

Proposed changes to the way that the Church of England funds training for clergy were given backing by the General Synod today.

The debate on Resourcing Ministerial Education, forming part of *Renewal and Reform*, affirmed plans to create a new framework in which dioceses would receive funding for those entering ministerial education to be used more flexibly.

The plans, which were given initial approval in February 2015's Synod meeting, seek to support an increase in those training for ministry by 50% from 2020 for a decade by making funding clearer and fit for purpose.

The Bishop of Sheffield and chair of the Church of England's Ministry Council, Steven Croft introduced the debate saying:

"The vision of Resourcing Ministerial Education is a growing Church with a flourishing ministry. In order to grow and flourish, the body of Christ needs its ligaments and sinews, ordained and lay ministers. We have listened carefully to what dioceses have told us about the qualities required in those ministers. We need ordained and lay ministers who are collaborative, missional and adaptable."

"The block grant system is about more than the distribution of funds for training. It has the capacity to build strong relationships between dioceses on the one hand and TEI's on the other, to bring them into conversation about the formation which is needed and offered and to increase trust across the Church."

Following Synod's approval, the Ministry Council will carry out further consultation on the proposed funding framework with theological colleges and dioceses - and report back to Synod on the progress as a result of the changes.

The full report on the progress of the Resourcing Ministerial Education proposals since February 2015 General Synod is available at

[https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2442565/gs\\_2020\\_-\\_resourcing\\_ministerial\\_education.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2442565/gs_2020_-_resourcing_ministerial_education.pdf)

# Notes to editors

A blog written by the Bishop of Sheffield ahead of Synod addressing concerns expressed by Theological Colleges about the proposals is available at:

<http://cofecomms.tumblr.com/post/139174948072/rme-response-to-principals-concerns>

The full motion as carried by the General Synod reads:

That this Synod:

- a. reaffirm the five objectives set out in GS 1979 for achieving the vision of a growing church with a flourishing ministry;
- b. note that work on Resourcing Ministerial Education and on enhancing quality in all stages of ministerial development, set out in GS 2020 contributes to these objectives;
- c. welcome the proposed new funding arrangements for initial ministerial education, agreed by the Archbishops' Council following wide consultation, set out in GS 2020 *and, recognising the vital contribution of TEIs and the importance of their full involvement in developing with dioceses a shared understanding of ministry and ministerial education and in implementing as set out in Annex F of GS 2020 the funding arrangements, request the Archbishops' Council to report to the Synod by July 2017 on progress towards achieving these objectives;*
- d. request the Archbishops' Council to report back to the Synod by July 2018 on the progress being made to secure both a step change in the number of ordinands and continuing improvement in their quality and deployability; and
- e. *request the Archbishops' Council to report back to the Synod by July 2018 on the progress made by dioceses to secure a step change in both the number and variety of authorised lay ministries.*

The motion includes amendments in italics which included in full below.

The Revd Canon Mark Tanner (Universities and TEIs) moved as an amendment:

After "GS 2020" in paragraph (c) insert "and, recognising the vital contribution of TEIs and the importance of their full involvement in developing with dioceses a shared understanding of ministry and ministerial education and in implementing as set out in Annex F of GS 2020 the funding arrangements, request the Archbishops' Council to report to the Synod by July 2017 on progress towards achieving these objectives".

Christine Corteen (Salisbury) moved as an amendment:

At the end insert-

"(-) request the Archbishops' Council to report back to the Synod by July 2018 on the progress made by dioceses to secure a step change in both the number and variety of authorised lay ministries."

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**Source URL:** <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/press-releases/synod-signals-support-new-ministry-funding-framework>