



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Ministry Council

Inspection Report

Lancashire and Cumbria
Theological Partnership

March – May 2012

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GLOSSARY

CCS	<i>Christian Calling and Service certificate</i>
CDBF	Carlisle Diocesan Board of Finance
FdA	Foundation Degree
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
IME	Initial Ministerial Education
LCTP	Lancashire and Cumbria Theological Partnership
MSM	<i>Mission Shaped Ministry course</i>
RTP	Regional Training Partnership

LIST OF INSPECTORS

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THE INSPECTIONS FRAMEWORK

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

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

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

Confidence

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

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

Confidence with qualifications

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

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

No confidence

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

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

THE REPORT OF THE INSPECTION OF THE LANCASHIRE AND CUMBRIA THEOLOGICAL PARTNERSHIP

March – May 2012

SUMMARY

Introduction

In 2007 the former Carlisle and Blackburn Diocesan Training Institute was reformed as the Lancashire and Cumbria Theological Partnership (LCTP) in what LCTP describes as 'a unique relationship between the Churches and the University of Cumbria.' LCTP remains a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. It is, however, co-owned and governed (50/50) in a partnership between the University of Cumbria and the Dioceses of Blackburn and Carlisle.

LCTP exists:

- i to educate men and women for all categories of ordained ministry in the Church of England
- ii to provide Reader training for men and women in the Dioceses of Blackburn and Carlisle
- iii to offer theological education for independent learners in the context of a confessionally based study

At the time of the inspection, there were 24 ordinands on programme at LCTP, 41 Readers in training and 118 independent students.

Summary of outcomes

The inspection team regards Lancashire and Cumbria Training Partnership as fit for purpose for preparing candidates for ordained and Reader ministries and for providing programmes of theological education for independent students.

CRITERIA	OUTCOME
A. Aims, objectives and evaluation of the institution	Confidence
B Relationships with other institutions	Confidence
C Curriculum for formation and education	Confidence
D Community and corporate life	Confidence
E Worship and training in public worship	Confidence
F Ministerial, personal and spiritual formation	Confidence
G Teaching and learning: content, method and resources	Confidence
H Practical and pastoral theology	Confidence
I Teaching staff	Confidence
J Ancillary staff	Confidence
K Students	Confidence

L Governance, management, constitution and organisation	Confidence with Qualifications
M Business planning and risk management	Confidence with qualifications
N Financial policies and cost-effectiveness	Confidence
O Reserves policy and statutory liabilities	Confidence
P Accommodation	Confidence
Overall Outcome	Confidence

General observations

Whilst the inspectors found LCTP officers and staff to be in good heart and confident of the quality of the overall LCTP enterprise, they (the officers and staff) not surprisingly expressed a level of anxiety about the future. They were concerned about the financial implications of changes in HEFCE funding arrangements for the Partnership. They were also concerned about the Church of England's decision to seek a system of common awards for I.M.E. 1-7 and its likely effect on the relationship between LCTP and the University of Cumbria. They were yet further concerned that uncertainty about future validation arrangements had meant that revision of the LCTP curriculum had had to be postponed.

Response to the last inspection

The last inspection of LCTP – then the Carlisle and Blackburn Training Institute – took place in 2006 and the Senior Inspector carried out a Follow-Up Visit in July 2007. At the conclusion of the 2006 inspection, the inspectors made 17 recommendations. Documentary evidence provided ahead of the 2012 inspection, along with the inspectors' observations during the inspection itself, indicated that all recommendations had received careful consideration and eventual implementation.

Strengths

The strengths of the LCTP lie in

- Expertise and commitment of core teaching staff
- Efficiency of administration
- Residential weekend accommodation
- Development of students' ability to reflect theologically
- Worship – staff provide excellent models and students have ample opportunities to practise
- Provision of learning resources – book boxes, Blackboard, Google Books, generosity of staff, Rydal Hall, University.
- Standard of assessment
- Sense of community

- Students have the opportunity to explore the breadth of the Anglican tradition.
- Students' commitment, including their willingness to travel long distances, and their courtesy to staff and visiting lecturers.

Areas for attention

The areas for attention are:

- Working with sponsoring dioceses to achieve parity of training requirements for ordinands
- Timing of ordinations to fit more neatly with arrangements for the annual residential school
- Arrangements for the appointment of spiritual directors
- Provision of a wider range of portfolio requirements to accommodate a variety of learning styles
- Ensuring a baseline provision on Blackboard for each module of study
- The creation of a more open system of recruitment for Honorary Tutors and a more robust system of Honorary Tutor performance review
- Council membership and attendance
- Arrangements to enable a greater degree of student participation in LCTP governance
- The development of a risk management plan to be kept under regular review

FULL REPORT

INTRODUCTION

1. In 2007, the Dioceses of Blackburn and Carlisle came together with the recently founded University of Cumbria to reform the then Carlisle and Blackburn Diocesan Training Institute as the Lancashire and Cumbria Training Partnership (LCTP). Co-owned and governed (50/50) by the Dioceses and the University, the new partnership, like its predecessor, was set up as a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity.
2. The aims of the newly founded LCTP were:
 - i to educate men and women for all categories of ordained ministry in the Church of England
 - ii to train men and women to be Readers in the Dioceses of Blackburn and Carlisle
 - iii to offer theological education for independent learners in the context of a confessionally based study.
3. In order to better to achieve its stated aims, in 2008 LCTP undertook through the University of Cumbria a major revalidation of the full range of its programmes of study which led to LCTP's offering:
 - i a University Certificate in *Christian Calling and Service* awarded in the Dioceses of Blackburn and Carlisle to those successfully completing *Called to Serve*, an Education For Discipleship (EDF) programme.
 - ii a University Certificate in *Mission Shaped Ministry* awarded in the Dioceses of Blackburn and Carlisle to those successfully completing a programme of study which addresses the challenges of, and learning arising from Pioneer Ministry and Fresh Expressions of Church.
 - iii A Foundation Degree in *Practical Theology*, a programme normally followed by LCTP ordinands as Initial Ministerial Education (IME) 1-3.
 - iv A BA (Hons) Top-Up programme, *Practical Theology*, which is the equivalent of the third years of a BA Honours degree and can be accessed either in IME 1-3 or IME 4-7
 - v a Master's programme in *Practical Theology* as an option for some students within IME 4-7.

4. 2012 was to have seen a further revalidation exercise but present uncertainties arising out of the Church of England's decision to set in place a system of Common Awards to cover IME 1-7 has led LCTP and the University of Cumbria to agree that current validation arrangements will remain in place for a further year pending developments at the national level.
5. At the time of the inspection, LCTP had 24 ordinands (15 women and 9 men) and 41 Readers in training (26 women and 15 men) the majority falling into the 40-60 age-range. There were in addition 118 students classified as independent most of whom were either involved in IME 4-7 or following one of the diocesan based University Certificate programmes in *Christian Calling and Service* or *Mission Shaped Ministry* for which LCTP has oversight. This made a total student body of 183. Many of the students hold graduate status and bring to the various programmes offered by LCTP a wealth of both professional expertise and life experience. There are some students, however, who come to LCTP programmes with little more than basic educational skills and experience. Hence across the LCTP enterprise staff work with a challenging range of academic abilities. That they do this well was evidenced to the inspectors by the many appreciative comments we received from students with regard to the help and support provided by tutorial staff at all levels.
6. It is also important to note that LCTP provides theological education and formation across an extremely wide geographical area in the far North West of England. This inevitably poses significant logistical and organisational challenge. The inspectors were impressed, therefore, by the way in which the small team of core staff (2.5 fte equivalent) and a large and widely dispersed body of honorary tutors – lay and ordained – manage to deliver high quality teaching and learning. The inspectors were equally impressed by the dedication and commitment of the students, many of whom have to travel considerable distances in often inclement weather to attend evening course sessions. The LCTP enterprise clearly requires a high level of detailed and skilled planning.
7. During the course of the inspection which ran from March to May 2012, the inspectors were present across the whole of two residential weekends for ordinands as well as at the residential weekend for Readers, all held at Rydal Hall, the Diocese of Carlisle's excellent retreat house. Recently modernised and up-graded, Rydal Hall, set in spacious grounds, provides good quality social space and teaching accommodation, single en-suite bedrooms and quality catering. In addition, inspectors attended a random sample of 11 evening tutorials and were represented at a meeting of the LCTP Council and at meetings of the core staff, of voluntary tutors, of Readers and the Board of Studies. Inspectors also held individual interviews with each member of the core staff. This allowed the inspectors to gather a wealth of evidence on which to base our inspection report and

recommendations, as too did the opportunities afforded us across the weekends and at tutorial sessions to meet formally and informally with students from across the years.

8. Inspectors also received detailed information about the life and work of LCTP provided ahead of the inspection. LCTP's response to the Inspection Questionnaire, minutes of meetings, programmes for residential weekends, day schools and the annual summer residential along with policy and procedure documents were of great value as the inspectors sought to measure the Partnership against the inspection criteria.
9. Finally, the inspectors were highly appreciative of the warm welcome extended to us by all members of LCTP across the period of the inspection. We were also appreciative of the willingness of staff and students to engage with us openly and freely and to provide answers to our often probing and sometimes challenging questions. This made our task both the pleasanter and the easier.
10. The report that follows is written, and the paragraphs follow, in relation to the criteria set out in the Handbook, *Quality Assurance and Enhancement in Ministerial Education: Inspection, Curriculum Approval, Moderation*. The criteria are printed in *italics* and recommendations are printed in **bold**.

SECTION ONE: AIMS AND KEY RELATIONS

A Aims, objectives and evaluation of the institution

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

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

11. As already stated above in the Summary and Introduction to this report, the published aims of LCTP are:
 - i to educate men and women for all categories of ordained ministry in the Church of England
 - ii to train men and women to be Readers in the Dioceses of Blackburn and Carlisle
 - iii to offer theological education for independent learners in the context of a confessionally based study.
12. LCTP also publishes programme handbooks giving overall aims and objectives for each of the six programmes of study for which it has oversight, clearly marking differentiation of expectation and outcome for the various categories of student. All individual course modules come with a printed module booklet which gives clearly stated aims and a list of intended outcomes against which the learner can measure individual progress and development.
13. In formulating aims and objectives for its various programmes of study, LCTP has been heedful of the need to ensure that they are encompassed within the wider vision statement of the Cumbria and Lancashire Regional Training Partnership (RTP). That vision statement sets the RTP aims as being:
 - To encourage and form Christians for discipleship, witness and ministry
 - To enable Christians to establish spiritual foundations for vocational living
 - To enable Christians to grow in the knowledge and understanding of the Christian tradition for the life-long Christian journey
 - To equip Christians to engage with the dynamic of being part of the living and missionary church in the contemporary context

- To enable Christians to be self-aware and to grow the Christ-like qualities to be able to live with risk, to be resilient while maintaining appropriate vulnerability and openness to others
 - To develop a wholeness of life which is marked by holiness
14. The inspectors were of the view that the various and detailed statements of aims and objectives published by LCTP are such as to give confidence that those aims and objectives are appropriate to the preparation of ordinands and authorised lay ministers for public ministry within the breadth of traditions of the Church of England.
- A.ii There should be evidence that the current, published statements on training policy produced by the various denominational bodies have been suitably integrated into the training programme.*
15. LCTP has at present only Anglicans following its ministerial education programmes. The inspectors were satisfied that the training offered by LCTP is appropriate to the wide range of traditions found in the Church of England and that ordinands and Readers are appropriately prepared for their future ministries.
- A.iii There should be evidence of action taken in response to (a) the previous inspection and curriculum approval reports and any follow-up (b) the evaluation of other external bodies and (c) the institution's self-evaluation.*
16. LCTP was inspected in 2006 and there was a follow-up visit by the Senior Inspector in 2007 at which time she expressed a general satisfaction with the way in which LCTP had addressed the majority of the inspection recommendations. She noted, however, that LCTP would not be in a position fully to implement some of the recommendations until new structural arrangements and the Cumbria and Lancashire RTP were in place.
17. Five years on from the 2006 inspection and its follow-up, the current inspectors were pleased to note that the recommendations of the 2006 inspectors had for the most part been addressed. We noted, however, that issues relating to the parity of length of training requirements across the Dioceses of Blackburn and Carlisle still remain unresolved and that there is still no provision for student representation on the Council nor yet on other LCTP committees and groups where student opinion and insight could make a valuable contribution to the Partnership's enterprise. These two matters will form the basis for recommendations in Sections F and L of this report.
18. Inspectors were provided with copies of the annual External Examiners reports for 2007 through 2011 and of Annual Evaluatory Reports to the University of Cumbria. These reports and LCTP's response to them showed a commendable readiness on the part of LCTP to accept suggestions for improvement of product and a willingness to act on them.

19. LCTP's responses to the Inspection Questionnaire and its Critical Review of Curriculum, which the inspectors received as part of the Inspection Documentation, evidenced an ability on the part of the Principal and staff to reflect thoughtfully on the whole of LCTP current curriculum offering. These documents provided inspectors with evidence that in all areas – curriculum, teaching and learning, assessment, student feedback – Principal and staff are aware of both strengths and weaknesses and constantly seeking means of enhancing all aspects of the LCTP enterprise.

The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion A, Aims, Objectives and Achievements of the Institution.

B Relationships with other institutions

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

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

20. LCTP describes itself as 'a unique partnership between the Churches in Cumbria and Lancashire and the University of Cumbria.' This means that LCTP forms part of the University and is therefore fully integrated into the Higher Education structure and arrangements for Quality Assurance. The Council of LCTP is currently made up of eight members, with four of those members representing the University and the other four representing the Churches.

21. As part of the inspection process, the inspectors received detailed documentation relating to the validation of all programmes of study approved by the University of Cumbria and overseen by LCTP. Scrutiny of the documentation and observation of the delivery of the LCTP curriculum led the inspectors to the view that the various training and formation programmes offered by LCTP with the University of Cumbria are fit for purpose and appropriate to the range of ministries for which LCTP students are being prepared.

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

22. The partnership with the University of Cumbria brings with it significant benefit to LCTP. There is in post a shared member of staff. All LCTP staff,

core and honorary, are regarded as honorary University lecturers and have access to University staff training opportunities and facilities of which they take advantage as appropriate (see para 113). In addition, LCTP has free usage of University premises for teaching and other meetings, whilst students have access to University library and e-learning resources and to the University's learning support services for those with special learning needs.

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

23. LCTP was closely involved in the formation of the Cumbria and Lancashire Regional Training Partnership (RTP) and the Principal of LCTP is a RTP Director. Wherever possible LCTP seeks to work across the denominations and to ensure that its students have opportunity to make ecumenical contacts.

24. Opportunity to provide ministerial formation and training for candidates other than Anglicans would be welcomed by LCTP but is at present made unlikely given the in-house arrangements which both the Methodist and the United Reformed Churches have in place.

25. With regard to relationships with secular organisations and other faith communities, LCTP offers a measure of teaching and provides opportunity for placements in non-parochial contexts. It should be remembered, however, that students following LCTP programmes of study are all part-time. They are for the most part involved in full-time secular employment and have their own particular social networks. In addition, many of the students from Lancashire also live in multi-ethnic and multi-faith communities where a level of interaction across cultures is the norm. Hence, it is through their daily experience of living and working that LCTP students in the main part come to a fuller and deeper understanding of their local communities and learn to see those communities as a valuable source for theological reflection.

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

26. As stated above, LCTP plays an active role in the Cumbria and Lancashire RTP. It also works in close partnership with the University of Cumbria which is a respected provider of Religious Studies programmes.

<p>The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion B, Relationships with other institutions</p>
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SECTION TWO: CURRICULUM FOR FORMATION AND EDUCATION

C Curriculum for formation and education

Curriculum advisors will consider the proposals for the curriculum to be offered by the training institution in the coming years against the policy statements of the relevant sponsoring churches. They will evaluate the formational and educational principles and design of the proposed programmes including their assessment proposals.

C.i The institution should offer a theological rationale for its approach to mission and ministry consistent with the principles of the churches for which it trains ministers and for the education it offers other groups of learners.

27. LCTP presents a clear statement of the theological rationale for its approach to ministry in the Inspection Questionnaire and the Validation Documents for each of its programmes (MA, BA, FdA, CertHE, MSM and CCS). The same principles are stated in student-friendly language in the relevant Programme Handbooks and also in a published Policy on Practical Theology and the Curriculum. This rationale takes account of both the Hind Report (2003) and *Shaping the Future* (2006) and the course content is carefully plotted against the House of Bishops' Learning Outcomes (as set out in *Shaping the Future*), in a series of Agreed Expectation Charts for readers at the point of licensing, ordinands at the point of ordination, and curates on IME4-7. LCTP defines Christian ministry as 'a theological activity and as such distinctive from any other forms of social activity or concern' and theology as 'the reasoned and critical study of the Christian tradition in the light of concerns for the mission of God.' LCTP asserts the importance that 'all who minister in the name of the Church are theologically equipped to an appropriate level in order to fulfil their God-given calling to be effective public ministers.' (See also G.i.)

C.ii The institution should offer a formational and educational rationale for its approach to ministerial training and for the education it intends to offer to other groups of learners.

28. LCTP presents a clear statement of the formational and educational rationale for its approach to training in the Inspection Questionnaire and in its Policy for the Integration of Learning. The course is designed with mature learners in mind, and a key principle is that formation and education do not take place in isolation, so that students should be encouraged to draw on their experiences of practical ministry as they undertake their studies. Students are encouraged to reflect on prior experiences and also to reflect on their ongoing ministry as they pursue their part-time studies, alongside family life and (for many) secular employment. From observation of teaching sessions, most notably on the modules 'Formed by Context', 'Formed by the Bible' and 'Formed by Tradition' taught at weekend courses, it is clear that

LCTP puts this policy into action, for students are encouraged to reflect upon their experiences in the light of the theological concepts being introduced. We also read samples of portfolios compiled by students on their placement, and these demonstrated theological reflection on new experiences.

C.iii The institution should offer a set of programmes which will enable candidates to be prepared for their envisaged ministries, in line with the developing policies of the sponsoring churches, and appropriate programmes to educate other groups of learners.

29. From the Inspection Questionnaire and Programme Validation Documents, it is evident that LCTP is mindful of the variety of different backgrounds from which their students come to ministry: some will have a wealth of practical experience but not much experience of academic study; other students will have more academic experience and less practical. To this end, LCTP offers a structured programme, from modules offered to learners who are exploring their vocation, through to pre-ordination training and Reader training. A clear bridge is also built towards post-ordination training. There are a variety of pathways that students may take through the levels in order to complement their prior learning.

C. iv The proposals concerning assessment should enable the institution to advise church leaders on the suitability of candidates for the envisaged ministry, in line with the guidelines of the sponsoring churches. Assessment proposals for other groups of learners should be consistent with the aims and objectives of the programmes being offered.

30. The principal mode of assessment, as set out in the Programme Validation Documents, is a 4,500-word portfolio. This is the same for every module at every level, from Foundation Degree to MA. We note that the uniform assessment requirement of a 4,500-word portfolio for each module is out of line with practices elsewhere, where wordage generally increases across the levels so that, for example, a first-year module might require a total of 3,000 words from a set of assessment tasks whilst an MA module might be assessed by a single 6,000-word essay. The rationale for the LCTP approach, as spelled out in the Validation Documents, is that it allows for 'flexible and differentiated modes of assessment appropriate to the intended learning outcomes of the individual modules and within the overall aims of the programme.' Theoretically, then, specific modes of assessment may be set for each module, so long as the total is 4,500 words or equivalent. This therefore allows for progression, so that introductory modules could comprise a variety of shorter tasks and more advanced modules could require more sustained written pieces. This principle is satisfactory, but see G.iii. for some concerns as to how it works in practice.

The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion C, Curriculum for formation and education.

SECTION THREE: MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT

D Community and Corporate Life

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

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

31. LCTP has a Community and Corporate Life policy, which clearly states the way in which LCTP sees itself as operating as a community, within its corporate life, which is congruent with its essential values as a Christian education body. This policy addresses, in particular, gender, ethnicity, disability and natural justice issues. Approved by Council, it seeks to ensure that staff, students and others who work with LCTP: maintain appropriate awareness of issues pertaining to gender; demonstrate knowledge and understanding of matters of ethnicity; ensure that disability is not a bar to full access to education and formation; and seeks to ensure that LCTP observes and maintains a positive natural justice model. As an example, a student who has dyslexia was observed recording teaching sessions using a micro-recorder, to alleviate the stress of listening and writing at the same time.

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

32. From observation and discussion, it is clear that LCTP staff exhibit a positive model of corporate behaviour, both towards each other and to students. It became evident through conversation with staff and students that there is a positive feeling of parity and inclusivity, between ordinands, readers and independent students and that students value and treat each other with integrity. LCTP has not had to cater for very many physically disabled students, but where this has been the case, examples were cited of ways in which these students were enabled to be fully integrated into the learning community. Such examples included the welcomed presence of carers, where appropriate.

33. It was evident from observed teaching sessions, for example in the Church, Society and Mission module, that topics such as disability, natural justice etc, are integrated into the curriculum, enabling students to consider such issues within the wider Church context and their implications for public ministry.

The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion D, Community and corporate life

E Worship and training in public worship

Inspectors will consider the arrangements for common worship and the policy underlying them, noting the use of the authorized and other forms of worship, and how worship is conducted. Inspectors will note the ways in which ministerial candidates are trained to plan, prepare and conduct public worship.

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

34. We observed worship during the residential weekends, for both ordinands and readers, at Rydal Hall. Given the size of both of these groups, the chapel at Rydal was too small to be used for worship services and so instead the drawing room was set up for the various acts of worship. This space, furnished with symbolic aids, provided an atmosphere conducive to worship, with silence, music and words used appropriately.

35. During the residential weekends, students also attended services at local churches .

36. We noted that there was no space allocated for private prayer (See F.vii).

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

37. There is a clear and detailed policy outlining the place of worship within the life of LCTP. The main body of this policy covers when and how worship will take place during the programme and who will be involved, including the roles students will be expected to undertake. The introduction to this policy clearly describes the place of worship and the central and valued part it plays within the life of the LCTP, The appendices provide comprehensive and helpful guidelines on each of the different services from Common Worship, Book of Common Prayer (BCP) as well as services from other traditions. This policy also includes guidelines on leading intercessions and preaching. These subjects are also covered in some depth during the teaching programmes for both ordinands and readers.

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

38. The Worship Policy described in E.ii provided detailed information about the use of authorised and innovative forms of worship and also addresses worship in ecumenical situations.
39. During the residential weekends we observed a range of Common Worship services which involved the students in a variety of different roles, appropriate to their level of experience. We are aware that the Summer School includes the use of worship services from BCP as well as more innovative forms of worship but because of the timing of the inspection were not able to observe this.
40. Wherever possible students are encouraged to undertake a parish placement in a church with a different tradition to their own. Students spoke very positively of their experiences of worship in these contrasting parish placements and commented that the experience had given them the opportunity to be involved in taking part in and leading worship in a tradition different from their own. Many acknowledged that this experience had challenged them to think about their approach to worship in its different forms.

E.iv. There should be a policy about expected attendance at public worship and evidence of its outworking.

41. Expectations for student attendance at worship are carefully laid down within the Worship Policy, including circumstances under which absence may be acceptable and how this should be managed. From our observations during the residential weekends, students appear to adhere to this policy.

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

42. This inevitable tension is worked through creatively. We observed tutors leading a range of services and they took the opportunity to model effective leading and preaching whilst at the same time unobtrusively using the opportunity to promote learning about the structure of worship and good practice in leading worship. This means that students have the chance to observe and learn whilst still having a spiritual experience.

43. LCTP's Worship Policy makes clear reference to the two aspects in its introduction.

E.vi The institution should have a policy, available to candidates, on training in public worship. It should ensure that candidates plan, prepare, and effectively conduct public worship, including preaching.

44. LCTP has a separate policy for Training in Public Worship, as distinct from the Worship Policy described earlier; however the two policies clearly complement each other.
45. The policy provides details of the taught modules of the programme which address these areas and also refers to the importance of 'workplace learning' in the student's home parish where he/she will be conducting worship and preaching. The policy encourages the minister(s) assessing students in the parish to provide feedback on how they lead worship and preach and also suggests that students may also wish to seek feedback from others within the parish. Feedback and evaluation forms for this purpose are provided on the LCTP website. These can be emailed to the LCTP or returned by post.
- E.vii *The institution should ensure that the policy is adhered to and that proper oversight is exercised over this part of the programme of formation.*
46. We were able to attend some of the sessions on Preaching during the readers' residential weekend. These were led by a retired actor, who is also a minister and took the form of workshops with students receiving individual feedback and tips and techniques to improve for example their voice projection, timing and pace. These were very effective and students spoke very positively of the sessions. We are aware that ordinands receive similar training throughout the programme.
47. Both Ordinands and readers play active roles during the worship at residential weekends and Ordinands were also able to describe their involvement in worship at Summer School.
48. They receive feedback on this in line with the policy as described in E.viii.
- E.viii *There should be an appropriate policy and practice for reviewing and assessing the leading of worship.*
49. LCTP has a Worship Feedback Policy, which explains how tutors will provide feedback to students who have taken part in leading worship and preaching. The format that this will take is provided in the organisation's Worship Policy so that students can be clear what will be the areas being assessed. There are also guidelines in the Policy for Training in Public Worship about feedback being sought from the student's own minister and others in the Church attended. Appropriate forms are provided for this.
- E.ix *The students should receive critical and constructive comment, attending to performance, content and process from staff and peers.*
50. The LCTP has a Worship Feedback Policy Feedback on the conducting of worship is given to students confidentially. However we were able to

observe, during the weekends that immediately following an act of worship in which students were involved, the tutor designated on the worship rota, who had made discreet notes during the service, immediately after the event took the student(s) into a private area to provide feedback. We spoke to the principal about this who confirmed that tutors give feedback as soon as possible after the event to ensure the maximum learning. The Worship Feedback Policy makes no mention of formal peer review in this context but we did observe students informally commenting on worship led by their fellow trainees.

The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion E, Worship and training in public worship.

F Ministerial, personal and spiritual formation

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

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

51. The policy regarding ministerial formation is set out in the Validation Documents and also communicated to students in the Policy for the Integration of Learning. It is clear to us that the programme is very student-centred and allows great flexibility for students to follow bespoke programmes drawn from broad pathways. We note that there is some provision for variation in the length of training but that, as the Policy states, this 'lies with the sponsoring diocese and not with LCTP.' From interviews with focus groups of students and from observation of a staff meeting, we learned that there is a discrepancy in practice between the dioceses of Blackburn and Carlisle in determining the length of individual students' programme of study.
52. From interviews with focus groups of students from each of the three years, we learned that students felt that their prior learning was being taken into account when determining their individual pathway through the programme. However, some students felt that the implementation of the policy on formation was not clear and transparent for those who were to be ordained after 2 or sometimes even 1 year. It also appears that some students can be on the course for several months before receiving confirmation of the length of their programme.
53. On observing discussion of students' progress at a Staff Meeting, we learned that staff members were concerned that they could not adequately prepare students for ordination in cases where dioceses insist on a

drastically foreshortened programme. In such cases, staff members can raise concerns in students' final reports, but it is the Bishops' decision as to when candidates are ready for ordination.

Recommendation 1

We recommend that LCTP consult with dioceses to ensure parity of training requirements for ordinands.

54. From interviews with the focus groups and, particularly from informal conversation with final-year students, there was some concern about the fact that the final summer-school takes place after ordination. This creates difficulties for the new deacons, who have to attend these schools within weeks of being ordained, and puts a strain on their families, who have already had to make time and organize childcare for the ordination retreat. It also creates confusion for their new parishes. Students at other levels find the presence of the newly ordained unsettling, and anecdotal evidence suggests that tensions can arise over the week.
55. It would be a far more natural progression if students could complete the course before undergoing the life-changing step of ordination. This could be achieved either by moving the residential school to an earlier point in the year or by negotiating with dioceses to have a later ordination date for ordinands from the courses.
56. Readers, on the other hand, complete their formal training by the middle of June but are not licensed until October. Feedback from some of the trainee Readers indicated that they felt that this was rather a long time gap.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that LCTP negotiate with dioceses regarding ordination/licensing dates or change timing of annual residential school, with a view to a timely completion of training before ordination/licensing.

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

57. We observed the common life of LCTP at two weekend courses for ordinands and a weekend for trainee readers, all held at Rydal Hall near Ambleside. On these occasions, we joined the community for taught sessions, worship, and meal breaks, which gave us an opportunity to meet students and staff informally. We also organized focus groups for students in each of the three years, and also held formal interviews with staff. We

observed the more dispersed life of the LCTP community by attending a selection of 10 teaching sessions around the region led mainly by honorary tutors.

58. We find the course commendable for the opportunities it offers students for questioning, discussion and reflection. Students find the course a safe space to explore their faith and their views of ministry: they have the freedom to interrogate their own beliefs and church traditions. They are also given leave to question ideas put forward by staff.
59. The tutorials clearly have a formational element, as students are encouraged to bring their own experiences into the discussion and to reflect on these. Students are very comfortable about such sharing and about being candid, as trust is built up within small groups.

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

60. From our interviews with focus groups and informal discussions with students, it is clear that LCTP provides a 'safe space' for them to explore their views and attitudes and to move out of their comfort-zones. All students undertake a 'contrasting placement', where they spend the period from Advent to Easter in a church from a different tradition from their own. This provides an ideal opportunity for such an exploration, and some students spoke of journeying from one tradition to another. From these interviews, and also from looking at examples of the substantial portfolios students compile while on placement, it is clear that students have the opportunity to reflect theologically on the different traditions and on the reasons why they feel more comfortable in a particular tradition.
61. Students are also exposed to different traditions within the Anglican Church through meeting students with different churchmanship on the course. The published Policy on Celebration of Eucharist by Ordained Women Priests or Ministers of Other Traditions states that 'it is important that, within the training process, all students, regardless of theological tradition, should be open and aware of differing traditions to their own,' whilst also giving students permission to follow their individual consciences and absent themselves from worship they would find problematic. Corporate worship on the course appears generally to be middle-of-the-road, but we note that other patterns of worship (e.g. BCP, creative liturgy) are experienced at Summer-School.
62. It is also clear that students have exposure to other denominations. We saw this in the March weekend course where the taught sessions were led by a

visiting tutor who is a Catholic priest and monk, and on the May weekend when the whole group attended Sunday worship at the Methodist church in Ambleside.

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

63. From our interviews with focus groups and from informal conversations, it is clear that students find all the core staff approachable and that it was easy to arrange meetings with any of them. We also noted this from observing staff-student interaction at the weekend courses. Each student is assigned a personal tutor whom they meet on a regular basis to discuss their spiritual development and formation, as well as to reflect theologically on material covered in formal teaching sessions. At the weekend courses, all staff tutors pinned up a list of available appointments and made sure that their tutees signed up. We noted that there was no course chaplain, although were encouraged to observe that the guest speaker at the March weekend offered one-to-one sessions for students. It would be desirable for such an arrangement to be put in place on all the residential courses.

Recommendation 3

We recommend that an independent chaplain be appointed to be available at weekend and annual residential courses.

64. We learned from the focus groups that not all students had spiritual directors, and that this was due to a waiting list at the diocesan level. This was confirmed by a staff member, who explained that, due to concerns about safeguarding within the wider Church, all spiritual directors and prospective spiritual directors have to undergo training and receive specific CRB clearance to undertake the role. This is creating delays at the moment, but the situation should ease as this process gets underway.

Recommendation 4

We recommend that LCTP urge the dioceses to progress the training of spiritual directors to ensure that all ordinands can have in place arrangements for independent spiritual direction, and that it should urge its students to take up opportunities for spiritual direction.

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

65. LCTP provides ample opportunities for students to reflect on these issues, as all students are part-time and so are working through their vocational

journey and theological studies whilst living their everyday lives. Students clearly value this very highly and they have opportunities to reflect theologically on their experiences in tutorials; sessions of the modules 'Formed by Context', 'Formed by the Bible' and 'Formed by Tradition'; and in personal tutor meetings. Students greatly valued the talks by the visiting tutor at the March weekend, in which he reflected on his engagement with the world as a monk and a priest. A feedback session allowed students to raise issues/questions, both in terms of what it meant for them and what they might seek to communicate to others in their ministry. Students felt free to ask challenging and provocative questions.

66. From our individual interviews with core staff, and our observations of their interactions with students (both informally and in their teaching, preaching and leadership of worship), we saw that they provided excellent models of reflective ministry, including displaying healthy levels of self-criticism.

F.vi The institution should enable candidates to develop as people, as future public ministers and as life-long learners, able to look forward to working effectively in the context of traditions other than their own, both within and beyond their own church.

67. See F.iii.

F.vii Candidates should be encouraged to make time for private prayer and to explore the expectations on the ordained in the areas of corporate and individual prayer, of general conduct and of lifestyle.

68. From our observation of the conduct of the Daily Offices at the weekend courses, it is clear that students are familiar with this pattern of worship. Rydal Hall provides a conducive atmosphere for prayer and reflection, because of its picturesque setting and the grounds, which include a Quiet Garden. However, there is no room specifically set aside for prayer, as both the Chapel and the Drawing Room are also used for meetings and teaching over the weekend. We believe that it would be an enhancement to have a suitably-furnished quiet room set aside for private prayer.

Recommendation 5

We recommend that a quiet space be provided for students during weekend residential courses

The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion F, Ministerial, personal and spiritual formation

SECTION FOUR: EDUCATION AND TRAINING

G Teaching and learning: content, method and resources

Inspectors will attend a representative sample of different teaching and learning activities, noting their quality and effectiveness and the methods used. They will examine the adequacy of educational resources and libraries, and will look at samples of students' written work. They should report on the full range of educational activities of the inspected institution including provision for other types of ministries and for independent students and auditors.

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

69. The aims and objectives of the educational programmes are set out in the Inspection Questionnaire and the programme Validation Documents. These documents state that the learning programme has been designed to take account of changes in ministerial education within the Anglican, Methodist and United Reformed Churches. In particular, the documents spell out ways in which the whole programme has been designed in the light of both the Hind Report and *Shaping the Future*. LCTP also publish Agreed Expectation Charts that outline what ordinands should have attained at the point of ordination; what trainee Readers should have achieved at the point of licensing; and the learning outcomes for students on IME4-7. Each of these Charts plots course content against the House of Bishops' Learning Outcomes as set out in *Shaping the Future*.
70. LCTP has a portfolio of six Awards validated by the University of Cumbria and through this, pre-and post-ordination education is mapped on to appropriate academic qualifications. So, independent learners who are exploring a vocation take the Foundation Degree programme (Education for Discipleship). Trainee readers take a Certificate in Higher Education (Reader Education Programme). Those on IME1-3 take either a Foundation Degree or a BA Hons top-up. Ordained persons on IME4-7 will either take a BA Hons top-up, or a postgraduate programme (MA or PhD). The Programme Specification for the BA top-up gives details of two different pathways depending on whether it is taken at IME1-3 or IME4-7.
71. LCTP benefits from the coherent set of dual roles that have been negotiated for two of its staff: the Vice-Principal (Carlisle) is also Officer for Initial Ministerial Education Years 4-7 in the Carlisle Diocese and the Vice-Principal (Blackburn) is also Warden of Readers for the Diocese of Blackburn. Both report making adjustments to training on LCTP based on feedback from 'end users' as to what would be most helpful. (There were some drawbacks with dual roles however: see L.iv.)

G.ii Teaching and learning programmes should serve the aims and objectives of the institution and of the educational programmes of which they form a part. They should demonstrate a proper balance between the academic, formational and practical aspects of training.

72. The teaching and learning programmes are carefully designed with the needs of learners and particularly the geography of the area in mind. Most modules are taught in local centres across the region and are delivered mainly by honorary tutors (though some members of the core staff have tutor groups). Modules typically have 7 two-hour tutorials. Whilst tutor groups varied in size – from 3 to 9 students – depending upon how many students lived in the area, all the groups observed were educationally viable and tutors devised learning activities with the size of the group in mind. We observed 11 tutorials around the region, and while we encountered diverse approaches, the quality of the teaching was in most cases very good. However there were a couple of examples where, whilst still of a satisfactory level, the sessions were being led by tutors who were not as familiar with the material and topic as might have been expected (see also I.ii.). Many of the tutorials took a discursive approach, and students were encouraged to reflect theologically on their own experiences in the light of topics introduced.
73. For most modules, the tutorials are supplemented by a Day School, generally held at either Rydal Hall or the University of Cumbria in Lancaster, which all students on the module attend. In addition, trainee Readers attend one residential weekend per year, and ordinands attend six residential weekends, all at Rydal Hall (trainee readers have the option of attending the Saturday sessions of the ordinands' weekends). The weekends cover a set of topics that are separate from the modules, and often involve guest speakers.
74. We observed one residential weekend for Readers and two weekends for ordinands, all held at Rydal Hall. We found that the programmes provided a good balance of worship, taught sessions, opportunities for discussion and reflection, and also breaks, during which students could build relationships and so help develop collegiality among dispersed group of learners. We witnessed a variety of different learning styles over the taught sessions, including lively anecdotal presentations; workshop-style sessions combining tutor input and student activities; traditional lectures; plenary discussions; seminar-style sessions. We noted that the core staff played a key role in holding the weekends together. For example, on one weekend, one member of staff gave a homily at the evening service that drew on themes introduced in the lectures, and another staff member gave a presentation in the evening that drew together threads from the guest lecturer's contributions, and related them to course themes.

75. Ordinands study three modules that are taught exclusively at the weekend courses: 'Formed by Tradition', 'Formed by Context' and 'Formed by the Bible'. These modules offer students the opportunity to reflect on their learning and formation, while engaging with critical theological issues and readings of key texts. We observed sessions of each of these modules and felt that they were a good example of students relating their academic work reflectively to their ministry.
 76. Ordinands also attend one residential school each year. This takes place out of the region and transport is arranged. Venues used include: Ripon College, Cuddesdon; St John's Nottingham; and St John's College, Durham. The residential courses have a rolling programme of three themes, so that students will experience all three over their time on the course. Teaching on these courses is shared between the core staff and academics at these institutions. The week has a worship programme, which is designed both to feed students spiritually and to give them practice in leading worship, and it is at residential school that students get experience of BCP and alternative worship.
 77. Due to the timing of the inspection, we did not observe a residential school, but we attended a meeting at which the core staff discussed plans for the 2012 Summer School and we were impressed by with the care, expertise, theological reflection and collegiality that went into the planning process. From our discussions with students, it is clear that they benefited from the residential school, although there were concerns about its timing (see F.i.)
 78. Learning also takes place within the parish setting, as students continue to fulfil lay ministerial roles while training. Learning also takes place on two placements: one at a contrasting parish and one in a secular context (examples include shadowing a funeral director, or working at a hospice, or a prison or hospital chaplaincy). From surveying samples of portfolios produced on the placement modules, it was clear that students gained substantial experience while on placement, and that placement supervisors were often very generous in the time they gave to students.
 79. Overall, we felt that the range of learning opportunities on offer presented a good balance of academic, formational and practical aspects of training. In particular, it was noticeable that LCTP has great strengths in treating these aspects holistically – by encouraging students to apply theology to their ongoing experiences and to use their experiences to help them grasp theological concepts – rather than compartmentalizing them.
- G.iii Units of teaching and learning should have clear and appropriate aims, be well structured and enable students to achieve appropriate learning goals.*
80. Each module has clearly-defined aims, objectives and learning outcomes, which are set out in the validation documents and in module booklets. The

module booklets are particularly helpful, as they provide a clear structure for the module, with details of aims and objectives for each session, along with suggested preparatory reading. The booklets give students clear guidance on how to prepare for each session. They are also designed to be used by the honorary tutors as a guide to the material to cover each time, in order to ensure some consistency across the many tutor-groups, without being too prescriptive, so that the tutor can lead the session as best suits the needs of their group.

81. The module booklets also set out the assessment tasks, along with guidance to the student on how to demonstrate the necessary learning outcomes. However, on this point, we have concerns about the use of portfolios as a means of assessment. From a comparative study of the module booklets, it would appear that most modules are assessed by written work (typically three 1,500-word essays). We did not therefore see the 'flexible and differentiated modes of assessment appropriate to the intended learning outcomes of the individual modules' envisaged in the curriculum documents. We would like to have seen a spread of varied assessment tasks across modules to suit a variety of different learning styles – for example, oral presentations or timed assessments could have been included.
82. From observation of two meetings of the Board of Studies, along with the associated paperwork, two other issues emerged. First, the portfolio approach meant that some students ended up with a borderline mark for the module (39, 49, 59, etc.), derived from the component tasks. There was no clear policy as to whether these borderline marks were to be confirmed by second marking of the whole portfolio (as opposed to the individual pieces, which had been second marked) and to what effect. Second, there was no clear policy on how resits were to be conducted: whether the students should resit an entire module, or whether they should make good failed components.

Recommendation 6

We recommend that LCTP provides more specific guidance on portfolio requirements for each module, looking across the programme to ensure a spread of different tasks and activities, and that it provides a policy and guidance on borderline cases and resits.

G.iv Teaching programmes should introduce students to the appropriate knowledge and learning processes, while drawing on student experience.

83. We observed a wide range of learning styles, which ranged from sessions that emphasized knowledge and content, and were therefore taught in plenary lecture format, through to sessions which were based around

student discussion. As we have already made clear, LCTP gives priority to allowing students to reflect upon prior and ongoing ministerial experience.

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

84. We saw a good range of different learning methods, including seminar-style teaching, traditional lectures, workshop-style sessions (a combination of tutor input and group activities) and open forums. We also noted that students had one-to-one sessions with their personal tutors (which we decided would be too intrusive to observe). The range of teaching and learning methods ensured that many different learning styles were accommodated. The educational methods were highly suitable for LCTP's target audience of mature learners, and the ample opportunities for theological reflection put into practice LCTP's key principle that formation and education do not take place in isolation, and that students should be encouraged to draw on their experiences of practical ministry as they undertake their studies (as stated in C.ii.).

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

85. Structured individual learning is provided in the module handbooks (see G.iii. above). All students have regular one-to-one sessions with their personal tutor, where they can discuss topics introduced in taught sessions. Students also have the opportunity to learn in a variety of different groups – in their tutor-groups, which change slightly module by module; with their year groups; and in plenary sessions with all students on the programme. We observed examples of all of these kinds of teaching, and were impressed by the amount of theological reflection the students were able to do. From our interviews with students, it is clear that they value being taught in a variety of different groups and that ordinands, trainee readers and independent students can learn from one another.

86. Although we had some concerns about how the integrity of 'levels' of academic study might be preserved when different year groups study together, this was not a problem in practice, and we observed sessions where students from different levels studied together, and noted that tutors were adept at making sure that everyone had grasped the concepts whilst keeping the discussion at a suitably engaging level to stretch the more advanced students.

G.vii Staff should provide formal and informal feedback to students and assessment of work and of candidates' progress, both in terms of academic progress and in terms of preparation for beginning public

ministry. There should be both affirmation and constructive criticism, as appropriate, of students and of work.

87. Formal feedback to students is provided through assessment of portfolios. From the sample of coursework we saw, we noted that tutors provided detailed commentary on the scripts and clear and detailed summative comments on a cover-sheet, as well as providing a summary of the student's level of attainment using a tick-list (see G.viii. below). Comments always gave clear guidance on ways in which the assignment could have been improved, but were also affirmative of good points. We noted that markers were good at identifying cases where students who were weaker academically were nonetheless demonstrating useful ministerial skills, and offering suitably affirmative feedback.
88. We noted that staff used the full range of marks (this is also noted in External Examiners' reports). Second marking of individual pieces of work is done routinely and the standard of marking is remarkably consistent (this is probably due to the clarity of the assessment criteria).
89. Informal feedback on progress – both academic and formational – is provided in the regular one-to-one meetings between students and their personal tutors. Personal tutors are also responsible for more formal feedback in the form of the reports on students at the end of the programme. We had sight of one of these and were impressed with the level of detailed information given. We noted that there was a good balance between affirming comments and clear but supportive guidance on aspects of ministry that the student would need to develop in curacy. Students have the opportunity to discuss these in detail with their personal tutors.
90. Feedback on placements is provided by placement supervisors, who are encouraged to fill in a detailed questionnaire on students' performance, including their capacity of reflection on action. From inspecting a selection of such reports, the level of detail provided by supervisors varied and in one case, the supervisor provided feedback in a letter rather than on the questionnaire. This is perhaps inevitable in the case of secular placements, where the supervisor might not be familiar with the discourse of theological reflection. However, the feedback form states that the contents of the questionnaire will be discussed in a tutorial with the personal tutor, so theological reflections can be drawn out in this way. Since the student's overall module result is determined by the tutor, the student is not disadvantaged by the level of reporting provided by their supervisor.
91. We also noted that students were given prompt verbal feedback on their conduct of worship at the weekends (see E.ix. above).

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

92. Clear assessment criteria are provided in the validation documents: these are presented in seven categories: knowledge and understanding; critical analysis; structure; prose; referencing; presentation; and sources. The assessment criteria also make distinctions between expectations at the different academic levels. These criteria are consistent with national benchmarks for attainment in Higher Education.
93. Students are made aware of the marking criteria and of what is expected of them. Each module booklet also states the module objectives and many booklets give further guidance on how objectives might best be met. Students are also required to complete a checklist to be submitted with each assignment, which reminds them to check their essay against a range of criteria relating to writing skills and presentation, and bibliography and referencing. Tutors use a uniform pro-forma as part of their feedback, where they grade work according to the seven categories of assessment criteria.

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

94. We witnessed teaching on 10 different sites and we agree that the venues provide appropriate environments for learning. Learning spaces at Rydal Hall and the University of Cumbria are of high quality. The tutorials took place in a range of different venues, including vicarage sitting-rooms, church halls, and a company office. These spaces were used thoughtfully to produce the most effective learning environment, and good use was made of home computers as teaching aids.
95. The dispersed nature of the course might lead one to believe that access to learning materials might be difficult, but this was not the case. Students had access to books from a wide range of sources. Each tutor group had a small book-box, issued by LCTP, containing key texts, and the small, friendly nature of the groups meant that these books were circulated fairly. Students have borrowing rights at the University of Cumbria Library: they reported that it is easy to borrow books and that they can either visit in person or request books to be posted to them, free of charge. Students can also borrow books from the small but relevant library at Rydal Hall. When at residential school, students are granted reading rights for the week at the host institution. We also noted at tutorials that the honorary tutors were extremely generous in lending their personal books, including very recent publications. One tutor had also created an electronic library to support a particular course, using Google Books, and this was available to all students on the module.
96. LCTP makes some use of Blackboard, a virtual learning environment provided by the University of Cumbria. This is used primarily to give students

access to preparatory reading for particular seminars. However, from our exploration of the site and from student feedback, the level of online provision varies between modules. This provision would therefore be enhanced if the course team were to establish a baseline for what information and materials should appear on Blackboard for each course.

Recommendation 7

We recommend that baseline provision for each module be made on Blackboard.

97. We do not, however, endorse the comments of the previous inspectors that LCTP should make more provision for distance and online learning. There are various reasons for this: online learning has not become as prevalent as earlier predictions had suggested; the provision of high-quality distance learning is highly labour-intensive and would be beyond the capacity of the small staff team; there is great formational value in maintaining as much face-to-face contact as possible; and it would disenfranchise those students who are not IT literate.

<p>The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion G, Teaching and learning, content, method and resources</p>

H Practical and pastoral theology

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

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

98. LCTP has clear published policies relating to a) Ministerial Formation and b) Integration of Learning, which have been approved by Council. LCTP has developed a balanced curriculum which intermeshes theory and practice via modules which are dedicated to: pastoral care and practice; preaching in worship; and church, society and mission. Parish-based and secular placement experiences and the production of reflective placement portfolios further integrate theory and practice.

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

99. Integrated learning is a feature of the student experience throughout the whole of their learning experience. This was particularly evident in the

'Formed by' modules which students experience at residential weekends. These explore biblical, tradition and contextual issues and build on aspects of the curriculum and the students' experiences within their home/work contexts. Students are encouraged to share their understanding and views within teaching sessions, tutorials and seminars, thus enhancing the value of the learning community. Individual students cited experiences within placements and within the wider curriculum which had helped them review their understanding of the nature of ministry, the place of different types of worship and to develop varied approaches to situations within different community settings.

100. Successful as these strategies are, LCTP has no wish to rest on its laurels. As noted in the introduction to this Report, 2012 was to have seen a further revalidation exercise, but this has been postponed. LCTP intends to consider within its future revalidation exercise, the provision of a Placement module, as a stand-alone module, with the aim of giving even greater clarity of purpose of learning outcomes related to placements and this is to be commended.

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

101. The dioceses of Carlisle and Blackburn have two distinct demographic populations. There is much more evidence of multifaith/multicultural populations within the diocese of Blackburn than there is within the diocese of Carlisle. It is not easy for LCTP to provide equal measure of experience across the two dioceses, however, it was observed within discussion sessions, module teaching, seminars and written work, that all students are enabled to consider multifaith and multicultural issues. Where the presence of Other Faiths is demographically thin on the ground, questions are raised by staff which reflect those multicultural pockets which do exist and the value of having students from the different dioceses, enables shared learning, which is invaluable. The degree to which students reflected theologically, within observed sessions, was impressive.

<p>The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion H, Practical and pastoral theology</p>
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SECTION FIVE: STAFF AND STUDENTS

I Teaching Staff

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

I.i Appointments should involve appropriate consultation with the relevant sponsoring churches and partner institutions, and the method for making appointments should be clear and fair to all concerned.

102. LCTP has in place a Staff Appointment Policy for Core Staff. This provides clear details of the process for the recruitment and selection of all members of the core team. It outlines the responsibility of the Governing Body of LCTP in the process and, where appropriate, the roles of the Bishops of Carlisle and Blackburn as the sponsoring Dioceses and the University as the partner institution.

103. As well as the Core Staff, LCTP also relies heavily on honorary tutors for the delivery of much of the learning. LCTP has a policy relating to the recruitment and appointment of honorary tutors.

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

104. The LCTP policy for the recruitment of Core Staff has been written mindful of current good practice in recruitment and selection and includes reference to transparency, quality and equality in the process as well as guidelines on record keeping and the provision of feedback at various stages of the process.

105. All the Core Staff have contracts of employment which include terms and conditions of service, relating to the particular nature of their employment and which link to a relevant job description.

106. In contrast the policy for the appointment of honorary tutors describes what happens rather than taking into account good practice and principles in recruitment and selection.

107. Honorary tutors are recruited by 'word of mouth' and 'personal recommendation.' This was born out in evidence from responses to questionnaires sent out to a sample of honorary tutors. Whilst the tutorials, which we observed, led by the honorary tutors were generally of a high standard, there were a couple of examples where, whilst still of a satisfactory level, the sessions were being led by tutors who were not as

familiar with the material and topic as might have been expected. It transpired that this was because they had not previously taught the topics in question and usually taught other modules of the programme, which were within their own field or area of expertise.

108. Honorary tutors are issued with a Tutor Agreement which describes the terms of their appointment and the expectations of them.

Recommendation 8

We recommend that LCTP reviews the policy for the appointment of Honorary Tutors and gives consideration to advertising these roles more openly to ensure the widest possible range of expertise and experience in the topics of the programme delivered in this way.

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

109. Throughout the Inspection we were particularly impressed by the breadth and depth of the expertise and knowledge as well as the teaching skills of both the core teaching staff and the honorary tutors of LCTP. This was evidenced by our own observations of the taught sessions and the worship and by feedback from the students.

110. The programme also calls upon a wide range of external presenters to deliver specific sessions on the residential weekends and day schools.

111. During the Summer School LCTP also makes use of the expertise of staff of the various institutions where these are held to enhance the students' learning experiences.

I.iv The gender, lay/ordained and denominational balance among staff members should enable the institution to offer appropriate models of learning and of ministry, and should comply with denominational guidelines. (For Church of England Guidelines see Appendix F.)

112. The mix of teaching staff within the LCTP meets the denominational guidelines in terms of gender, lay/ordained and denominational representation. LCTP has also taken steps to ensure that students from within different traditions of the Anglican Church are catered for. Different traditions are taken into account through provision of worship and teaching sessions. (Sections E.iii and F.iii of this report refer to this in more detail.)

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

113. The LCTP has a policy which addresses the performance review and ongoing development of core staff. The core teaching staff of LCTP are encouraged to avail themselves of staff development opportunities offered by the University of Cumbria and indicated to us that they took advantage of these as appropriate. Members of the core teaching staff also described to us how they had been encouraged and supported in their learning in a range of different ways including financial support to gain further academic qualifications; opportunities to take on roles at national level which provided personal development, financial support to attend international events and encouragement and support to undertake further research as far as role demands permit.

114. There is an acknowledgement amongst the core teaching staff that whilst there is a framework in place for staff reviews (appraisals) to take place this is complicated because of the dual roles held by staff and the different review regimes which operate. (This will be dealt with more fully in section L.iv.)

115. LCTP also has a policy in place for the performance review and development of honorary tutors. The issue of a modified form of appraisal for honorary tutors was picked up in a recommendation from the 2006 Inspection. Feedback from honorary tutors indicates that whilst they have not had any kind of formal review (appraisal) as part of this role they do receive feedback via a variety of different mechanisms including regular tutors meetings and informal discussions with the Principal. The policy also includes student feedback and a pro-forma is provided for this purpose. Any honorary tutor who teaches more than 30 hours should take part in the University of Cumbria's peer review programme. The issue of performance review of honorary tutors is addressed in Recommendation 15 in section L.iv.

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

116. As LCTP is a part time course, many aspects of the spiritual life of the teaching staff will happen within their home parishes and environments. During the residential weekends we observed, all the core teaching staff played an active part in the worship activities whether they act as leaders or worshippers. The performance review process encourages staff to reflect upon their own practice and to identify personal development needs.

117. Tutors' meetings are held four times a year. The minutes of previous meetings indicate that regular agenda items include: validation; feedback;

second marking and other similar issues relating to the role of tutors in the running of the programme. We observed one such meeting in which, once necessary business had been concluded, there was a valuable opportunity for those attending to reflect, theologically on the work of the partnership and their role in it. This happened 'naturally' and had not been 'staged' because of the presence of the inspectors which allowed us to reach the conclusion that this is a normal occurrence at tutors' meetings. However it was also noted that the number of honorary tutors attending this meeting was quite small and evidence from previous minutes of these meetings indicates that whilst a small number of honorary tutors attend regularly there are others who, for whatever reason, never attend thus missing the opportunity to take part in these learning opportunities. There is an Honorary Tutor's Agreement which outlines the roles and responsibilities of those fulfilling this role and whilst it mentions the tutors' meetings it merely indicates that tutors are 'invited to attend'

Recommendation 9

We recommend that the LCTP finds ways of enabling all honorary tutors to play a more active part within its wider learning community.

The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion I, teaching staff
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J Ancillary staff

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

J.i There should be an adequate number of ancillary staff for the type of institution and its way of working.

118. LCTP has one administrative member of staff based at Church House in Carlisle. She has a contract for 30 hours a week. She has been in post for thirteen years. Initially her role was split between providing support for LCTP and other administrative work within the Diocese but since January 2012 her role now involves support to LCTP and IME 4-7 which makes a much more cohesive job. Her job description is still to be updated to reflect this change.

119. During the course of the Inspection we heard nothing but praise for how the administrator fulfils her role. This came from core teaching staff, honorary tutors and students alike who all appreciate her efficiency, attention to detail and knowledge of the systems, processes, procedures and personalities which enable to smooth running of LCTP. The administrator has also coped in an exemplary fashion with the additional demands made by the requirements of the inspection and has responded quickly and positively to any requests put to her by the inspectors. We are left with the clear

impression that the administrator, because of the way in which she has developed this role and made it her own, is a key player in how LCTP operates. This however did leave us with some concerns about what might happen should the administrator not be able to carry out her role for any reason. We are aware that following our discussions contingency plans have now been devised to cover this eventuality.

Recommendation 10

We recommend that the LCTP reviews and updates the job description of the administrator to take account of recent changes and that there are regular reviews of the workload and contingency plans in respect of her roles and responsibilities

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

120. When the administrator's role was previously split as described in J.i there was some potential for confusion because of the dual reporting lines detailed in the job description which then applied. Changes to the role from January 2012 should mean that this situation no longer applies and this should be addressed by the review and update of the job description as recommended above.

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

121. The policies for staff appointments and performance review and development for core staff, referred to in I.ii and I.v above, apply equally to the administrator as a member of the core team. She confirmed that she has access to development opportunities provided by the University and the Diocese and has made use of these as appropriate.

122. However there is no evidence of the administrator having a performance review and she agrees that she cannot recall when this last happened. (This will be dealt with more fully in section L.iv and the associated recommendation 14.)

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

123. It was suggested following the Inspection in 2001 that the administrator be invited to attend staff meetings and she describes this as 'the most valuable thing that has happened' as she now has a much clearer understanding of how

the partnership operates and the systems and processes which underpin the programmes of study. She attends a range of meetings which support the life and work of LCTP. At these she acts as secretary but is also encouraged to contribute and feels that this has not only enhanced her role but also enables her to provide a better service to the staff and students of the institution.

The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion J, Ancillary staff

K Students

Inspectors will examine procedures for admission and suspension or dismissal, for assessing progress during training, and for ministerial candidates, for reporting to the sponsoring church and for supporting candidates in finding their first appointments.

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

124. Included in the documentation sent out to inspectors ahead of the inspection were copies of written information and policies made available to LCTP students in relation to admissions, attendance, pastoral care, worship, grievance and assessment. Also provided were documents providing information for students on reporting to sponsoring churches and arrangements for first appointments.

K.ii The institution should show evidence of compliance with its own policies, and denominational policies where they exist.

125. In our formal and informal contacts with students across the period of the inspection, the inspectors were not made aware of any concerns regarding LCTP's compliance with its own stated policies regarding students. We witnessed procedures for reporting on final year ordinands to their sponsoring churches in process across the weekend of the May residential and were assured by students that they were content with the arrangements. Also across the period of the inspection we witnessed meticulous attention being given to providing students with feedback immediately after they had led an act of worship, in full compliance with LCTP's written worship policy.

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

126. During all weekend residentials for ordinands, provision is made for a Student Business Meeting at which ordinands have opportunity to voice any concerns and, where appropriate, for those concerns to be passed to the

Principal and staff. (The inspectors attended one such meeting during the March weekend.) We found no such provision, however, for those in reader training or for independent students. We were also disappointed to note from documentation provided how little attention appears to be paid to the student voice in the LCTP Council and across the range of LCTP meetings. That the opinions and views of LCTP students are not more widely and systematically sought is in our view out of line with what in similar institutions is regarded as the norm. Moreover, many of LCTP's students are academically and professionally well qualified and, given opportunity, could make a valuable contribution to governance and decision-making. Hence the recommendation we make under Criterion L: Governance, Management and Finance.

The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion K, Students

SECTION SIX: GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE

L Governance, management, constitution and organisation

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

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

127. The LCTP Council is made up of representatives of its various stake-holder bodies. The members of the Council, are trustees, for the purposes of charity law and directors for the purpose of company law. Two members are nominated by the Carlisle Diocesan Board of Finance and two by the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Finance. The University of Cumbria is represented by four members. The Principal is the Company Secretary. It was noted, from previous minutes of the Council and the Council meeting which we observed that there is a regular pattern of non-attendance or limited attendance, by some representatives. The Council will be aware of the importance of consistent and reliable attendance by its members. LCTP is facing considerable challenges , given the recent review of the long-standing HEFCE funding arrangement between the University of Cumbria and LCTP, which had previously operated in LCTP's favour and the Church of England's decision to set in place a Common Awards system, which makes it all the more important, that the Council ensures that its membership is sufficient, regular and active.

Recommendation 11

We recommend that the LCTP Council reviews its responsibilities in relation to students, staff and the wider Church under company and charity law, such that its membership is sufficient, regular and active, to ensure that its responsibilities are met.

128. LCTP will be facing financial challenges, particularly over the next five years and the development of new avenues of funding is likely to be of importance to LCTP. Whilst due recognition is given to the current membership of the Council, as member time is limited and given that there is not a designated Treasurer, we are of the view that it is important that the Council's financial advice and oversight is strengthened.

Recommendation 12

We recommend that the LCTP Council appoint to its number a member who is able to ensure that it meets its fiduciary obligations and ensures sound financial planning. This person should not be a member of the core staff.

L.ii There should be evidence of a structured contribution made by the student body so that it plays an effective role in decision-making processes.

129. We attended a Student Business Meeting during the ordinands' residential weekend. This is a meeting of all the students. The meeting deals with issues relating to the programme and is chaired by one of the students. At the meeting we attended the main item of business was around preparation for the Summer School and transport arrangement for this. Staff are invited in as the final agenda item if there are any issues identified during the meeting which the student body wishes to raise with them. (This did not happen at the meeting we observed as there were no concerns to be raised.) There is no comparable meeting during the trainee readers' residential weekend.

130. Members of the inspection team attended a number of other meetings relating to the corporate life of LCTP but there was no evidence of any student representation at any of these.

Recommendation 13

We recommend that the LCTP introduces student representation on the Course Council, as well as in meetings relating to curriculum development and evaluation of the overall student experience.

L.iii There should be evidence that tutorial and ancillary staff are able to fulfil their job descriptions both individually and corporately and are resourced to do so.

131. We were provided with copies of role descriptions and detailed CVs for all the core teaching staff and the administrator of LCTP, as well as a copy of the tutor agreement for honorary tutors which outlines their responsibilities and the CVs of those who fulfil these roles. We were therefore able to see how individual members of staff were matched in terms of qualifications, skills and attributes to the roles to which they were appointed. It is also apparent that there is a good mix of skills, experience and traditions across LCTP as a whole which adds to the strength of the learning experiences provided for the students. From discussions with staff we judged that they were adequately resourced to carry out their roles and functions, having access to appropriate learning and development opportunities as outlined on I.v. The institution relies heavily on its honorary tutors and although the system only allows the reimbursement of expenses and the occasional,

nominal gift of a book token this does not seem to deter those who volunteer for this role.

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

132. As has already been noted in I.v and J.iii LCTP has in place a number of policies relating to Performance Review (appraisal) of core staff, including the administrator and honorary tutors. The institution also adopts the University of Cumbria's policy for Peer Review and core teaching staff and honorary tutors alike spoke positively of this process. However there was less positive feedback about the Performance Review processes. The institution's own Inspection Questionnaire response highlighted the issue of staff holding dual roles as a potential weakness because of the tension in the time available for the different roles. From speaking to staff it seems that this is exacerbated by the fact that those with dual roles are subject to different forms of performance review in their different roles. This was reported to lead to some confusion about when and how performance reviews were actually happening and means that staff do not have an annual review of their performance within the institution. Similarly there was no evidence of the administrator having had a recent review, the same being true for the honorary tutors. So, although there is a system in place, there seems to be some evidence that it does not always operate as designed and does not provide all staff with the opportunity to review their own performance and receive the type of relevant feedback and assessment which would help them grow and develop in their roles.

Recommendation 14

We recommend that LCTP ensures cohesion between internal and external appraisals across staff and their functions and that all core staff, including the administrator receive regular annual appraisals.

Recommendation 15

We recommend that LCTP reviews the operation of the policy for performance review of honorary tutors.

L.v The training institution should meet the current legal requirements, including fire prevention, health and safety, safeguarding, charity registration, immigration and any other current legislation.

133. LCTP has a range of policies in place in compliance with current legislative requirements. Some of these are policies in their own right, for example, health and safety, other issues are subsumed within the broader Community and Corporate Life policy. There is in addition a range of policies relating to staffing and student matters such as discipline, grievance, harassment, staff

and student welfare etc. A number of these policies had been in place for some time but all had been reviewed, updated and approved by the Council last year. We understand that the forthcoming Inspection had provided the impetus for this. Annual reports and financial statements are made in accordance with Company Registration and Registered Charity status, as evidenced by recent Annual Reports and Charity Commission returns.

The inspection team has confidence with qualifications with regard to Criterion L, Governance, management, constitution and organisation

M Business planning and risk management

M.i The inspectors should be satisfied that the governing body has clearly identified its role in policy formation and delegation of authority in the areas of business planning, risk management and financial policies.

134. In developing its business plan and completing its 2011 risk management report, (as per recommended practice in respect of Accounting by Charities, issued October 2000), and appropriate financial policies, including its reserves strategy, the Council has clearly identified its role in policy formation and delegation of authority in these areas. It was noted that Employers' liability insurance is in place.

M. ii The inspectors should satisfy themselves that the trustees/directors have carried out a proper risk assessment process to ensure that the institution is not at risk from loss, or claims that have not been identified or for which provision has not been made in the accounts.

135. The Council undertakes an annual Risk Management Report which identifies risks under five headings: strategic, organisation and procedures, human resources, travel and physical (office equipment and loss of records and data). An explanatory note is provided for each potential area of identified risk. Impact and probability assessments are made and mitigation for these assessments is given. A risk manager is identified for each particular item. It is noted that the risk management responsibilities are mainly shouldered by either the Chair of the Council or the Principal, accountable to the Council. Out of 22 items identified, the Principal is singly responsible, to the Council, for 14 of these items. The Chair of the Council is responsible for 3 items and 5 are shared between the Chair and the Principal, or others. Whilst it is recognised that LCTP is a small organisation, this seems to put considerable responsibility for the corporate safety of the organisation upon the Principal at a time of recognised uncertainty, given changes in HEFCE funding arrangements and the Church of England's decision to set in place a system of Common Awards. and we would urge the Council to consider a more equitable sharing of this load, either with other Council members or senior staff, for example, the Vice-Principals.

136. As is evidenced from the minutes of Council meetings, funding and Common Award issues are being addressed by the Council in consultation with the University of Cumbria and the dioceses which form part of LCTP's constitution. However, we could find no evidence of a regularly reviewed risk management action plan, as opposed to an annual risk management report. We are of the view that such a plan, together with a regular reporting strategy, which makes clear the areas of risk, appropriate actions with review dates, the person responsible for the action, and the action/outcomes so far achieved, would be beneficial to the Council in enabling it to assess its ongoing risks more easily.

Recommendation 16

We recommend that LCTP develops a risk management action plan and that this is reviewed regularly.

M.iii The inspectors should be satisfied that the institution has in place a business plan which identifies the aims and objectives of the institution over the short and medium term and identifies how the organisation intends to meet the opportunities and needs identified therein.

137. Through its published business plan the Council has: outlined the scope of its role; the structures and policies that exist to regulate its management; made clear its core roles and makes suggestions as to possible developments. The business plan does not stand alone, and is considered along-side other statements or policies, such as risk-assessment, agreed annual budgets, reserves policies, contingency plans, core staff appointments policies and its relationship with the University of Cumbria. Potential areas for development are identified, such as training for young preachers and leaders of worship in partnership with interested parties, for example, the Diocese of Carlisle and possible involvement with the Methodist Districts of Cumbria and North Lancashire in Local Preacher training. An increase in the number of independent students is envisaged. There is also a proposal to extend the current IME 4-7 MA programme to a wider group of potential students. LCTP was in discussion with its constituent dioceses, about course costs/prices etc. at the time of the inspection. It may be that LCTP is hiding its light under a bushel and has more to offer, by way of individual module take-up, where validation allows.

138. Changes in HEFCE funding and the proposed introduction of a Common Awards arrangement by the Church of England could make for a degree of financial instability. LCTP has moved from a position of being able to put additional reserves aside in 2010/2011, to using reserves in 2011/2012. The Council has recognised that changes will need to take place if the budget for 2013 is to be sustainable. We would urge the Council to review what it has to offer and to develop a more detailed business plan in future years which

takes account of these changes, providing detailed remedial strategic and financial information.

The inspection team has confidence with qualifications with regard to Criterion M, Business planning and risk management

N Financial policies and cost-effectiveness

N.i The inspectors should satisfy themselves that proper books of account are kept enabling the trustees/directors to determine on a day-to-day basis the assets and liabilities of the institution.

139. Appropriate books of accounts are kept. This process is facilitated via the Carlisle Diocesan Board of Finance (CDBF), which provides a regularised management accounting service to LCTP, for which a fee is paid. Given the relatively small core staff base of LCTP, the purchase of this service ensures that LCTP's financial picture is as up-to-date, as possible, at any one time, in terms of the assets and liabilities of the institution.

N.ii The inspectors should be satisfied that the annual budget planning process correlates to the business plan and is reviewed regularly by the governing body that the financial position of the institution is reported on a regular basis to the governing body and that appropriate and timely action in respect of such reports is taken.

140. Written evidence of an annual business plan and annual budget setting was sent to the inspectors, prior to the inspection. It is clear from this documentation and from the detailed minutes of Council meetings, that the aims and objects of the business plan are discussed by the Council, where amendments take place, prior to ratification. A detailed annual budget is set by the Council during the early part of each academic cycle, when student numbers have, as far as possible, been confirmed and likely outgoings are known. The budget is designed to correlate with the stated intentions contained in the business plan, within the limitations noted above in Section Miii. Detailed financial updates are presented to the Council for discussion, on a quarterly basis, as evidenced by Council minutes and financial reports.

N.iii The inspectors should satisfy themselves that proper budgets are prepared and that expenditure against these budgets is regularly monitored and reported to the trustees. Authority for virement between budget heads should be properly authorised within set limits and recorded.

141. As noted in N.ii, a proper annual budget is prepared, which is discussed and agreed by the Council. This is presented under the major headings of income, expenditure, fixed assets, current assets and current liabilities, with detailed performance reports provided to Council against each category on a

quarterly basis. The expenditure budget as a whole is not particularly large, the major portion of which relates to staffing, with lesser sums allocated to other training costs and residential costs for summer schools, residential weekends and day schools. There is therefore, very little room for virement. Where the use of reserves is necessary, these are agreed by Council as is any extraordinary expenditure above the limit of discretion afforded to the Principal, which is set at £200.

N.iv The inspectors should ensure that the trustees/directors have properly delegated power to operate the bank accounts and to enter into binding contracts to staff members. There should be evidence that these arrangements are regularly reviewed and that the governing body regularly reviews all covenants in respect of any bank or other loan covenants or agreements have been observed.

142. LCTP has its own bank account arrangement, operating through a local branch facility in Carlisle. Prior to 2011, the Principal and two Vice Principals were whole time equivalent post-holders in their respective diocese, co-opted to work for LCTP, with associated payment arrangements between LCTP and the dioceses. During 2011, there was a change to this arrangement and LCTP has entered into direct staff contracts in respect of the Principal and the two Vice-Principals, for that part of their time which is provided to LCTP.

143. LCTP is not responsible for any substantial direct premises costs or landholdings and subsequently does not have any loans or covenants.

N.v The inspectors should examine the cost-effectiveness of the institution. The inspectors should be satisfied that the institution has in place procedures to ensure that due economy is exercised in respect of the purchase of goods and services. There should be defined limits for authority to purchase without quotations being obtained and the terms and levels of authority for officers and trustees should be clear.

144. LCTP is careful to ensure that due economy is exercised in respect of the purchase of goods and services. Given that the students are for the most part non-residential, save for weekends and summer schools, the purchase of goods and services by LCTP is limited. Most of the residential elements take place at Rydal Hall, for which there is a cost arrangement between LCTP and Rydal Hall, which is owned by the diocese of Carlisle. Summer schools are provided at a range of education centres, where appropriate rates are negotiated. There are no major capital building costs, which require quotation. As noted in N.iii any unusual expenditure which has not been budgeted for, above the sum of £200, has to be agreed by Council.

N.vi The inspectors should satisfy themselves that the institution provides cost effective education and training when compared to the costs of similar institutions.

145. We do not have any detailed information available from other similar institutions, in order to compare the provision of like-for-like cost effective education and training. We did not, however, come across any current arrangements or plans for future education and training which would lead us to believe that the institution was being anything other than cost-effective in its activities.

N.vii The inspectors in making their recommendations should evaluate the expected cost to the institution. The inspectors should state whether in their opinion the institution has the necessary resources to achieve a satisfactory response to the recommendations

146. We do not consider that there are any particular financial implications related to our recommendations that will prevent LCTP from achieving a satisfactory response.

The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion N, Financial policies and cost-effectiveness

O Reserves policy and statutory liabilities

O.i The inspectors should satisfy themselves that the trustees/directors can be satisfied that the institution is solvent and the institution has sufficient reserves to ensure that it is able to meet at least 3 months expenditure or such other amount as the trustees/directors have deemed appropriate.

147. LCTP's published Reserves Policy was agreed in 2005, when it set its minimum reserve at one third of the annual running cost. At its AGM in November 2010, the Council agreed that its Reserves Policy should be officially extended to 3-6 months financial provision. This allows for the minimum standard to be adhered to, with additional provision, if possible.

148. It is clear from the most recent annual accounts, for the year ended 31st August 2011 and the current in-year financial reports, copies of which have been supplied, that the institution is solvent and has sufficient reserves to meet at least three months expenditure.

O.ii The inspectors should satisfy themselves that appropriate advice has been taken on VAT and PAYE liabilities and that appropriate controls exist to ensure that any payments made correctly identify potential liabilities.

149. LCTP is a company limited by guarantee and is a registered charity.

150. As noted in N.i above, CDBF provides a management accounting service to LCTP. Advice on VAT payments is available through this arrangement and LCTP's auditors have signified in their audit of the annual accounts that VAT payments have been included in the sums presented, where appropriate. LCTP's PAYE liabilities are discharged via its arrangements with CDBF's payroll function.

O.iii If the accounts are kept on a computerised system there should be adequate provision to ensure that all data is properly backed up on a regular basis and that adequate backup data is kept offsite.

151. LCTP has its own data and record retention policy, which applies equally to its accounts, as far as these are formulated by LCTP. Paper records are stored in the office and electronic data is backed up daily on a seven day cycle, with back-up data being removed from the office, each day. The maximum loss should therefore be only one day's data which would need to be constructed.

The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion O, Reserves policy and statutory liabilities

P Accommodation

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

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

152. LCTP is fortunate in having the use of Rydal Hall, the Diocese of Carlisle's retreat house, for its residential weekends and for some of its meetings. With its extensive grounds and well-kept formal gardens, the Hall provides an excellent standard of catering, good teaching accommodation and en-suite bedrooms. LCTP is equally fortunate in having the free use of University of Cumbria rooms for meetings and for its annual programme of Day Schools. Evening group tutorials take place in a range of venues – vicarages, church halls, offices, students own homes – whilst one of the residential theological colleges is normally booked for the Summer School.

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

153. The inspectors heard no expression of dissatisfaction relating to accommodation provided at Rydal Hall and at the University of Cumbria's

Lancaster campus. Equally the inspectors heard no adverse comment about the variety of venues used for group tutorials. A measure of dissatisfaction was expressed, however, by both staff and students in respect of the overall quality of accommodation at one of the residential theological colleges used for the annual residential school. LCTP is therefore currently reviewing future use of that accommodation.

The inspection team has confidence with regard to Criterion P, Accommodation

CONCLUSION

Overall outcome: The inspection team has confidence in LCTP for preparing candidates for ordained and licensed ministry.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

We recommend that LCTP consult with dioceses to ensure parity of training requirements for ordinands.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that LCTP negotiate with dioceses regarding ordination/licensing dates or change timing of annual residential school, with a view to a timely completion of training before ordination/licensing.

Recommendation 3

We recommend that an independent chaplain be appointed to be available at weekend and annual residential courses.

Recommendation 4

We recommend that LCTP urge the dioceses to progress the training of spiritual directors to ensure that all ordinands can have in place arrangements for independent spiritual direction, and that it should urge its students to take up opportunities for spiritual direction.

Recommendation 5

We recommend that a quiet space be provided for students during weekend residential courses

Recommendation 6

We recommend that LCTP provides more specific guidance on portfolio requirements for each module, looking across the programme to ensure a spread of different tasks and activities, and that it provides a policy and guidance on borderline cases and resits.

Recommendation 7

We recommend that baseline provision for each module be made on Blackboard.

Recommendation 8

We recommend that LCTP reviews the policy for the appointment of Honorary Tutors and gives consideration to advertising these roles more openly to ensure the widest possible range of expertise and experience in the topics of the programme delivered in this way.

Recommendation 9

We recommend that the LCTP finds ways of enabling all honorary tutors to play a more active part within its wider learning community.

Recommendation 10

We recommend that the LCTP reviews and updates the job description of the administrator to take account of recent changes and that there are regular reviews of the workload and contingency plans in respect of her roles and responsibilities

Recommendation 11

We recommend that the LCTP Council reviews its responsibilities in relation to students, staff and the wider Church under company and charity law, such that its membership is sufficient, regular and active, to ensure that its responsibilities are met.

Recommendation 12

We recommend that the LCTP Council appoint to its number a member who is able to ensure that it meets its fiduciary obligations and ensures sound financial planning. This person should not be a member of the core staff.

Recommendation 13

We recommend that the LCTP introduces student representation on the Course Council, as well as in meetings relating to curriculum development and evaluation of the overall student experience.

Recommendation 14

We recommend that LCTP ensures cohesion between internal and external appraisals across staff and their functions and that all core staff, including the administrator receive regular annual appraisals.

Recommendation 15

We recommend that LCTP reviews the operation of the policy for performance review of honorary tutors.

Recommendation 16

We recommend that LCTP develops a regularly reviewed risk management action plan.