiology; biblical hermeneutics** – David Holgate (2/3F, 3B, 3E)

**Local church studies; visual research methods** – Philip Richter (3C; 3E)

**Sin, guilt & shame, homiletics** – Judith Rossall (3E)

**Feminist theology; Pneumatology** – Anna Clara Thomasson-Rosingh (3E)

**Evangelical and Eastern Orthodox spirituality; Biblical Studies, New Testament Interpretation of the Old** – Philip Seddon (3E)

**Theology of the life-cycle; feminist theology** – Kathryn O’Loughlin (3A; 3E; C7)

**Christian ethics; rural theology** – Timothy Gibson (3D; 3E)

- E-learning based teaching, and other ‘creative and innovative pedagogical approaches’ (LTAS), including local tutorials. E-learning is currently delivered via a Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment (STeTSl<sup>earn</sup>). When the collaborative partnership with the University of Winchester gets underway, it is anticipated that this will migrate to a Moodle platform, thereby enabling significant use of multi-media to add value to students’ learning experience. Local tutorials are delivered by STETS’s network of local tutors, who are normally qualified to a minimum standard of BA in theology and/or ministry. The role of local tutors is to facilitate students’ learning in small-group or one-to-one sessions, providing guidance as they work through online modules, and helping them to prepare for assignments. Local tutors receive ongoing support from STETS’s core academic and administrative staff. Local tutors also receive regular training from STETS, via two Training Days per year, including development of their adult education skills and introductions to forthcoming module material;
- Life-long learning promotion, by establishing good habits of ongoing ‘acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills’ (LTAS). STETS encourages students to maintain their interest in and appetite for learning after they reach the point of ordination, and offers ongoing opportunities for training in theology, ministry and mission (the BA (Hons) top-up is one option that students choose to follow if they do not already possess a first degree; additionally, the MA in Theology for Ministry and Mission provides an opportunity for postgraduate study that reflects the fundamental orientation of STETS).

In order to maintain the quality of our teaching, STETS expects all staff to participate in peer-observation-of-teaching-dyads at least once a year. Peer observation is intended to help identify both strengths and areas for potential staff development. Outcomes are confidential to the dyad, but annual staff appraisal checks that peer observation has taken place, and that teaching staff have carried forward any recommendations made by colleagues for development and enhancement.

STETS staff who are new to higher education teaching are appointed a mentor, who offers particular support and guidance in the planning and delivery of teaching sessions, and in relation to marking. The Dean of Studies and Programme Leaders also provide ongoing support to all staff in relation to learning and teaching.

Students’ self-managed learning, via their engagement with the online modules, is

supported and complemented by Local Learning Groups, centre-based learning and tutor groups (see below).

Additionally, a key component of STETS's BA (Hons) top-up is practice-based learning, also known as, reflective practice. Reflective practice is a core competency for Christian ministry, and has been defined as the 'rigorous and prayerful process' of:

- Acquiring, understanding and applying theoretical knowledge;
- Developing practical skills;
- Analysing situations and experience;
- Discerning, understanding and applying appropriate value systems;
- Developing a critical awareness of situations so as to maintain a prophetic stance towards them;
- And developing self-awareness whilst undergoing affective change (cf. *The Making of Ministry*, 1996, para 6.3.2 and Appendix 1).

Such reflective practice is 'mainstreamed' into academic modules 3A – 3E, and for students completing C1 – C9-10 it is located primarily in the 'D'-modules. In each case, students engage in supervised ministerial practice and also work through guided material with the help of a professional mentor – usually a training minister in their church or workplace. For example, students preach regularly and reflect on this experience with the Training Minister and Worship Reflection Group. This is designed to enable them to develop their ministerial skills, to help them to reflect faithfully, attentively, imaginatively, purposefully and self-critically on their ministerial and personal formation, and to enhance their preparedness for ordained or licensed ministry. Professional mentors (training ministers) receive regular training from STETS, and are often trained alongside local tutors in order to enhance the integrity of students' training as a whole.

#### b) Means of delivery:

The BA (Hons) is delivered primarily by means of distance learning modules, which we anticipate will be in future delivered via a Moodle-based VLE. Students progress through core material in each module in a linear fashion. This core material is supplemented by additional module material, which students progress through in a less linear and more elective fashion, thereby encouraging them to engage creatively with their studies and taking account of different learning styles.

As they work through distance learning materials students are given support by their local tutorial (tutors meet with students six times per 10-week module, usually within 30-minutes' travel time from the student's home). Most students are in a small group, although some (for geographical reasons) have one-to-one tutorials. The tutorial is an opportunity to discuss issues that have been raised by the module material, to explore wider connections with the practice of ministry, and to prepare for the assignment. Tutorial groups are learning communities of often richly-experienced adult learners. The set 'tutorial tasks' prompt good formational exchange. Together, the distance-learning modules and tutorial system help students to develop skills of academic writing and argumentation and formational perspectives that are fundamental to their development as Christian ministers, and satisfy the skills expectations of their sending Churches at the point of ordination.

In addition to the local tutorial, STETS students receive regular teaching sessions from STETS's core academic staff and invited external speakers, who hold particular expertise in theological sub-disciplines. These face-to-face teaching sessions are held during residential periods: six weekends per academic session (two each term) for each cohort and one week-long Easter School. Teaching sessions can take the form of lectures, seminar groups, workshops and field trips. Alongside teaching sessions, every residential period provides students with an opportunity to engage with Scripture (especially during a staff-led Bible Reading and subsequent group discussion), worship together, prepare for student-led worship and reflect on their practice in these areas. (*Note: Appendix 1 gives full details of the nature of STETS weekends and their role in relation to modules*).

The reflective practice element of the course is integrated with academic modules 3A to 3E, (C1 to C9-10 are supplemented by means of three targeted 'developing ministry' ('D') modules). In each case, students engage in practical tasks that are related to their developing professional expertise as ministers-in-training, and are encouraged critically to reflect on their performance of these tasks. A further aspect of the reflective practice component is the Local Learning Group. This is a group that is convened by the student, and includes members of their church as well as people from the wider community (including at least one non-churchgoer, preferably an agnostic or atheist). The student is given a task by the distance learning module that they must complete with the group, which relates to the topic they are studying in the module. They are expected, subsequently, to reflect critically upon this process with their training minister. There are two meetings of the local learning group per 10-week module, and they provide an opportunity for students to develop leadership and facilitation skills in a workplace environment. Such group work is a central feature of ministerial life, and the Local Learning Groups provide students with a learning context in which to develop their abilities and reflect critically on their practice in this sphere.

A breakdown of the hours spent studying per student per week is given below:

Tutor Group or Local Learning Group: 1.5 hours

Practice-based learning: 4 hours

Self-supported study: 11.9 hours

This is augmented by residential periods, held during weekends at Sarum College every six weeks. When students have attended a residential period, their workload during the following week is reduced, because they are not required to undertake work in the 'elective' strand of the module they are studying. Weekends involve a total of 22 hours contact time, across 44 hours spent in College.

*(Please note: an overview of the integration of three core elements of STETS training (distance learning modules, reflective practice and centre-based learning) is provided in Appendix A: 'An Overview of the Programme').*

c) Specifics of assessment:

#### **Portfolio assessment of modules**

Modules are assessed by means of written portfolios (i.e., sets of work, addressing set titles), totalling 5,000 words. The portfolios may consist of a variety of submitted material, all of which are summatively assessed, but not all of which bear the weight for the grade students receive in a given module. The latter is described as 'formational

assessment’ (NB this is **not** a reference to formative assessment. We define ‘formative’ assessment as diagnostic assessment used to help gauge the strengths and weaknesses of learners’ performance without awarding marks or grades; **‘formational’ assessment**, on the other hand, refers to assessment of students’ preparedness for ministry in terms of their personal growth and change, in relation to both the development of specific ministerial skills and their growth in faith, discipleship, prayer and vocation (see *The Hind Report: Formation for Ministry within a Learning Church* (2003), p.58 - available online at:

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/lifevents/ministry/workofmindiv/tetc/safwp/hindreport2003.html>)) and, because it deals with aspects of personal ministerial formation, it is marked on a pass/fail basis only. Thus, a portfolio could consist of a (graded) academic assignment, supplemented by (pass/fail) ‘formational assessment’, including, for example, reflections on students’ own ongoing ministerial practice, learning journals or multi-media resources. The precise breakdown of portfolios is left to a module convener’s discretion, working to a broad principle that unnecessary complication is to be avoided, and mindfulness is needed concerning the number of discrete items of work that a student is required to submit (and, by implication, that core academic staff members are required to mark).

This mix of assessment methods enables students to develop their skills of critique, analysis and reflection (and writing and presentation) in a way that gives them the best possible chance of success and that enhances their professional development. In order to assist students’ learning further, STETS is committed to providing appropriate, prompt, timely and constructive feedback on assessed work.

Assignments for the larger graded academic component of each portfolio will be carefully framed to ensure that these too require answers which relate education, training and formation. The balance of the mix of these dimensions will necessarily vary from module to module. The scope for such integration will be explored at local tutor and training minister days before the modules are followed by students and the results will be reviewed at subsequent training days and via the feedback to the Course Review Committee.

d) Types of assessment employed:

Assessment is by portfolio (i.e., a set of pieces of work, addressing set titles) – the nature of which will vary between modules, but can consist of essays, presentations, journals, briefing papers and other media appropriate to the student’s professional development (e.g. sermons and talks). Where sermons, talks and reports of professional practice are submitted as the primary assignment, they should be accompanied by critical commentaries that demonstrate the student’s engagement with module material, and their ongoing reflection on their developing skills as a minister-in-training.

#### **4) ENGAGEMENT WITH THE ACADEMIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND OTHER ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS**

[Agreement with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications and the QAA Code of Practice](#) is assured by the validation process and by annual monitoring process.

Please see Appendices B and Two for details of how the STETS BA (Hons) meets the requirements laid out in the *QAA Codes of Practice* for Bachelor’s degrees, distance learning and TRS. Additionally, Appendix C identifies how the BA (Hons) top-up meets the outcomes of the PSRB’s requirements, by mapping the programmes against the Hind Learning Outcomes, taken from *Formation for Ministry within a Learning Church* (2003). Available online at:  
<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/lifeevents/ministry/workofmindiv/tetc/safwp/hindreport2003.html>.

Other reference points applied to the design of the Programme:

The STETS BA (Hons) has been developed in response to student feedback on modules and residential periods. This feedback is garnered through use of online module review forms, and weekend and Easter School review forms, as well as a leavers’ survey. Additionally, the programme has been developed in consultation with the South Central Regional Training Partnership, the Ministry Division of the Church of England and the Methodist Church Discipleship and Ministries Cluster.

#### **4) PROGRAMME STRUCTURE, LEVELS, MODULES, CREDIT AND AWARDS**

##### **Introductory paragraph:**

The BA (Hons) in Theology for Christian Ministry and Mission is awarded when students accrue 120 CATS/60 ECTS credits at FHEQ Level 6, having already accrued 240 CATS/120 ECTS credits at FHEQ Level 4 and FHEQ Level 5. This is achieved over a period of 18 months’ or three years’ part-time distance learning study (depending upon the students chosen rate of progression). Pre-ordination students, training for 3 years, who enter STETS with APEL may exit with a BA (Hons) in Theology for Christian Ministry and Mission, subject to the accrual of 120 CATS/60 ECTS credits at FHEQ Level 6 in the second 18-month phase of pre-ordination training. The STETS academic year is divided into three terms, with four modules being completed per session (modules last for 10 weeks, including time for writing up assignments). Post-ordination training students (i.e. those who articulate to the BA (Hons) top-up following completion of an FdA in pre-ordination training) progress at half-speed, completing 2 modules per session and taking 3 years in total to finish.

Each module follows a spiral structure, as outlined in the preface. In modules 1A –3E, the three aspects of the spiral are God, World, and Church. In modules C1 – C9-10, the three points are: Theology, Scripture, Church in Mission.

Note: given the nature of recruitment for STETS’s undergraduate courses, there is a single point of entry, at the start of the academic year. Students enter in a single cohort, therefore, in September.

##### **Year One: Level 6 [Students registering for a BA (Hons) in Theology for Christian Ministry and Mission enter here]**

<b>3A</b> Christian theology,	<b>3B</b> Leadership in the Christian	<b>3C</b> The Creative Arts and	<b>3D</b> Theology for Public Life	<b>= 80 CATS/40 ECTS credits</b>
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pastoral care and ritual in the human lifecycle (20 CATS/10 ECTS credits)	Church (20 CATS/10 ECTS credits)	Christian Ministry and Mission (20 CATS/10 ECTS credits)	(20 CATS/10 ECTS credits)	at FHEQ Level 6
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**[Students who enter with APEL at the start of year two for three years' pre-ordination training are ordained at this point, and complete 3E post-ordination]**

**Year Five: Level 6 [completed post-ordination, or concurrent with 3A – 3D to exit at the end of three years' part-time training]**

<b>3E independent research project</b> Project Module  (40 CATS/20 ECTS credits)		= a further 40 CATS/20 ECTS credits at FHEQ Level 6, making <b><u>120 CATS/60 ECTS</u></b> FHEQ Level 6 credits
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**[Students exit here with a BA (Hons) in Theology for Christian Ministry and Mission]**

Level 6 post-qualification students, who are completing the BA (Hons) top-up as part of their post-ordination training, progress at half-speed through the modules, therefore taking twice as long as pre-ordination students on this pathway, thus:

**Year One: Level 6**

<b>3A</b> Christian theology, pastoral care and ritual in the human lifecycle (20 CATS/10 ECTS credits)	<b>3B</b> Leadership in the Christian Church (20 CATS/10 ECTS credits)	= 40 CATS/20 ECTS credits at FHEQ Level 6
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**Year Two: level 6**

<b>3C</b> The Creative Arts and Christian Ministry and Mission (20 CATS/10 ECTS credits)	<b>3D</b> Theology for Public Life (20 CATS/10 ECTS credits)	= a further 40 CATS/20 ECTS credits at FHEQ Level 6
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**Year Three: Level 6**

<b>3E – independent research project</b>	<b>3E – independent research project</b>	= a further 40 CATS/20 ECTS credits at FHEQ
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Project module (40 CATS/20 ECTS credits)	Project module (40 CATS/20 ECTS credits)	<b>Level 6, making <u>120</u> CATS/60 ECTS FHEQ Level 6 credits</b>
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**[Students exit here with BA (Hons) in Theology for  
Christian Ministry and Mission]**

**Note: an alternative pathway for existing STETS students transferring from the University of Surrey to the University of Winchester for the remainder of their training, who are studying modules C1 – C9-10, may be found in Appendix D.**

**6) SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS**

The University provides the following support:

Student Handbook; Personal Tutor system; Counsellors; Chaplaincy; Careers Service; Job Shop; Equal Opportunities Officer; Disabled student support; Induction and Pre-Entry Study Skills Programme; general Study Skills Programme; Library Skills and Study Skills Programmes; Child Care Nursery; Welfare Advice; Bursaries; Financial Advice; the Learning Network, IT support; Student Exchanges.

The Faculty, Department and Programme provides the following support:

Personal Tutoring; PDP; Module Handbooks and Guides; Tutorials; Assignment Feedback; Programme Leadership.

STETS provides all students with a Course handbook, detailing essential information relating to their training and academic programme of study. In addition, STETS core academic staff serve as staff consultants (personal tutors) for all students, and offer pastoral guidance and support. This is augmented by the College chaplain, Sr Mairead Quigley, who is present during all residential periods.

STETS offers financial support where necessary through its student hardship fund, and the Principal and Finance Officer can advise students on potential sources of funding during their training. Students are also normally given financial support from their sponsoring churches, in the form of book grants and travelling expenses.

A full induction to the Sarum College library is offered to all new students, along with ongoing study skills support (see above for more details). Additional support with *STeTSlern* is offered to students by the Director of Learning Development. The Principal offers guidance to students in relation to their professional development, and this is augmented by the support of their training ministers and tutors.

When it comes to the support offered to students who transfer to the University of Winchester for completion of the existing STETS BA (Hons), we will appoint a programme leader (to be appointed – *pro tem*: Dean of Studies) to oversee the course during its run-out period. This will ensure that staff, students, tutors and training ministers have a figurehead who is responsible for the day-to-day administration and management of the existing programme. A different person (Revd Dr Judith Rossall) has been appointed to the role of programme leader for the new course, and her responsibility will be to drive the process of preparing this course for introduction in September 2011. In this way, we are confident that students will be fully supported regardless of their programme of study, and that the quality of our undergraduate

provision will remain high, both in the run-out phase of the existing programme and during the introduction of our new degrees.

## 7) **CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION**

Students are required to have attained 240 CATS/120 ECTS credits at FHEQ Level 4 and FHEQ Level 5, with a minimum of 120 CATS/60 ECTS credits at FHEQ Level 5.

Potential applicants whose first language is not English may be asked to provide evidence of English Language ability. The requirement for admission to undergraduate degree programmes is a minimum score of 6.0 in IELTS (International English Language Teaching System) including a minimum score of 6.0 in Academic Writing, or an equivalent qualification (for example 560 in Paper-based TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), 220 in Computer-based TOEFL).

Tests in English language are undertaken at the potential applicant's own expense.

Please note: details of STETS's APEL policy, for advanced admissions, can be found in Appendix 3.

## 8) **QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT**

### **a) Mechanisms for review and evaluation:**

#### **Quality assurance and enhancement at Module Level**

Students provide feedback to module tutors through Module Evaluation Forms, seminar discussion and written response. The tutor collates the forms and produces a response for discussion at the STETS Course Review Committee (CRC). The response identifies good practice and proposes remedies for any points of concern. The CRC reports to the STETS Board of Studies.

#### **Quality assurance and enhancement at Programme Level**

The STETS Board of Studies evaluates the success of the programme, using student feedback and representation. Minutes from the STETS Board of Studies and the External Examiners' reports will inform the Programme's annual Action Plan and Evaluation which is submitted for approval to the Faculty Quality Committee. Issues for attention are identified and included in the plan for the following year.

#### **Quality assurance and enhancement at Department Level**

The Action Plan and Evaluation is copied to the Head of Department for discussion and inclusion in the Department Report.

#### **Quality assurance and enhancement at Faculty Level**

The Action Plan and Evaluation are submitted to the Faculty Quality Committee for discussion; the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee has oversight of development in the Faculty, including via the Collaborative Enhancement of Teaching and Peer Observation of Teaching.

### **Quality assurance and enhancement at University Level**

The quality of the programme is monitored by two External Examiners appointed by the University's Senate. The External Examiners' Reports are distributed to the Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice Chancellor, Director of Quality, and to the Faculty Dean, Associate Dean, Chair of Quality Committee, A summary of all external examiner reports is received at Senate Academic Standards Committee. Academic Standards Committee audits a selection of Departments regularly.

### **Quality assurance and enhancement for Staff**

The quality of learning and teaching is supported by the Collaborative Enhancement of Teaching and Staff Development, by Staff Development and Review, by attendance at conferences and curriculum focused staff development, by external involvement such as external examining and by involvement in research and knowledge exchange activities.

### **b) Indicators of Quality and Standards**

External Examiners' Reports

Annual Monitoring process

Student feedback including the University Student Satisfaction Survey and the National Student Survey

Programme Re-approval

QAA Institutional Audit

Quality arrangements for Collaborative Provision if relevant

Appendix 4 gives details of STETS's QA procedures.

The Board of Studies is accountable to the STETS Governors for:

- the academic policy of STETS;
- the overall health and conduct of programmes;
- oversight of curricula content and delivery;
- the development of academic activities and resources needed to support them;
- general issues relating to the teaching and scholarship of STETS, including standards;
- the nomination of external examiners, and framing of responses to their reports;
- annual monitoring of programmes, including approval of Annual Statement to the University;
- module evaluation and action in response to student feedback;
- policies and procedures for admission, assessment and examination of the academic performance of students;
- oversight of validation procedures and review of new courses;
- procedure for the expulsion of students for academic reasons;
- the continuing education of staff members.

There are three sub-committees reporting to the Board of Studies:

- i) The Course Review Committee, chaired by the Director of Vocational Studies, receives, and initiates responses to, analyses of student- and local-tutor-feedback (as applicable) on the distance-learning and reflective practice

modules, residential weekends, study days and Easter Schools. Through this Committee student and local tutor feedback is recorded, analysed, discussed and referred back for appropriate action to academic staff responsible for the relevant module, weekend, study day or Easter School.

- ii) The Assignment Title Review Committee, chaired by the Director of Education, reviews all existing and new assignment titles, both in terms of internally-generated criteria and in response to comments or recommendations by external examiners or moderators.
- iii) The AP(E)L (Admissions) Committee, chaired by the Vice Principal, considers claims for advanced standing on the basis of accredited prior learning and/or experience.

Programme review and monitoring functions that would otherwise be delegated to a separate Programme Committee are subsumed within the STETS Board of Studies.

Two external examiners examine the programme. Both are responsible for the programme as a whole, but specific examination duties are shared between them, according to their respective expertise. Before each annual meeting of the Exam Board, STETS academic staff meet informally with the external examiners to review the logistics of the examination process, progress on issues raised in the preceding year, and to discuss any other issues relating to the programme which are beyond the scope of the Exam Board meeting itself.

The Board of Studies reviews and approves STETS's Annual Statement to the University, and the Board of Governors notes the University's response to STETS's submission and ensures that its management committee makes appropriate plans to meet any additional resource implications.

Additionally, STETS's provision is monitored by a Church moderator, whose role is to ensure the fitness of our programmes for preparing candidates for public ministry in the Churches. The Vice Principal maintains oversight of this area internally, and co-ordinates with the Church Moderator annually, with a site visit occurring every 12 months and a written report submitted in due course. The Vice Principal ensures that the Board of Governors notes any recommendations, and enacts them as necessary. This process augments the Church inspection process, which last happened in 2005, the recommendations of which have been implemented in STETS's current provision.

The Governing Structure of STETS is outlined diagrammatically in Appendix 6.

## **9) THE REGULATORY & POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The University's Academic Regulations apply to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes. In this section indicate that:

- (a) The programme conforms fully with the University's Academic Regulations for (delete as applicable):

Academic Regulations for Undergraduate Programmes

- (b) Exemptions

STETS will operate within the University of Winchester ARUPS, except that, subject to the approval of Academic Standards Committee, the following changes to ARUPS will apply (*changes indicated in italics*):

- A:1/1.6 STETS undergraduate modules will normally carry *20* CATS points of credit rating; [*this will have a pro rata effect on other paragraphs in the ARUPS, whenever module credit rating is quantified (e.g., all the relevant parts of Section E)*].
- B:1/1.3 Applicants must be prepared to come to *STETS* for interview
- D:1/1.1 The *STETS* academic year lasts *41* weeks and is divided into *4 modules; the second and third modules span the Christmas and Easter vacations respectively but allow for proper breaks at these festivals. [omit references to 'semesters' in the ARUPS]*
- D:1/1.2 Each *module* will comprise *an 8-week* teaching period and be followed by a *2-week* assessment period.
- D:1/1.3 The *STETS* Academic Year Calendar is approved by *the Board of Studies* and published by *the STETS Office*.
- D:3/3.3.1 *Students will normally take 4 20-credit modules or equivalent per year, for a total of 80 credit modules per academic year. Post-ordination students progress at a rate of 2 20-credit modules per year, for a total of 40 credit modules per academic year.*
- E:1/1.1 All Honours degree students must take *5* modules at level 6 (120 credits), including the double module Final Year Project (*40* credits)... Modules studied in the [*omit*] student's final year of study, or equivalent, will normally be at level 6.
- E See comment under A:1/1.6 above.
- F:3/3.2 The minimum pass mark for a module is 40% [*omit remainder of paragraph*].
- F:4/4.3 The maximum assessment load for a *20-credits* level 5 or 6 module will normally be the equivalent of a *5,000* word assignment.
- F:5/5.1 *omit final sentence*
- F:5/5.1.1 The Final Year Project will normally be between *10,650* and *13,000* words, or the equivalent...
- F:5/5.1.2 A Final Year Project is conventionally a dissertation, *but may include the use of other appropriate media (for example, audio, visual, video, or computer); but it must comprise at least 10,500 words of text.*
- F:6/6.2 Unless specified elsewhere, students must submit two copies of the Final Year Project [*omit remainder of paragraph*].
- F:6/6.3 Unless specified otherwise, work for assessment must be submitted to the *STETS* Office for the module for which the work is to be assessed.*[omit]* A student is also responsible for keeping a copy of all submitted work.
- F:6/6.4 ...Deadlines for Final Year Projects and all other coursework may only be extended by a *normally* previously agreed extension...
- F:6/6.5 All failed assessments should be redeemed. *Students may repeat the assessment on one subsequent occasion within one year of the first attempt. Because of the nature of the STETS Course, students are normally expected to present their work for reassessment within six months.*  
*In view of F:11 (see below) and 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 above. Such provision may be permitted, provided the student has:*

*either:*

- (i) achieved an overall mark of at least 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 at least 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.*

F:11 *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 or condonement is allowed*

G:2 **STUDENT PROGRESSION BETWEEN ACADEMIC (18-MONTH) PHASES**

#### c) External PSRB Accreditation

PSRB accreditation will be sought from the Ministry Division of the Church of England, and from the Methodist Church. The procedure for such approval is as follows:

STETS, like all training institutions which prepare candidates for ordained ministry in the Church of England, the Methodist Church and other ecumenical partners, has a process of institutional recognition (with inspection every 5-6 years) and curriculum approval at a similar interval. These are organised by the Ministry Division's Quality in Formation Panel against standards published in *Shaping the Future* (Church House Publishing, 2006) and the handbook, *Quality Assurance and Enhancement in Ministerial Education* (July 2009). The curriculum being proposed to the University of Winchester will be scrutinised by the churches in the spring of 2010 with the institution being due to be inspected in 2012-13. Please contact Dr David Way for further information ([david.way@c-of-e.org.uk](mailto:david.way@c-of-e.org.uk)).

#### d) University Strategies and Policies

STETS is fully cognisant of, and compliant with, the following University policies:

##### **Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy (LTAS) –**

Consistent with the LTAS, STETS aims ‘to provide high quality, creative and challenging learning experiences’ (LTAS), respecting and taking account of students’ diversity, within an educational milieu designed to develop ‘criticality, autonomy and capacity for life-long learning’ (LTAS).

As already detailed above (3a), STETS is committed to providing:

- Regular staff development sessions, to ‘ensure that a highly qualified, motivated and valued body of staff has the capacity to be fully engaged in the enhancement of the student learning experience’ (LTAS);
- Study skills support to both whole cohorts of students and, where necessary, to individuals, to ‘support students throughout their learning experience while taking into account a diverse range of student needs’ (LTAS);
- Research informed teaching, through ‘the active engagement of ... staff in relevant research, knowledge exchange, consultancy or professional practice’ (LTAS);
- E-learning based teaching, and other ‘creative and innovative pedagogical approaches’ (LTAS);
- Appropriate, prompt, timely and constructive feedback from assessment, in order to ‘contribute constructively to the learning process’ (LTAS) and facilitate the student’s development;
- Life-long learning promotion, by establishing good habits of ongoing ‘acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills’ (LTAS).

#### **Collaborative Enhancement of Teaching Policy (CET) –**

As already indicated above (3a), STETS is committed to sharing and disseminating good teaching practice. Consistent with the CET, STETS expects all staff to participate in peer-observation-of-teaching-dyads at least once a year (see 3a above for more details).

Academics new to higher education teaching are assigned a mentor who will, for instance, give particular guidance in relation to the first sets of marking. At least two opportunities for peer observation of teaching will be provided in the first year. STETS staff also collaborate regularly with each other in terms of course design, writing of e-learning materials, and teaching at residential. This offers further opportunities to observe and offer feedback.

#### **Research & Knowledge Exchange Strategy (RKES) –**

Consistent with the RKES, STETS aims to ensure that all its academic staff engage in research and knowledge transfer.

STETS is committed to:

- Maintaining a research-active culture in which ‘the generation, transfer and exchange of knowledge’ (RKES) is highly prized;
- Providing the opportunity for staff sabbaticals, at least every five years;
- Encouraging and equipping all academic staff to engage in ‘outwardly facing research and/or professional practice’ (RKES) of value to academia and/or the Church;
- Providing regular staff development in terms of how to undertake and disseminate research;
- Enabling all academic staff to undertake knowledge transfer with national and international peers, through participation in conferences, research seminars and publication.

#### **Internationalisation Strategy (IS) –**

Consistent with the IS, STETS aims to integrate an international and intercultural dimension into its teaching, research and overall ethos. Whilst STETS has little control

over the ethnic and religious background of its students, the STETS curriculum actively seeks to engage with the world church and a globalising world to build global awareness and a sense of global citizenship. Interfaith dialogue is addressed within several modules and field trips offer the opportunity to visit places of worship of other faiths. The staff team includes those from South Africa and the Netherlands; and during the 2010-11 academic year will be augmented by a visiting fellow from Romania. Students are able, finance and appropriate supervision permitting, to undertake their Placements abroad.

**Widening Participation Strategy (WPS) –**

Consistent with the WPS, STETS seeks to ensure that its courses are accessible regardless of students' social, economic or ethnic background. STETS aims to help its students overcome the following potential barriers to their learning (as identified by the WPS):

**Financial** – where appropriate, students receive help from the STETS student hardship fund and/or assistance in accessing other additional funds;

**Geographical** – the STETS mode of learning delivery ensures that students in more isolated areas are not disadvantaged: students engage with online learning materials and attend a weekly tutorial or local learning group within 30-minutes' travel time from their home, apart from during the writing-up periods at the end of each module;

**Social and cultural** – some STETS students are already graduates; for others the STETS Course is their first experience of higher education and they may bring a history of under-achievement and diminished confidence: STETS seeks to build students' academic and professional confidence and to enhance their study skills by means of a dedicated study skills folder and regular study skills input at residential, especially in the first year. These resources are engaged with on a voluntary basis by students – many of whom to choose to make use of them.

**Accessibility** – STETS is committed to making all necessary reasonable and anticipatory adjustments in its learning and teaching arrangements to ensure that disabled students (including those with physical and mobility difficulties, those with hearing or visual impairments, those with specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dyspraxia, those with certain medical conditions and those with mental health problems) are not disadvantaged; for instance: STETS has published a 'Student/Staff Disability Policy'; Sarum College, the venue for STETS residential weekends offers good access for those with physical and mobility difficulties; STETS current BA & PG Diploma programmes are specifically designated for student support by the Secretary of State, rendering STETS students eligible for the Disabled Students Allowance; as far as possible, STETS enables individually-tailored support for students with disclosed learning differences, to help students play to their strengths and discover their own best learning style;

**Time** – because it is largely delivered via online learning and its components are carefully timed, the STETS Course is highly flexible, enabling students to study alongside full-time careers and/or substantial caring commitments.

**Equal Opportunities Policy (EOP) –**

Consistent with the EOP, STETS aims to 'maintain an inclusive and supportive study and work environment' (EOP). STETS is committed to preventing unlawful discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and promoting mutual respect. It seeks to ensure that students and staff do not engage in discriminatory practices, in relation to, for instance, disability, race, religion and belief, or sexual orientation. This

is not only enshrined in the student compact, but is also integral to the content of the STETS Course, reflecting key elements of Christian belief and anticipated practice. STETS is committed to a working and learning environment that is free from any form of harassment: procedures for dealing with harassment by a student or member of staff are detailed in the STETS 'Policy Statement on Harassment'.

**Employability and Skills Policy (ESP) –**

By definition, almost all STETS students are either ordinands or already in public ministry. Some will be stipendiary ministers, others will be self-supporting. Consistent with the ESP, STETS aims to develop 'employability skills within the curriculum... through application in a context '(ESP). The STETS Course is vocationally oriented and holistically integrates work-based learning.

**10) RESOURCES FOR THE PROGRAMME**

**Library and bookshop**

STETS students and staff are members of Sarum College Library, which is staffed by a Chartered Librarian (part-time), and a full-time Assistant Librarian.

The Library is one of the best theological libraries in the south of England and presently holds over 36,000 volumes. About 1,000 volumes are added each year as a result of donations and the purchase of new books. Subscriptions are held for 50 current journals, which may be read in the Library. Some journals are also available online.

The Library is normally open on weekdays between 09:00 hrs and 17:00 hrs (and until 18:30 hrs on the Fridays of residential weekends), but is not staffed during the lunch hour from 13:00 hrs to 14:00 hrs. It is also open (but not staffed) throughout residential weekends and schools. Access at other times is by arrangement with the librarian or a member of the STETS staff. The Library operates a postal service and also offers inter-library loan facilities for books not in the library's stock.

The library catalogue Heritage Online is fully computerised and is searchable at: <http://217.158.105.100/heri4/>. This is a significant help to STETS's distance-learning students.

Students are also sometimes able to gain membership of theological libraries in their local areas. Church training officers assist them with advice in this regard. Library staff have good links with the network of theological libraries and can also help.

The Librarian, Mrs Jenny Monds, is aware of this validation submission, and is willing to be consulted about any library issues raised by the process.

Sarum College Bookshop, managed by the Librarian and staffed by the Librarian (part-time), an Assistant Manager and a Bookshop Assistant is one of the best academic theological bookshops in the UK. It moved into new expanded premises at the front of the College in Autumn 2002. STETS also works closely with the Bookshop to ensure that copies of the main texts needed for the course are easily available. STETS students, Local Tutors and Training Ministers are eligible for a 10% discount on books.

The bookshop is open 09:00 to 16.45 hrs Monday to Friday and 10.00 to 16.00 on Saturdays It also offers a mail order service.

**IT learning and support**

Computer facilities are available at Sarum College via terminals in the library, which offer word-processing facilities, access to specialist software relevant to the course, and Internet access. WiFi is available in the college.

STETS students are also expected to have access to a personal computer with internet access. The STETS 'Computing Good Practice' leaflet offers useful advice on how to manage and protect data. Students are encouraged to use the STETS e-mail discussion lists, currently housed on the Surrey University server. These allow the posting of messages onto electronic 'notice boards' accessible by other students and staff.

Limited financial support is available for students who experience difficulty gaining access to home computing facilities.

*STeTSLearn*: STETS delivers modules on line, and will use the Moodle platform for this purpose. This offers extra facilities compared to the conventional printed module: e.g. video clips, sound files, discussion boards, easy searching of the module text, and greater portability. A full induction as to how to use *STeTSLearn* is offered prior to the first e-learning module.

Other audio visual resources: STETS is equipped with a large-screen television, video projector, video recorder, digital sound recorder, DVD player, digital video camera and digital still camera. This equipment supports the teaching sessions during residential periods; supports the voice and presentational skills workshop; and is available for student presentations and project work.

#### **Teaching space**

STETS has use of teaching and study space in Sarum College.

#### **Teaching staff**

Teaching is provided by STETS's core academic staff.

### **11) STAFF DEVELOPMENT, RESEARCH AND THE PROGRAMME**

STETS conducts regular staff development seminars for core and associate staff under the leadership of the Principal and Director of Education. These are intended to identify and promote best educational and research practice. Sessions have normally taken place once or twice each term, on a Tuesday afternoon, when part-time staff members are usually also available to participate.

Themes of sessions have included:

- Summative and formative assessment;
- Gender issues in ministerial training;
- Effective chairing of meetings;
- Training in the use of Microsoft Office software;
- Lecturing skills;
- Seminar leadership;
- Non-essay based assignments;
- Using small groups in the lecture room;
- Promoting staff research and writing;
- Placement marking;
- Refashioning the curriculum;
- Supervising projects;
- VLE Training;

- Reusable Learning Objects (RELOs);
- Review of Team Functioning.

Sarum College provides a fruitful context for promoting staff academic development and research. There are daily opportunities to have conversations with visiting scholars and church leaders at mealtimes and the Bookshop provides a useful source of contacts with (visiting) publishers through the hosting of regular book launches and contact with publishers.

Appropriately qualified staff members are acting as co-supervisors of MPhil research for students registered with other universities, and as external examiners at Masters and Doctoral level.

STETS offers a programme of sabbaticals/study leave of 3 months every 5 years (or 6 weeks every 2.5 years) to full-time staff and (pro rata) to part-time staff, which have been effectively used for staff members' personal and academic development

All academic staff members are placed in dyads for the ongoing responsibility of observing one another's teaching practice.

STETS also encourages all academic staff members to keep up to date in their specialist subject areas and meets the cost of attending relevant conferences. Academic staff members are encouraged to attend at least one such professional conference each year.

Regular staff appraisals monitor take-up of these and other opportunities for staff development.

STETS is committed to itself modelling reflective practice: it is a flexible institution with well monitored and constantly evolving policies and practices.

#### List of Appendices:

- Appendix A Overview of Programme
- Appendix B FdA & BA (Hons) modules mapped to QAA benchmarks
- Appendix C FdA & BA (Hons) modules mapped to Hind Learning Outcomes
- Appendix D Progression through run-out provision
- Appendix E Set of marking criteria for formational assessment for both FdA and BA (Hons) Theology for Christian Ministry and Mission programmes whether or not the assessment leads to a mark
- Appendix F Table mapping learning outcomes to assessments
- Appendix G Document which maps subject specific elements

Appendix 1 – FdA & BA (Hons) modules mapped to residential weekends

Appendix 2 – STETS compliance with QAA Guidelines for Distance Learning Provision

Appendix 3 – STETS APEL Policy

Appendix 4 – STETS Quality Assurance Procedures

Appendix 5 – STETS Student/Staff Disability Policy  
Appendix 6 – STETS Governing Structure