

Ministry Council: Periodic External Review Report

Ripon College, Cuddesdon

February – March 2017

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GLOSSARY

APL	Accredited Prior Learning
ASE	Annual Self Evaluation
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BCP	Book of Common Prayer
CAMC	Common Awards Management Committee
CAVLE	Common Awards Virtual Learning Environment
CMS	Church Mission Society
CW	Common Worship
MTh	Master of Theology
OMC	Oxford Ministry Course
PMLT	Pioneer Mission Leadership Training
PP	Portsmouth Pathway
RCC	Ripon College Cuddesdon
RME	Resourcing Ministerial Education
RSC	Residential Student Community
SED	Self Evaluation Document
SORP	Statement of Recommended Practice
TEI	Theological Education Institution
ULO	University Liaison Officer
WEMTC	West of England Ministerial Training Course

LIST OF REVIEWERS

For Ministry Division

The Rev'd Dr Jeremy Duff, Senior Reviewer, Principal, St Padarn's Institute, the Church in Wales

Dr Stephen Longden, Reader and Lay Chair of Deanery Synod (Diocese of Derby), Client manager Corporate Programmes, Staffordshire University and former QAA Subject Auditor

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For Durham University's Common Awards team

Prof Mike Higton, Professor of Theology and Ministry (team Chair)

Dr Andrew Millard, Member of Durham University academic staff

Prof David Clough, external subject specialist and external moderator for the Common Awards

Dr Elena Gorman, Quality Assurance Manager (Common Awards) (team Secretary)

Mrs Emma Harrington, Common Awards Officer (Observer)

THE PERIODIC EXTERNAL REVIEW FRAMEWORK

For ministerial training institutions that offer the church's Durham University-validated Common Awards programmes (as most do), Periodic External Review is a joint process that meets the quality assurance needs both of the sponsoring churches and of Durham University, and enables the church to conduct an external quality check of each TEI against national standards and expectations for ministerial training and formation.

On behalf of the sponsoring churches, review 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 has been prepared for the House of Bishops acting through the Ministry Council.

For Durham University, the PER process is the university's mechanism for gathering and evaluating information from multiple sources in order to inform decision-making on: (i) renewal of the Common Awards partnerships with approved Theological Education Institutions (TEIs); (ii) revalidation of Common Awards programmes that have been approved for delivery within TEIs.

Review teams are appointed both by Ministry Division from a pool of reviewers nominated by bishops and TEIs and by Durham University's Common Awards office. The latter will take lead responsibility for PER criteria E and F covering teaching and learning infrastructure and delivery. In effect, this part of the review represents academic revalidation by Durham as the church's partner university. But evidence-gathering is shared and judgements are owned by the review team as a whole.

Recommendations and Commendations

PER reports will include Recommendations which may either be developmental, naming issues that the reviewers consider the TEI needs to address, or they may urge the enhance of practice that is already good. They will also include Commendations, naming instances of good practice that the reviewers specially wish to highlight. The reviewers' assessment of the TEI is expressed as much through the balance of Recommendations and Commendations in their report as through its criterion-based judgements.

Criteria-based judgements

In coming to their judgements under Sections A-D, reviewers are asked to use the following outcomes with regard to the overall outcome and individual criteria:

Confidence

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

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

Confidence with qualifications

Overall outcome: likely to include commendations as well as a number of recommendations, including one or more of substance that questions the generally acceptable standards found in the review and which can be rectified or substantially addressed by the institution in the coming 12 months.

Criterion 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 review and the capacity of the institution to rectify or substantially address these in the coming 12 months.

Criterion 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.

In respect of Sections E–F, university validation does not currently apply a hierarchy of quality judgements. Instead, the practice is to grant continuing approval subject to the fulfilment of conditions expressed in the reviewers' recommendations. Thus, where Common Awards programmes are part of the PER, the reviewers' shared judgements under these two sections will normally be expressed as 'Confidence, subject to the implementation of the recommendations in this section'.

The Common Awards team's findings will be part of the joint PER report, but will also be included in a stand-alone report prepared for the university's governance bodies, and which can be made available to the TEI under review if wished.

*For training institutions that do **not** offer the Durham-validated Common Awards programmes, PER will be undertaken entirely by Ministry Division-appointed reviewers, applying criteria A-F but with appropriate adaptation in the case of E and F. Some diocesan Reader training schemes, for example, will fall into this category.*

REPORT OF THE PERIODIC EXTERNAL REVIEW OF RIPON COLLEGE, CUDDESDON

February – March 2017

SUMMARY

Introduction

Ripon College, Cuddesdon (RCC) has a complex history and structure and has seen significant change over the last ten years. Originally established as a residential theological college, the incorporation of the Oxford Ministry Course (OMC) in 2006 introduced part-time, non-residential provision. In 2011, the West of England Ministerial Training Course (WEMTC), with delivery centres in Ludlow and Gloucester, was fully incorporated within the College. At a similar time, the College entered into a partnership with the Church Mission Society (CMS) to deliver pioneer ministry training in Oxford. In 2014 RCC set up the MAL Programme to train senior incumbents for enhanced leadership in the diocese of Monmouth and in 2015 developed the Portsmouth Pathway in partnership with the Diocese of Portsmouth.

Hence, the last decade has seen RCC grow from a residential college with about 50 ordinands in 2006 to a multi-pathway institution with over 200 full-time and part-time students for lay and ordained ministries, learning in five different locations. In addition, there are courses offered for those beginning theological study or exploring ministry, and for those well established in ministry; there are overseas links; and there is a resident community of religious sisters. RCC's evolution is described further in Section A.

Drawing on the commitments of its governing documents, the College summarises its aim as 'to form, equip and resource ministers of the church for the service of God's mission in the world' and, while it sees the training of ordinands as its continuing core purpose, it is pleased to use its resources and expertise to serve the Church more broadly, particularly in relation to licensed lay ministry.

Previous inspection and initial Durham validation

RCC's previous church Inspection, as PER then was, took place as long ago as March 2009. At that stage the residential College and Oxford Ministry Course were its main elements, and even then the Inspection report reflected a growing complexity in its mix of residential/full-time and part-time pathways, and the need to review administration and structures and to equip staff accordingly. It was a positive report, commending 'a vibrant institution which is growing and expanding in order to become a rich resource for theological education and ministerial training...' and a community in good heart. Its overall judgement in the institution was Confidence.

Preparatory to the Common Awards partnership, on 17th March 2014 Durham University conducted a validation visit to Ripon College, Cuddesdon. The documentation submitted before the validation visit highlighted the institution's complex history and structure. At that time it was delivering full-time and part-time, residential and non-residential provision to approximately 150 students across sites in Oxford, Ludlow, and Gloucester, and in partnership with a separate legal entity (CMS). Consequently, the validation visit team sought to gather information to evaluate the extent of commonality, difference, integration and cohesion

within the multi-centre, multi-pathway TEI. In particular, the team sought assurance that the TEI would operate as a single institution for the purpose of the Common Awards partnership and programmes.

Following its investigations before, during, and after the validation visit, the review team formed the view that the appropriate constitution and effective operation of the TEI's Management Committee would be essential for the management and oversight of provision across all delivery centres (see the Validation Visit Report, para. 38). Having considered additional information that the TEI submitted after the validation visit, the University concluded that the proposed membership and operation of the Management Committee would enable the TEI to manage and monitor its Common Awards provision in line with the requirements of the validation contract.

The validation visit team also explored other mechanisms that the TEI would use to achieve consistency and cohesion across delivery centres: commonality in programme design; the continuing development and introduction of TEI-wide quality assurance policies and processes; the inclusion of all centres in core processes for monitoring and reviewing Common Awards provision; regular staff meetings for all centres to review provision and share good practice.

During the initial validation process it was confirmed that, as the designated legal entity for the TEI, Ripon College, Cuddesdon would assume all the legal responsibilities of the validation contract. In doing this, Ripon College, Cuddesdon would have authority to act on behalf of all the centres within the TEI in respect of the Common Awards partnership and programmes. The University's Legal Department confirmed that the Memorandum of Understanding between CMS and Ripon College, Cuddesdon provided sufficient confirmation that CMS had agreed for the College to enter into a contract with the University on these terms. This arrangement ensured that the TEI could take appropriate action should any issues arise regarding the quality and standards of provision within any of the TEI's centres.

Once the initial validation process was complete, the University approved the proposed partnership and programmes. On 31st July 2014 the University entered into a contract with Ripon College, Cuddesdon as the lead centre and designated legal entity for the TEI. The Service Contract between Durham University and the Archbishops' Council was amended to reflect that the TEI was comprised of: Ripon College, Cuddesdon (incorporating Ripon College, Cuddesdon; the Oxford Ministry Course [OMC]; and the West of England Ministerial Training Course [WEMTC]), and the Church Mission Society. This arrangement ensured that any future proposed changes to the constitution of the TEI (such as the addition or deletion of centres, or changes to the names of centres) would be subject to the University's formal process for approving partnership changes.

While the initial validation process confirmed the appropriateness of the proposed new partnership and programmes, the University's annual monitoring and periodic review processes need to assess the effectiveness of the implementation and ongoing operation of the TEI's Management Committee and other key mechanisms for assuring and enhancing academic quality and standards.

Scope of current review

As noted in Section A, the TEI has undergone a period of substantial change since initial validation, with a further three centres added to the TEI (as is detailed more fully in the Common Awards reviewers' separate report):

- (a) the Portsmouth Pathway, delivered via St Luke's Church in Portsmouth, being non-residential part-time training for ordinands and readers from the Diocese of Portsmouth via the CertHE, the CertHE (180 credits), and the DipHE (2014)
- (b) the Monmouth Diocesan Board of Finance as a new delivery centre offering the GradDip and MA programmes for Ministry Area Leaders (MAL) (2015).
- (c) Oxford Youth Works, delivering CYM endorsed pathways through the CertHE programmes. The TEI has not offered any programmes under this arrangement. However, at the time of the PER visit, the TEI was proposing to activate this partnership through the introduction of a new CYM-endorsed pathway through the Certificate of Higher Education in Theology, Ministry and Mission (2015).

Hence these new centres are within the scope of the current PER, as are programme changes consequent on the recent expansion of RCC's delivery centres. The full suite of Common Awards programmes approved for and delivered by Ripon College, Cuddesdon, and requiring revalidation as part of the present PER, comprises:

- Certificate of Higher Education in Theology, Ministry and Mission (V60446)
- Certificate of Higher Education in Christian Ministry and Mission (V60346)
- Diploma of Higher Education in Theology, Ministry and Mission (V60447)
- BA in Theology, Ministry and Mission (V604)
- Graduate Certificate in Theology, Ministry and Mission (V60421)
- Graduate Diploma in Theology, Ministry and Mission (V60422)
- Postgraduate Certificate in Theology, Ministry and Mission (V60414)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Theology, Ministry and Mission (V60412)
- Master of Arts in Theology, Ministry and Mission (V60407)

Evidence

Ministry Division-nominated reviewers visited a number of RCC's centres to meet staff, students and governance personnel individually and in groups, observe teaching, worship and social events and spaces, and to sample something of the gathered life of those communities. These visits included OMC/Portsmouth/CMS Pioneer Pathway residential weekends at Cuddesdon during 3-5 February and 24-26 February, WEMTC's weeknight teaching events at Gloucester (2nd February) and Ludlow (8th March), and time spent with RCC's residential student community during 28th February – 1st March, including a meeting of the Board of Governors on the 28th. The senior reviewer also met with the chair of the board of Oxford University's Faculty of Theology and Religion.

On 10th March 2017 Durham University and the Church of England's Ministry Division jointly conducted a structured day of interviews at RCC with key members of senior management staff, teaching staff, administrative staff, and student representatives from different centres and pathways within the TEI.

Written evidence was also received from a selected sample of stakeholders including sponsoring bishops, partner TEIs, DDOs, former students and receiving incumbents, who were invited via a brief questionnaire to

offer their views on strengths and areas for development for RCC, and its partner courses, and their hopes for its future.

Ahead of the PER visits, a comprehensive set of documents, including the following, was provided to the joint review team:

- (a) a Self-Evaluation Document including SWOT commentary relating to educational provision and a formational scene-setter
- (b) document mapping programme elements against formation criteria
- (c) curriculum mapping documents
- (d) prospectus and publicity
- (e) TEI handbooks and worship policy documents
- (f) anonymised sample student work and reflections
- (g) governance structure information
- (h) staff details
- (i) business plan
- (j) risk register
- (k) annual reports and financial statements
- (l) description of accommodation / facilities and development plans
- (m) programme regulations;
- (n) module overview tables;
- (o) external examiner reports;
- (p) annual self-evaluation reports;
- (q) statistical data;
- (r) previous validation and inspection reports;
- (s) committee minutes.

The team also had access to the Common Awards framework and documents, including:

- (a) the core regulations for the Common Awards programmes;
- (b) programme specifications;
- (c) module outlines;
- (d) assessment criteria and assessment guidance;
- (e) contact hours parameters;
- (f) the Common Awards *TEI Handbook*;
- (g) the *Guide for PER Reviewers Appointed by Durham University* (incorporating the PER Criteria that were developed in conjunction with the Church of England).

The Reviewers would like to thank staff, students and the Cuddesdon community for their kind hospitality during the PER visits, the courtesy and speed with which they responded to requests for further information and help, and for their open and generous engagement with the whole PER process throughout.

Summary of outcomes

The Review team has Confidence with Qualifications in regarding Ripon College Cuddesdon as fit for the purpose for preparing candidates for ordained and licensed lay ministries.

CRITERIA	OUTCOME
A Formational aims	Confidence with Qualifications
B Formational context	Confidence
C Leadership and management	Confidence
D Student outcomes	Confidence with Qualifications
E Partnership with university	Confidence, subject to Recommendations
F Taught programmes	Confidence, subject to Recommendations
Overall Outcome	Confidence with Qualifications

In addition, and with regard specifically to Sections E and F, the Common Awards review team **was satisfied** with the quality and standards of the Durham programmes detailed above. The team:

- a) recommends that the programmes should be revalidated for a period of six years;
- b) Is satisfied that Ripon College, Cuddesdon continues to be a suitable collaborative partner for the University; and
- c) has identified a number of recommendations for the TEI to address in relation to the partnership and programmes.

The TEI's action in response to the recommendations will be considered for approval by the University. All recommendations must be signed-off in advance of the partnership renewal process that will take place towards the end of the initial validation term.

General Observations

The Report is written in relation to the PER Criteria outlined in the September 2016 edition of the *Quality Assurance and Enhancement in Ministerial Formation Handbook*.

FULL REPORT

SECTION A: FORMATIONAL AIMS

AI The TEI's formational aims are clearly stated, understood and owned within the TEI.

1. Ripon College Cuddesdon is a complex institution, which has seen significant change over the last ten years. It has developed from a residential college with about 50 ordinands in 2006 to a multi-pathway institution with over 200 full-time and part-time students for lay and ordained ministries, learning in five different locations. Alongside this there is also the Cuddesdon School of Theology and Ministry for those beginning theological study or exploring ministry; a partnership with Monmouth Diocese to provide leadership training for senior incumbents; the Cuddesdon Study Centre with its programme of lectures, visits from overseas scholars and specific research projects of value to the wider church; and a small community of religious sisters (comprising the Community of St John Baptist and the Companions of Jesus the Good Shepherd) which shares the site and community life.
2. Throughout these developments the College's primary aim has remained little changed. The original Cuddesdon Theological College's royal charter spoke of "theological training of candidates for Holy Orders in the Church of England". This evolved through the incorporation of Ripon Clergy College Corporation, to the aim laid out in the current royal charter, "the training of candidates for Holy Orders in the Church of England and such other students of Theology and other germane Christian studies as the Governors may permit". The College summarises this as "to form, equip and resource ministers of the church for the service of God's mission in the world" and "we train men and women for ministry in the Church of England: stipendiary, non-stipendiary, local ordained and lay ministry". The College sees the training of ordinands as its continuing core purpose, but is pleased to use its resources and expertise to serve the Church more broadly, particularly in relation to licensed lay ministry.
3. Similarly, the college remains committed to its inherited focus on the formation of 'critical and constructive theologians who are able to inhabit the wisdom they acquire through study and living and praying together'. Alongside this, however, the college describes that it has become far more aware of the Church's current 'critical missional situation' and the need for ministers who are flexible and adaptable to new situations, and it believes that the Common Awards programmes are far more missionally-focused than some of the courses previously taken by RCC students. It has identified five key values: community, hospitality, wisdom, integrity and diversity (these are presented in section D1, para 71).
4. The expansion of Ripon College Cuddesdon from its residential college core has in each case been in response to requests from the wider church, leading to partnerships, mergers or programmes for the Oxford Ministry Course, the West of England Ministerial Training Course, the Church Mission Society, Monmouth Diocese, and Portsmouth Diocese. Despite mutterings about 'empire building', these developments have been of great service to the partner institutions and the wider Church, and have been driven by a deep-seated culture within the College that its calling is to serve the Church. Many institutions may express that their calling is to serve the Church, but we commend the College

for putting into practice its 'calling to serve the Church' by forming new partnership and programmes to respond to the Church's needs.

Commendation 1

We commend the College for putting into practice its 'calling to serve the Church' by forming new partnership and programmes to respond to the Church's needs.

5. At the same time, the College has intentionally moved away from any sense of being a 'party college', or being defined according to traditional churchmanship categories. It places an emphasis on 'serious engagement with the breadth and diversity of the Church of England'. It is committed to the diversity of the church and is proud that its students come from across the Church of England spectrum.
6. This self-understanding, history and sense of calling have produced a situation in which staff and students have some difficulty in articulating what Ripon College Cuddesdon is, and what are the unifying features of the College, or the 'common thread'. This is manifested in widespread, if low-level, anxiety – expressed in interviews with staff and students – over what the next expansion might be, and the way in which the identities of Pathway (WEMTC, Portsmouth, CMS etc.) sit alongside the Ripon College Cuddesdon identity in a somewhat inconsistent or even incoherent way. The College's response that the unifying feature is a common sense of calling to celebrate the diversity of the church (together with the culture of service to the Church) might be satisfactory in some contexts, yet does not appear strong or clear enough to guide either the strategy or the operations of the College. It is broadly acknowledged within the College that what is needed now is a phase of consolidation after rapid change and expansion. This seems wise. Yet if the College is to bring coherence and leave behind the mutterings of 'opportunism' and 'marriages of convenience', and create a context in which the current diverse Pathways can thrive, it will need to articulate a far clearer sense of its identity and calling.
7. The College approaches the different Pathways and the multiple identities which arise with a 'light' touch, giving space for distinct cultures and contextualisations whether geographic, by type of ministry, or mode of learning. This is in keeping with the College's assertion that it does not want 'franchises'; we commend this sensitivity to local context and need.

Commendation 2

We commend the College's sensitivity to local context and needs in the development of pathways and partnerships.

8. However, the resulting structure is highly complex, because each of these Pathways has a bespoke relationship to the College. The Residential Student Community (RSC) shares tutors and premises with the Oxford Ministry Course (OMC) and both are primarily for ordinands, but there is no shared teaching between these two pathways. The same curriculum is effectively taught once in the day, and a second time in the evening and at residential. The RSC does not attend the weekend residential or summer school. A third pathway exists in 'dual-track' students who are in effect OMC students who do partake in some RSC teaching – this helps establish relationships between the groups, but if anything increases the organisational complexity. Those preparing for lay and ordained ministries in the Portsmouth Pathway (PP) are Ripon College Cuddesdon (RCC) students. Their weeknights are

taught in Portsmouth; lay ministry candidates have started attending a small number of residentials alongside the OMC; its ordinands attend them all. The CMS partnership is differently configured. The ordinands at CMS are RCC students, but the majority in their cohort are preparing for lay ministries and have little contact with RCC and are not generally seen as RCC students, although are in fact students on Common Awards under the RCC umbrella. Teaching happens at CMS in the week. The ordinands attend all the residentials and summer schools, but audit modules for no credit which all the other ordinands are getting credit for. WEMTC not only has its own weeknight teaching in two distinct centres, but organises its own separate weekend residentials. Its ordinands attend all of these separate weekend residentials, those preparing for reader ministry a small number, and the other students none. Its ordinands do join the OMC, PP and CMS ordinands at the summer and Easter schools. The Monmouth programme stands completely distinct. This complexity is further reflected in, and increased by, the nomenclature, with 'pathway', 'course' and 'partnership' all being used without clearly distinct meanings. Similarly, we found that the residential weekends are still frequently referred to as OMC weekends (we understand the intention is to change this practice), despite the fact that ordinands from other Pathways are equal participants.

9. We are unsure as to whether this level of complexity can be sustained. We accept the explanation given that this complexity arises partly from the history of the recent expansion and partly out of a desire not to impose a 'model' on the diverse elements. We also saw that some of the staff involved valued the independence this complexity gave them. However, a significant price is being paid particularly in terms of staff workload and stress. As is developed further in Section E1, this complexity also gives rise to important quality assurance concerns. As noted below (para 33) students were generally very positive; nevertheless students from across the pathways did express considerable variation in their understanding of whether they were Ripon College Cuddesdon students, whether they were on a different course but simply attended RCC residentials, and what their 'share' in RCC was. One staff member even spoke of RCC as the body which validated their Pathway akin to how different universities did in the past.
10. There is very little reflection of this complexity within the governance structures. There is a report from each Pathway at the governing body meeting, yet there are no subgroups or identified governors with special responsibility for different Pathways. The complexity is absorbed at the staff level. It seems surprising for there to be such a difference between the rejection of uniformity in the operation of the Pathways, and the lack of reflection of the diversity of RCC at the governance level. One diocese deeply embedded in one Pathway did express dissatisfaction that it felt distant from the governance of that Pathway. It was frequently stated that RCC has students from about thirty dioceses and therefore the level of relationship with each could only be limited. This is correct, yet is a reflection of the residential community's outlook. It would not be unreasonable, for example, for dioceses for whom RCC is the only vehicle for the training of readers or non-stipendiary clergy, to expect some direct input into governance.

Recommendation I

We recommend that the Principal leads a thorough-going review of the range of partnerships and dispersed communities / pathways which form RCC to identify:

- (a) the uniting narrative, ethos or calling which creates a clear identity for RCC throughout these different communities;
- (b) the synergies or other benefits which could come from the breadth and diversity of these communities / pathways;
- (c) whether it is feasible for RCC to thrive while containing within it the current diversity of communities / pathways with diverse relationships to the 'centre';
- (d) structures and policies to set out clearly what activity and oversight takes places at the RCC level, and what is delegated to each community/pathway; and
- (e) the appropriate way of enabling the voice within the governance structures of dioceses for whom RCC is the provider of Reader and non-stipendiary ordination training.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that a clear set of criteria is developed and agreed by the Board of Governors which would guide any future consideration of further expansion/ diversification.

A2. The TEI's formational aims are appropriate to the ministerial training requirements of its sponsoring church denominations.

- 11. RCC is fundamentally shaped in its culture and programmes by a commitment to prepare ministers for ministry within the Church of England. The college is deeply embedded within the life of the Church of England, with students from over two-thirds of its dioceses. Its developing self-understanding and sense of priorities (paragraph 3 above) are in keeping with the changing priorities of ministry within the Church. The published Church of England formational criteria for ordained ministry are present throughout the language and culture of the College.
- 12. The majority of RCC students are enrolled on Common Awards courses, which have been designed through the partnership between the Church of England and the University of Durham to meet the ministerial training requirements of the Church.
- 13. A small number of RCC students study on the MTh or BA in Theology offered by Oxford University. The design of these programmes when taken alongside the manner of their implementation by RCC, and the prior learning required by students to access these programmes, means that they contribute well to ministerial training requirements.
- 14. RCC has a clear commitment to engagement with the breadth and diversity of the Church of England. It expresses a vision for a church in which all play unique and complementary parts in the service of the Gospel, which moves beyond mere tolerance, and in which 'all are likely to experience a degree of discomfort, as well as affirmation and acceptance, in the process of growing in God's wisdom and love'. This is to be commended as deeply appropriate to the ministerial training within the Church of England.

Commendation 3

We commend the College's commitment to engagement with the breadth and diversity of the Church of England.

15. The College's culture of service to the Church also models important values to its students and is to be commended.
16. Staff articulated a pressure they experienced to provide training which the Church sees as belonging to the post-ordination IME 2 phase. This pressure seems to come from students' lack of trust in what will follow within Dioceses, leading to an assumption that the college must cover (within IME 1) everything they might need. This pressure contributes to the busyness of staff and some students. As the curriculum review is taken forward (see para 56 and Section F) we would **urge** the college to focus on the ministerial requirements for IME 1, and encourage a spirit of confident collaboration with dioceses who will be responsible for IME 2. (see further in paragraph 91 and recommendation 14)

A3. The TEI's aims, activity and achievement are understood and supported by wider church audiences.

17. Responses from Bishops, DDOs and training incumbents demonstrate that the wider Church expresses considerable support and appreciation for the work of RCC. Particular responses valued the diversity held together within the College, its understanding of rural ministry (seen as being better than is found in many TEIs), the stability of the institution's underlying character in a changing world of theological education, and range of options available to meet different students' needs.
18. The College expresses concern that there are out of date perceptions of the College based on its earlier history. This is perhaps inevitable given the speed and scope of the changes over recent years. The publicity and communications from RCC show a good awareness of the need for it to communicate a clear, positive, consistent picture of itself. The implementation of recommendation 1 should further facilitate clear, consistent, communication.
19. As noted above (paragraph 4) many of the developments in RCC over recent years have been in response to requests from particularly dioceses (Portsmouth, Monmouth, Hereford, Gloucester), and those dioceses express significant support for what RCC has done.
20. The College expresses considerable anxiety about the impact of the Resourcing Ministerial Education (RME) agenda on its student numbers and financial viability. While some anxiety in the face of significant change is understandable, this seems to express an underlying anxiety that the wider Church does not value the training provided by RCC sufficiently to want to pay for it. The team saw little evidence of this, but also little evidence that RCC was engaging explicitly in demonstrating value for money to dioceses. We would encourage RCC to have confidence in its product and avoid giving its public profile an anxious overlay, which can unhelpfully give the impression that it doesn't trust Dioceses to value what is important.

21. RCC has a different relationship with the dioceses involved in its non-residential provision – where there is an ongoing relationship of some depth – compared to those who use RCC as one residential college among many for residential ordinands. This is inevitable given the fact that RCC seeks to be both a regional and a national provider. Nevertheless, at times it appeared from our discussions at interview that the fact that the college might be relating to thirty dioceses nationally was limiting the degree to which RCC was investing in deeper relationship with those dioceses where it could play, and to some degree was, playing a more significant role. It will be important for RCC to strike the right balance in its communications and publicity strategy between its historic role as a national institution serving all dioceses equally, and its newer deeper relationship with particular dioceses.

Recommendation 3

We recommend that once Recommendation 1 is implemented, the college reviews its publicity and communications strategy to ensure that it is appropriate and balanced given the emerging nature of RCC, and it communicates clearly and confidently the identity of RCC.

22. Statistics analysing the whole student body by age, gender and ethnic identity were not made available. Anecdotally it appeared that the body was appropriately diverse by gender and age, but with poor ethnic diversity. We **urge** RCC to make the collection and consideration of such statistics a routine, important, management function.

The review team has Confidence with Qualifications with regard to Criterion A: Formational Aims.

SECTION B: FORMATIONAL CONTEXT

BI The TEI draws on partnership with theological educators in the region and local faith community organizations to enhance training and formational opportunities for students.

23. Ripon College Cuddesdon is part of the South Central Regional Training Partnership. However, beyond formal representation at RTP meetings, this appears to have little meaning for the College: for instance, the RTP was not mentioned in RCC's annual self-evaluations nor at any interview with staff or students. In part we understand that this is because the RTP has itself become a provider of theological education; hence limiting its ability to be an 'independent broker' bringing together providers. Furthermore, key dioceses with which RCC has established partnerships are outside of the South Central region; hence the RTP does not bring together all of the dioceses which are core to RCC.
24. RCC has a significant partnership with Oxford University, which stretches beyond the formal partnership covering students studying for an Oxford Degree. The historical and geographical relationship with Oxford significantly helps the College foster a research culture with teachers engaging in cutting edge thinking and writing. It also helps the College have an attitude of openness and engagement with the currents of wider society and thinking.
25. RCC draws effectively on a wide range of church partners for the provision of placements – including parish settings of considerable diversity, and many opportunities in sector ministries. There is appropriate use of church partners in the more formal aspects of learning.
26. The partnership with the Church Mission Society further enriches the opportunities available, and the breadth of understanding of ministry within the College. WEMTC has a close relationship with Redcliffe College in Gloucester whose facilities it uses.
27. The College has a long-standing relationship with the Al Maktoum Institute in Dundee and hosts twice a year a group of Muslim women, mainly from the Gulf States, who meet with current students from the different pathways and explore their different understandings of faith with one another. It is looking to develop a link with a Muslim educational institution (Darul Uloom) in Blackburn. There are meaningful links with other parts of the Anglican Communion. The Cuddesdon Study Centre facilitates church leaders from across the communion spending time at Cuddesdon and contributing to the community's life and learning. Student exchanges happen regularly with two colleges in the USA, and one in Barbados, South Africa and Tanzania.

Commendation 4

We commend the College for the breadth and depth of partnerships which enrich the learning and formational environment for staff and students.

B2. There are well understood and embedded practices of corporate life, so as to enhance the process of students' formation.

28. There are appropriate policies for the community in relation to welfare, equality (gender, ethnicity and disability) and conduct, and, where possible, these are applied and reasonable adjustments have been made.
29. Since the last Review, the college has undertaken a Disability Audit and significant adaptations, often in response to the needs of particular students, have ensued. Measures include adaptations for the partially sighted, automatic doors and ramps for wheelchair users, as well as the adaptation of a ground-floor flat suitable for a disabled student.
30. Across the RCC staff as a whole, ordained staff generally reflect a good gender balance. At Cuddesdon itself, most of the female tutors are part-time, although the other part of their roles involves work in local or world church and research contexts which adds richness to what they offer as RCC tutors. There is a reasonably diverse age profile across the tutorial staff, some degree of international representation, very limited minority ethnic representation but good access to ethnic and international expertise and perspectives through the CMS link. More could be made of these to ensure that the wider RCC student body has access to greater diversity of perspective from their teachers.
31. About one quarter of the teaching staff are lay people; the majority are ordained. Between them, members of the teaching staff bring experience from a range of ministerial contexts including the world church, an asylum seeker detention centre, and advocacy for the elderly.
32. The Reviewers are satisfied that Safeguarding procedures, training and practice are in place, that they are methodical, robust, thorough and in line with national guidance.
33. Despite the complexity outlined at paragraph 8, reviewers were very impressed with the effectiveness with which community is built in both residential and dispersed modes and for people on different ministerial tracks. There was both an outstanding experience of the local community in each programme or pathway and for the most part, a good sense of connection with the RCC Community as a whole. This is facilitated by both real-time physical community (joint weekends, worship, teaching, common social time) and also by effective virtual community via e-mail and social media. A number of students reported appreciating the freshness of perspective brought by engagement with students on different pathways.
34. We witnessed a strong sense community life and mutual support evidenced by conversation with students in fellowship groups, at meal-times, in the common room, at corporate worship, and through what they said in response to Reviewers' queries. Students can and do access multiple support systems including tutors and chaplains and there is a culture of excellent mutual peer support which was very much in evidence through conversation and observation.

Commendation 5

We commend the effective formational community within each of the programmes offered.

35. Spouses and families expressed a high degree of satisfaction with their provision within the Cuddesdon community. They are satisfied that their interests and concerns are appropriately recognized within the College's decision-making process and were extremely happy with their facilities, accommodation and social timetable. At Cuddesdon, most families live in good-sized flats in a block on the grounds, and they appreciate the close-knit supportive community that this engenders. They have access to a dedicated chaplain which is much appreciated as well as good access to tutors and the Principal. They feel fully included in the meals, the teaching and worship life of the community. They also describe good integration with single students at Cuddesdon. All commented on their appreciation for the abundance of safe physical space for families and that Cuddesdon was a place that welcomed pets. One child wanted us to state specifically that Cuddesdon is great for kids.
36. Some concern was expressed that certain maintenance issues have not been responded to effectively, but there was confidence that the Principal understood this and was addressing these concerns.
37. The spouses who spoke to the Reviewer said that its reputation for family provision was one of the main reasons they had chosen Cuddesdon and they were very satisfied that it was living up to and even exceeding their expectations.

Commendation 6

We commend the outstanding provision for spouses and families.

B3. The provision of public social and private living accommodation is satisfactory [see also E3 for teaching accommodation].

38. Social and private accommodation at Cuddesdon is well maintained and fit for purpose. Residential students expressed high satisfaction with their accommodation and the Reviewer was shown three different kinds of student rooms – new-built, newly-refurbished, en-suite. All were very pleasant, attractive, well-maintained and personalized and appreciated by their residents. There is good social provision for single year-round residential students including a dedicated lounge/kitchen which is protected out of term-time for their exclusive use.
39. Cuddesdon has had a Disability Audit since the last Review and has made a number of improvements and adjustments. There is adequate provision for the needs of users with mobility and other disabilities. (See B2i for more detail)
40. The award-winning Bishop King Edward King Chapel, completed in 2013, is a superb liturgical space of beauty, imagination and peace. It is capable of imaginative and creative use and although the Review Team did not see it used outside the practice of the daily offices and Eucharist, students reported a number of occasions in which the space had been used creatively to enhance liturgical reflection and enrich the worshipping experience.
41. Cuddesdon has a programme of ongoing maintenance and has just come through an intense period of developing its Estate, the two major projects being the Chapel and the building of a new four storey accommodation and teaching block (in partnership with a small religious order, the Sisters of

Begbrooke) which enrich the Estate significantly. There is a sense of spaciousness at Cuddesdon – both in the buildings and the grounds – which contributes to a lived experience of non-competitive community that allows for the generous accommodation of a variety of groups and needs.

Commendation 7

We commend the very good quality of accommodation for students.

Commendation 8

We commend the superb new chapel.

B4. The TEI's corporate worship and liturgy are balanced in range and tradition, including authorised and innovative rites.

42. Ripon College Cuddesdon places considerable importance on fostering a routine of corporate worship. This is particularly evident in the residential community, with attendance expected at two acts of worship a day, with two further optional services available most days. An appropriate pattern of worship was evident at residential weekends, which was appreciated by students. Evening teaching within the 'non-residential' pathways was also preceded by worship which as well as offering worship, gathered the community together, and gave opportunity for students to lead worship in a supportive atmosphere, and in some cases experiment and learn from each other.
43. The corporate worship within the Residential Community is governed by a detailed chapel handbook. This sets out a clear pattern for worship almost exclusively Common Worship, though with two evensongs each week for two half terms being BCP, and one optional Eucharist each week being BCP or CW traditional language. The instructions for the two more creative acts of worship each week (Monday and Friday evenings) make clear that the rules and structure for a CW 'service of the word' must be observed. The handbook sets out instructions for the conduct of worship in great detail, with a tone which emphasises order over creativity or flexibility as is evidenced by the repeated use of the word 'should' throughout.
44. As we reflect above, and further at Section D3 (paras 92 and 95-97), the corporate worship and prayer life of the community is appreciated by students in both residential and non-residential modes, and we heard positive accounts of how liturgical diversity is held within the community. Nonetheless, a minority of students expressed disappointment and frustration with the balance of worship. In their experience, the worship pattern marginalised the worship traditions which had fostered their call to ordination, or were present in their sending / placement / receiving churches. They recognised that the Monday and Friday evening services were intended to connect with them, but felt that the balance was out of proportion, there being at most two services a week to cope with all manner of different traditions and innovation, with eight mandatory and a further ten optional all being – in their view - of a broadly similar style.
45. The tone of the handbook and the structures for worship project a certain tradition and style as 'the norm', and that other traditions or innovative rites are a departure from this. We do not intend this

as a criticism, but rather as an area for RCC's reflection. That 'norm' is certainly a mainstream tradition within the Church of England, Cuddesdon students are being very well prepared for that approach, and the uniformity gives an order to the residential community. At the same time, we believe this projection of a 'norm' may be in some tension with RCC's broader commitment to embracing the diversity within the Church of England with a generosity which goes beyond tolerance to acceptance and affirmation: hence our recommendation below.

46. The worship is intentionally inclusive in respect of gender. Appropriate Eucharistic provision is made on festivals for those who are unable to accept the ministry of a woman priest on the grounds of theological conviction.

Recommendation 4

We recommend that RCC reviews the pattern of worship for the residential community, and the approach set out in the chapel handbook, against its own commitment to embracing diversity within the Church of England to ensure:

- (a) that students from a range of backgrounds and experiences find their own worship style and tradition respected and affirmed;**
- (b) that students are helped to understand and embrace the range of worship traditions and styles which will be present in the churches in which they will serve; and**
- (c) that the balance between order and creativity serves the formational and training needs of the students.**

B5. Staff model appropriate pattern of spirituality, continued learning and reflection on practice.

47. The Review Team witnessed very good interaction between staff and students in a variety of learning and social settings. Most of the teaching sessions we witnessed were interactive with strong engagement from students who demonstrated confidence, curiosity and trust. Students spoke very highly of the accessibility of staff, and reported an easy, mature interaction that was evidenced at meal-times and in common spaces as well as in the classroom. Several residential students observed that they appreciated being treated like adults and felt that there was an appropriate balance of involvement/accessibility combined with a sense of realism and respect for the need of staff for time off. Community life across the pathways we witnessed facilitates an integrated approach to life and learning, and one of the key benefits of having a variety of pathways and programmes in one TEI is the richness and diversity engendered by this. Capitalizing on the full potential of this resource, and in particular of the very distinctive contribution that the Pioneer Pathway and its CMS resources could bring, is a work in progress.

Commendation 9

We commend the excellent interaction between staff and students.

48. Despite the pressures of a full timetable and considerable workload, staff do a good job in continuing to develop their professional expertise, some in research and the writing of books, others in areas of more applied expertise. Students value the way in which this continuing learning and expertise continues to resource their learning. They also expressed appreciation for the personal spirituality and continuing reflectiveness witnessed in their tutors. As in many institutions, it is a struggle for staff to maintain a healthy pattern of work and wider life. The Principal is working to address historic imbalances and is committed to encouraging a model of wellbeing rooted in mutual support and accountability, an effective senior management team with good systems of delegation, and promoting a good balance of being available and encouraging people to get on with their own lives and with space for being human.

Recommendation 5

We recommend that, as RCC emerges from a period of rapid change and expansion, serious scrutiny is given to staff work-load and work/life balance.

The review team has Confidence with regard to Criterion B: Formational Context.

SECTION C: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

C1. The TEI has clear and effective governance structures.

49. The Self Evaluation Document (SED) notes that 'The appointment of a new principal in April 2015 gave the College an opportunity to take stock of the recent developments in the light of its underlying ethos. Using an external facilitator, the College has adopted a two pronged approach to the development of its vision which will see the development of appropriate leadership structures as well as plans for further strategic development.'
50. The increased size and complexity of the college has meant that the earlier leadership patterns were no longer adequate. The incorporation of the Oxford Ministry Course, WEMTC, CMS and other part time students from the Diocese of Monmouth and Diocese of Portsmouth has led to an exploration of what holds the college together. The Principal commented that he saw the college as holding a common vocation while at the same time rejoicing in and celebrating diversity.
51. The last two years has seen the beginnings of a restructuring of the College governance and management in order to accommodate these changes. The need to manage a more complex institution has led to the recruitment of key new members of staff including a Director of Finance and HR (with an enhanced HR brief), an Estates and Facilities Director and most recently a full-time Academic Administrator.
52. It is acknowledged that there is still some need for more efficient management and governance structures and that the current structures are work in progress. Structures have been implemented for the Senior Leadership Team, which includes The Principal, Academic Dean, Director of Finance and HR, Director of Estates and Facilities, Development Director and the Directors/Deans of the various study pathways. There is also a clearly defined Academic Structure and Administrative Line Management Structure.
53. The Board of Governors (which meets May, November, and February) has clear terms of reference, as do the three sub committees: Educational Committee (which meets termly), Estates and Personnel Committee (which meets May, September, December and February), and Finance Committee (which meets March, June, October and December).
54. The Board of Governors consists of The Principal, Representatives of the Bishop of Oxford and General Synod, Elected representatives of the Staff and Student body, and up to ten co-opted members.

Recommendation 6

We recommend that, once the review of the Strategic Plan is complete, the Governance Structures are reviewed to ensure that they enable the implementation of that plan.

C2. The TEI has effective leadership.

55. In the 2016 Newsletter the Principal notes that Ripon College is a 'community of communities' and as such needs to develop sophisticated and nuanced skills in communication. The Leadership Team has sought to both listen to the diverse voices and to provide a clear sense of direction. The Reviewers were present at a Meeting of the Governors and witnessed clear reporting and lines of responsibility, including reports from the three sub-committees. Items were debated and discussed with openness and honesty. Observation of this meeting and minutes of previous meetings indicate that the Board of Governors operates effectively as a governing body and that matters are progressed efficiently and effectively.
56. As noted in Section C4, there is an ongoing process of strategic planning which aims to be responsive to the changing needs of the Church. There is a recognition that the rapid expansion in previous years has made the previous strategic plan (2014) out of date and that there is now a need for consolidation and increased coherence. This process has led to the setting up of three distinct workgroups each of which is working against agreed criteria: (i) the Curriculum Group to achieve curriculum rationalisation and integration within and across pathways; (ii) the Team Culture and Process group to improve communication and review working patterns; and (iii) the Branding, Marketing and Outreach Group. These three groups are overseen by the Senior Leadership Team. Discussions with staff indicated that they were engaged in this process and that there was a recognition of the need for the college to change and develop to meet the future needs of students and the church.
57. The Principal noted that there were areas of disagreement within the College but that such disagreements were part of living in society and the church. The staff sought to model such disagreements and differences and to show that such disagreements could be resolved and differences lived with and, hopefully, celebrated. The ethos was one of working with the tensions rather than imposing a 'tidy' solution.

Recommendation 7

We recommend that the process of review continues with a sense of purpose and the three workgroups fully report by the end of 2017.

C3. Trustees are appropriately recruited, supported and developed.

58. The Principal noted that they were in the process of 'reconstructing' the Governing Body so that it was more based upon skill sets rather than constituencies. The current Governing Body is mainly constituted of clergy with very few representatives of the lay community or of skilled practitioners from business who could offer their expertise.
59. New Governors are given an induction into the governance of the college and their role as Governor. They are encouraged to take an active role in the governance of the college and build beneficial relationships with the staff and students.

Recommendation 8

We recommend that, in support of the emerging policy on appointment on the basis of expertise, the skill gaps in the current Governing Body are identified, and new appointments are made explicitly to fill those gaps.

C4. The TEI has effective business planning and fundraising.

60. The Leadership Team has recognised the need to develop a Strategic Plan for further growth. The SED notes that 'This has led to the inauguration of a review of all its operations, which began early in 2016 and is planned to last two years.'
61. The task of creating more efficient structures has been undertaken along with further detailed reflection on the key formational aims and ethos of the College. Key areas that have emerged through the initial rounds of discussion have been proper delegation of management responsibilities and suitable accountability structures in the different areas of the College's activities in order to ensure efficient communication as well as manageable resourcing of all areas. Both Governors and Management have established new Committees to deliver change and to ensure good governance (see C2 above).
62. The three distinct workgroups described at Section C2 - the Curriculum Group, the Team Culture and Process group and the Branding, Marketing and Outreach Group – are overseen by the Senior Leadership Team, which is developing the Strategic Plan together with the Board of Governors.

Recommendation 9

We recommend that the process of the formulation of the Strategic Plan be pursued according to the agreed timescale.

C5. The TEI has sound financial and risk management and reporting.

63. A detailed budget is prepared for the June meeting of the Finance Committee. This is approved subject to adjustments for student numbers, which are not known at this stage. The budget is firmed up in October when numbers are confirmed.
64. Budget monitoring reports are prepared each month for meetings with the Head of Finance and budget holders. Detailed Management Accounts are prepared each quarter and presented to the Finance Committee before being reported to the Board of Governors.
65. Annual accounts are prepared according to the requirements of the Charity Commission (SORP 2015 (FRS 102)). Proper records of accounts are kept and reported to the Governors on a regular basis to ensure that they can discharge their responsibility for safeguarding the assets of the charity and take reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.
66. The report of the Independent Auditor on the accounts for the year ended 31 July 2016 reported that the accounts fully complied with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 and that there were no exceptions to report.

67. The College maintains a Risk Register which is reviewed and updated on a regular basis by the Finance committee. This includes the comments of the Estates and Personnel Committee. The register is considered by the Governing Body at least annually.
68. The Risk Register lists risks classified under Financial Risks, Physical Risks and Reputational Risks. Each risk is assigned a score for Likelihood (1 – 3) and Consequences (1 – 3) to give a Risk Score. The three key potential risks identified by the College at present are reduced student numbers, an unsustainable cost base (including potential pension liability) and ability to repay outstanding loans. Contingency plans are in place to cover the repayment of outstanding loans should this be required.

Commendation 10

We commend the implementation of effective financial controls and reporting.

The review team has Confidence with regard to Criterion C: Leadership and Management.

SECTION D: STUDENT OUTCOMES

DI. Students are growing in their understanding of Christian tradition, faith and life.

69. The Self-Evaluation Document (SED) states that RCC: 'was founded 'for the theological training of candidates for Holy Orders in the Church of England'. Its principal role continues to be to form, equip and resource ministers of the church for the service of God's mission in the world and to reach out to an unevangelised generation.'
70. We found an institution that consistently sets academic learning and the pursuit of knowledge and understanding within the context of community. The SED goes on to say:
71. 'The College encourages all students to live together as a community of learning, passionate for the Kingdom and open to the world. To do this there is a particular focus on five key values:
- Community: generosity towards one another as each seeks to live in community with one another.
 - Hospitality: the importance of receiving the stranger and being open to the world and keeping boundaries open.
 - Wisdom: the importance of learning through personal growth and the cultivation of habits of holiness, as well as inhabiting truth through theological reflection and study
 - Integrity: the importance of integrating all aspects of faith, life and ministry
 - Diversity: the importance of embracing all the riches of the Christian tradition, as well as embracing difference and practising reconciliation'.
72. Interviews with staff and students and also stakeholder feedback reinforced the importance of community and community life at RCC. Almost universally, students spoke with warmth and appreciation about community life and its importance in providing a supportive environment in which people could question, grow and be formed in line with the Church of England's formational requirements. Families of residential students are drawn into community life through times of worship, discipleship nurture courses for adults and children and social occasions. Students spoke of how participation in community life helped their families prepare for life in a clergy household. On residential weekends we also observed rich and supportive communities, fostered in part by students engaging not only in class, but in the context of shared meals, prayer groups, worship and worship planning groups and social occasions. CMS use the term 'relational formation'.
73. The pathways mapping documents clearly set down how students meet the Common Awards learning outcomes. In addition to academic requirements, every student has to undertake certain courses to ensure they also meet the House of Bishops' formational requirements, e.g. in relation to Spirituality and Worship, all residential ordinands: take an initial additional short course on worship at the start of training, lead worship regularly in college and on placement, and take part in regular small-group reflections with a staff member on worship they have planned and led; participate in voice coaching classes with the option of further one-to-one work; and receive some teaching on ministry to children

and young people. The PP, CMS and WEMTC pathways make similar provision, albeit in differing ways that are appropriate for their student cohorts.

74. We observed a generally high standard of teaching and the module feedback considered at each of the Boards of Studies affirmed this. The best sessions focused not just on knowledge and understanding, but how the subject impacted on formation and ministerial concerns, e.g. a session observed on the Biblical Studies module related Jesus' use of parables to the preaching of sermons. One student in interview noted that it was not always clear how learning relates to formation, but that this happened over time.
75. Students at Cuddesdon come from diverse educational backgrounds, sometimes with a fairly limited knowledge of the Christian faith. Teaching staff generally provide handouts and resources on Moodle that often include background material and further reading. A wide variety of pathways are available for students, through the Common Awards and the University of Oxford.
76. The residential student body is not particularly diverse in terms of social demographic, but the student bodies on each of the other pathways are more varied in this respect. Cuddesdon prides itself on '...the emphasis it places on a serious engagement with the breadth and diversity of the Church of England.' The staff and student body are certainly theologically diverse and not all teaching staff are Anglicans. In teaching sessions and the college groups theological diversity was evident and respected, though lively debate is encouraged to enable mutual appreciation and understanding. Staff and students were keen to stress that all are welcome at the college, e.g. Eucharistic provision is made on festivals for those who are unable to accept the ministry of a woman priest on the grounds of theological conviction.
77. A number of RCC staff members are research active and published academics. CMS has clear expertise in teaching the theology and practice of mission and evangelism. Generally speaking, teaching staff on PP and WEMTC associate staff tend to be practitioners who hold appropriate academic qualifications or appropriate experience. Several staff noted the recent move towards more collaborative working, but there is scope for further development of this and also co-teaching.

Recommendation 10

We recommend that the deployment of staff across the Pathways is reviewed, such that students on the PP and WEMTC are more frequently taught by Core members of RCC staff, and that the learning experience at Cuddesdon is enriched by the skills and practical experience of the associate staff.

Recommendation 11

We recommend that staff continue to be encouraged to further develop collaboration across the teams and share learning.

78. Theological reflection and reflective practice are taught from the beginning of training and run through all the academic programmes as well as being integral to sessions on skills for ministry. Minutes from respective Boards of Studies commended this aspect of training. One DDO said: 'candidates are best

equipped for ministry as reflective practitioners, ministers who approach their particular context through a life grounded in daily prayer, reflection on scripture, and in the sacraments.'

D2. Students have a desire and ability to share in mission, evangelism and discipleship.

79. The SED describes 'a strong set of relationships with faith and community organisations.' One stakeholder called Cuddesdon 'a vibrant, outward-looking community.' We found CMS to be particularly impressive here and very outward looking – both in the UK and beyond. Students there are programmed and encouraged to engage with world and work out how to enculturate the gospel in a variety of contexts – indeed, in any context.
80. Residential students undertake various placements during their training, all of which have an expectation of ongoing reflection and supervision (with an allocated supervisor) and also some form of written assignment employing reflective practice and theological reflection. Students sometimes undertake parish placements akin to their own theological tradition, but are likely to experience other contexts and theological traditions during the course of their training.
81. Students also undertake community placements. Current opportunities include: hospices, hospital, mental health, prisons, schools, youth clubs, rural ministry, homeless drop-in centres. There are links too with Muslim educational institutions. Students may also have the opportunity to undertake a placement abroad, for example in another church of the Anglican Communion. Placement supervisors and students spoke highly of college oversight of this area. The Pioneer Mission Leadership Training (PMLT) programmes at CMS combine theological learning and pioneering practice, aiming to give 'students a language and theology with which to understand their pioneering and validate their calling as a pioneer'.
82. Students on different pathways seem to have a more varied quality of experience in parish placements, where they are inevitably more dependent on the quality and capacity of their local training incumbent. All supervisors are given guidance notes, but not training in the role of supervisor.

Commendation 11

We commend RCC's placement provision and oversight for students, in particular its community placements and the CMS programme.

Recommendation 12

We recommend RCC explore how the whole student body might be enriched by more widespread opportunities for pioneering placements and how these might relate to and impact on existing models for mission and ministry.

83. We observed in teachings sessions and in discussions a student body that is eager to learn about the Christian faith. Many students participate in optional activities such as reading groups. Placement supervisors, such as the supervisor of a mental health placement, said they found Cuddesdon students to be 'mission minded' and sensitive to context.

84. Teaching staff said they were trying to prepare students for ministry now and as it might be in twenty years. However, with the exception of CMS teaching, which is highly **commended**, there was mixed feedback about the quality of teaching concerning mission and evangelism, evident in interview and in reports from the Boards of Studies. CMS students report covering in Cuddesdon residentials, topics they have previously been taught within CMS, which highlights the need to map and consolidate the programmes and coordinate the teaching teams. One former ordinand describes the college as ‘a bit culturally isolated, cosy and polite, a sort of haven’ and he ‘would have loved to have seen a more open, exploratory engagement with the relationship between the church and its current cultural context – politics, the arts, the social sciences, ethical challenges and social justice issues.’ One voice, admittedly – and the same is true of some of the very positive observations we cite later in this section – but we believe it is one the College needs to hear.

Commendation 12

We commend the quality of the teaching concerning mission and evangelism at CMS.

Recommendation 13

We recommend that RCC explores ways in which the relationship between CMS and Cuddesdon might creatively develop further to bring to the benefit of the whole student body the strength of CMS’ mission and evangelism teaching and its resources and culture for outward-facing engagement with the world and world church.

85. A distinctive feature of both the PP and WEMTC is the desire to be contextual. The director of the PP said Portsmouth diocese did not want ‘Cuddesdon by the sea’, but something distinct and grounded in mission there. The sessions are deliberately based in a Portsmouth inner-city parish undergoing development. WEMTC precedes the current partnership with Cuddesdon and has a strong local identity. The Dean of WEMTC recognised that large evangelical churches often have their own training programmes, but she has built a good relationship with one New Wine church to benefit from their expertise in mission and evangelism. That church has now hosted and led a teaching session for WEMTC students.
86. Teaching we observed often had an emphasis on helping others to grow in their faith and nurture calling, e.g. in the spirituality module that all students undertake (some as auditors). Discipleship courses are dissected in teaching sessions. The diverse student and staff body leads to richness in the perceived nature of ministry and calling. Students were able to talk about how they encourage and nurture vocation of others. The SED says: ‘recognising that the whole baptised people of God is called to be a community of disciples, the College also seeks to serve the wider learning of the Church and the world it serves, which has already resulted in lay training programmes both in Cuddesdon and on WEMTC. Recognising that ministry is increasingly shared by the whole people of God and the consequent need for education at all levels, the College has sought to act as a hub for learning as well as promoting research for the benefit of the wider church’.
87. A variety of nurture courses are run for family members of ordinands, allowing for different stages of understanding and discipleship. Students and family members are also involved in children’s work.

D3. Students are growing in personal spirituality and engagement with public worship.

88. The current Director of Worship at RCC is also the lecturer in liturgy, though the two roles are separate. It was evident in liturgy lectures we observed that students find it beneficial to have the theory and praxis of worship held together, particularly as many of the students come with a low understanding of forms of worship. We observed lectures which demonstrated assured authority on Eucharistic prayers and generated impressive engagement and reflection on the part of the students.
89. The Worship Handbooks for residential and OMC students emphasise that worship must underpin training and future ministry and that 'hopefully you will learn much that will help you become an excellent worship leader but first and foremost we hope that you will be rooted in worship yourself.' This is echoed in other pathways also.
90. Students on all pathways are required to prepare and undertake different roles in planning and leading acts of worship. These are mapped during training to ensure an appropriate range and level of experience and competence is gained. Students are expected to lead Common Worship contemporary and traditional language services in addition to the 1662 BCP. Students also prepare and lead other forms of service, such as services of the Word and creative worship. Whilst a range of service forms are covered, we do not think this would adequately prepare someone to lead worship in a parish of a charismatic or conservative evangelical tradition.
91. RCC staff will sometimes offer extra worship skills in response to students who complain IME 2 provision in their diocese is 'patchy'. This taps into some tendency at RCC towards trying to do too much (one DDO asks whether they are 'overly pastorally supportive'), whilst also recognising that time and staffing is more pressurised and consolidation needs to happen. This is not an issue on the PP or WEMTC where there is recognition that some worship training needs to take place post ordination/licensing in IME 2.

Recommendation 14

We recommend that as part of the process of consolidation, RCC focuses on core worship skills required by IME 1 and liaise with diocesan staff if there are concerns about IME 2 provision.

92. Much of the worship preparation happens in groups on all pathways, which fosters good practice of working in teams and enabling others. Students are expected to support and note one another's skills and also respect theological and liturgical diversity. In part this is to prepare them for future deployment where there is likely to be liturgical diversity. One student noted that groups planning creative worship are the most likely place where disagreement might happen and that it helps people to 'learn how to be generous with disagreement.'
93. Staff on all the pathways offer feedback to students after they have led an act of worship. There is a clear expectation that guidance and feedback is also given in training parishes, though the quality and form can be variable depending on the minister. Students receive training on voice projection and singing.

94. Preaching mostly happens during placements, where there is an expectation of constructive feedback being given to the student. We observed some high quality teaching on the structure, purpose and practicalities of preaching during a weekend for OMC, PP and CMS ordained pioneer students. Residential students have preaching workshops that include videoing sermons with staff and student feedback.
95. Students with learning needs such as dyslexia are supported to develop appropriate strategies as they lead worship.
96. Students work with their individual tutor to ensure they have a pattern of individual and corporate prayer and worship that is appropriate for them and which will sustain their future ministry (CMS use the phrase 'soul work'). The worship pattern at RCC is solidly based on the daily office and Eucharist. Some residential students from an evangelical tradition said that they struggled to be fed by the worship and supplemented it with other resources, e.g. from YouTube, although Friday evening worship – liturgy of the Word with what apparently is an impressive worship band - is appreciated by many.
97. Students all take part in prayer groups and there is a strong system of chaplaincy support and encouragement to undertake some form of spiritual direction. The presence of the sisters was widely recognised as significant to the spiritual life of RCC. One former ordinand said; 'the presence of the sisters is a huge, huge boon...the prayerfulness of the place is immediately and palpably apparent.' This bears out our positive findings at Section B about the corporate worshipping and prayer life of the community, notwithstanding Recommendation 4 which addresses its inclusivity. Nonetheless, there is the separate issue of whether students from all traditions are as fully resourced in their spirituality and equipped for their future ministerial role as they might be. Hence:

Recommendation 15

We recommend that further consideration is given as to how the college:

- (a) adequately prepares all students to be able to lead worship and preach in a parish of a charismatic or conservative evangelical tradition; and**
- (b) supports students from a charismatic or conservative evangelical tradition in developing a sustaining pattern of prayer and worship.**

D4. Students' personality, character and relationships.

98. Placement supervisors said they found Cuddesdon students teachable, engaged and committed to learning; one described their students as 'earthed'. Students are expected to work within clear professional boundaries (including safeguarding), something explicitly set out in handbooks, but which the supervisors felt students were already familiar with. There is an expectation that students reflect honestly and critically on tasks undertaken, focusing on their strengths and identifying areas for growth. The supervisors were very clear about their role and liaised with RCC staff as appropriate or if there were any concerns. As part of their reflection, students are asked to identify and explore what

they have learnt about ministry and themselves. In a spirituality teaching session we observed, issues surrounding the dangers of power and manipulation were addressed. Care of self is clearly coupled with care for others.

99. In student interviews, honest reflection was evident, including encouragement to learn from mistakes. For CMS pioneering students, learning to take good risks is essential. Other students and staff spoke of the benefits and challenges of having pioneer students in teaching sessions. In part this has helped others to engage with ministry in changing circumstances, but there is further scope to learn from the pioneers. One pioneer ordinand also noted the importance of them being part of residential with OMC and PP students: 'I'm learning to straddle the two to fulfil my calling'. Learning from one another and from difference and diversity is key to the RCC ethos.
100. The College is physically slightly cut off (there is now no bus service either), but there are real attempts to foster community life for the residential students and their families. The Common Room and bar are often where social occasions happen. There is a clear effort to welcome and draw in other students to the social life when they are at the college. Meal times are an important place for social interaction and building healthy relationships between students and staff.
101. Individual tutors play an important part in ensuring the well-being of all students and helping them to form patterns that will underpin and sustain ministry in the future. Inevitably, tutors vary as to the level of support provided, but there is an expectation of at least one formal meeting a term. On all pathways, informal interaction happens on a regular basis and a number of students commended staff for their pastoral support and noticing and acting when a student was struggling in some way. Students clearly feel staff are approachable and know them. Bishop Humphrey is very clear that he is Principal for all students and so signs off all reports and makes an impressive effort to engage with them. One student said that there was 'a culture of deep conscientiousness'.
102. There was some diversity in views as to how well staff modelled sustainable ministry and care for self. One student noted that she found it helpful that staff were not afraid to show when they were tired or struggling – modelling the reality of ministry. The new staff sabbatical policy was also seen as good modelling. However, one of the chaplains expressed concerns about whether the ordinands had the capacity to balance role and work/life balance and to understand how lonely parish ministry could be. DDOs, sponsoring bishops and former ordinands were generally positive about how RCC prepared candidates against these criteria.
- D5. Students are developing in the dispositions and skills of leadership, collaboration and ability to work in community.**
103. The College recognises that ministry is increasingly shared by the whole people of God and the consequent need for education at all levels, and has sought to act as a hub for learning as well as promoting research for the benefit of the wider church.
104. The SED states that 'Part of the distinct ethos of Ripon College Cuddesdon is the emphasis it places on a serious engagement with the breadth and diversity of the Church of England. To enable the vision of equipping and resourcing ministers of the church for the service of God's mission in the world to

be realised, Ripon College Cuddesdon treasures the comprehensiveness of the Church of God.' An example of this was a full time final year student who identified as Liberal Anglo-Catholic who said that he had learnt to appreciate different traditions. He had been placed in a Charismatic Evangelical church and had learnt to appreciate their tradition and why he was committed to his own. He hoped to forge links with the Evangelical Church when he was serving his Curacy in a nearby Anglo-Catholic church.

105. The SED further states, 'The College encourages each member to bring their particular gifts and insights to be a blessing to others and requires a commitment to generous listening to others. This vision is never easy since diversity calls for generosity on the part of each, which is far more than mere tolerance, and a recognition that all are likely to experience a degree of discomfort, as well as affirmation and acceptance, in the process of growing in God's wisdom and love.'
106. A final year student felt that the training in leadership had been excellent. She had been encouraged to attend PCC meetings whilst on placement and had benefited from seeing how different incumbents ran the meetings. She referred to the triangle of teaching, observation and experience.
107. One previous student now serving as a curate said that she felt that the programme had prepared her well for parish life. She had been able to reflect on her experiences and felt that she had the tools that she needed.
108. At a meeting with full time students it was said that they were not a bunch of like-minded people but a very diverse group and that disagreement happened when creative worship was planned. They had to 'learn how to be generous with disagreement.' They also commented that the education and learning church modules were a 'cracking series' and also the Leadership and Education module. The Placement programmes were helping students to reflect on leadership and teaching and the practice of mission.

Commendation 13

We commend the development of leaders for the Church who are collaborative and can work with diversity.

D6. Students show a calling to ministry within the traditions of the sponsoring church denomination.

109. Cuddesdon puts a significant emphasis on its engagement with the breadth and diversity of the Church of England. The SED says: 'To enable the vision of equipping and resourcing ministers of the church for the service of God's mission in the world to be realised, Ripon College Cuddesdon treasures the comprehensiveness of the Church of God. Believing that there neither is – nor should there be – any division in the Body of Christ, the College is committed to the flourishing of all and to building a community in which this is realised by the grace of God, where all play unique and complementary parts in the service of the Gospel. This is as equally true *within* the pathways as between the pathways. The College has been intentional in encouraging debate and dialogue and serious reflection on

diversity and identity. It has consciously moved away from any sense of being a 'party' college and has successfully drawn students from across the spectrum of the Church of England.'

- I 10. Students, past and present, clearly appreciate that diversity, especially those training on the OMS, CMS, PP and WEMTC pathways. The Dean of WEMTC said that when the merger with Cuddesdon was being envisaged, there would have been an issue for them if Cuddesdon had had a very definite church tradition as their student body is very diverse. She noted that, 'we add to one another's flavours'.
- I 11. The Five Guiding Principles are discussed with students in tutorials and differences are explored. However, whilst the residential college undoubtedly welcomes students from across the theological spectrum, we doubt that someone from either a traditional Catholic or conservative evangelical tradition would be sufficiently prepared for future ministry or fed liturgically and spiritually in the way they would need to enable them to flourish. We do not see this as a criticism, in that it is unlikely that any college could meet these needs across the whole spectrum of theological diversity, and Cuddesdon deals with diversity well. Nevertheless, it is a relevant observation given Cuddesdon's clearly stated aspiration to draw students from across the whole spectrum within the Church of England.
- I 12. In teaching sessions and interviews, students were able to reflect on their individual sense of calling alongside the call of the church. The stress on diversity does have the positive effect of emphasising that the college is there to serve the mission and ministry needs of the church, rather than its own agenda.
- I 13. Students and staff on the PP, OMC and WEMTC were particularly able to discuss how their calling was embedded in the local church. CMS students and staff express some frustration with the Church of England and its structures and perceived constraints at times, but this reflects more about the current position of pioneering within the Church of England than CMS. We would endorse the claim by CMS that: 'CMS has provided something of a voice for pioneers and pioneering, and may have helped to protect or grow it within the Church of England.'
- I 14. RCC students have a strong pattern of engagement with the wider community, demonstrating their understanding of the established church and public ministry. Residential students engage with the life and worship of the local parish and all students have opportunities for ministry and mission in a range of contexts. As already noted placements are a particular strength of RCC and include an expectation of community engagement.
- I 15. One DDO, partly reflecting what she took to be a Church of England-wide issue, felt that candidates are 'least equipped for ministry in perhaps chaplaincy roles, particularly in the Armed Forces' – although RCC offer chaplaincy-based placements and teaching on chaplaincy within the context of mission. A linked issue was raised by a distinctive deacon candidate who did not feel she was being sufficiently prepared for diaconal ministry, which would tend to have a greater focus in the wider community.
- I 16. We feel that further learning and collaboration across the pathways (including CMS) would potentially enrich this aspect of training.

D7. Pioneer ministry training

- I17. We found CMS staff and teaching to be of a very high standard. Staff are research active and this feeds into teaching and practice e.g., Cathy Ross's work on gender issues in the classroom. Students' own pioneering research is also taken seriously and included in CMS organised conferences and published books. Courses are led by practitioners as well as academics. There is a real vision for mission in new and diverse contexts, which was evident in a class observed and came through strongly in conversation with staff and students, for example, engaging in African migrant Christianity, graffiti, a fresh expression for adults with learning disabilities, new age fairs, mission in shame-based cultures.
- I18. There is a clear culture of student feedback, which feeds into module and programme development. Teaching observed included a significant amount of group work; students are intellectually serious, but creative. There is very good reflective practice and theological reflection. Students were all very positive about the quality of the teaching that is interactive and allowed wrestling openly with issues; students learn a lot from each other in a safe and challenging environment.
- I19. CMS describe their model of formation as being itinerant Franciscan rather than Benedictine (in a gathered, closed community). Cuddesdon has given them the space to flourish and hold to their identity, though there is scope for further collaboration. There is some frustration with Cuddesdon's lack of engagement with IT (largely because of the broadband problems) and it will be important for furthering this partnership that the potential of the new broadband provision is exploited. CMS have a good library, which some students at Cuddesdon use.
- I20. There is a clear vision for pioneering mission in the Church of England and a desire to be alert to shaping ministry to meet the needs of that mission. One of the positive benefits of the partnerships with Cuddesdon has been bringing together tradition and innovation to allow something new to flourish. It has also ensured a dimension of accountability for the students and staff, both to the University of Durham and the Church of England. CMS have a strong virtual alumni community and have researched future deployment.

Commendation I4

We commend the CMS pioneer training as an exemplar for pioneer ministry training.

D8. The TEI has clear and robust procedures for end-of-training assessment of students' knowledge, skills and dispositions, and reporting on students' achievement.

- I21. Stakeholder feedback from bishops and DDOs indicated that they were generally happy with interaction and feedback from RCC. One DDO did note that 'end of year reports are thin by comparison with many other TEIs.' Discussion with students suggested that relationship between the college and different dioceses and DDOs varied in quality. Accordingly, we would **urge** that the College considers how to ensure greater consistency in feedback to and communication with DDOs and dioceses (this ties in with Recommendation I4).

122. The PP and WEMTC each have a paid member of RCC staff whose role includes a large element of liaison and communication between college and dioceses. Students and core staff noted the importance of these posts in terms of integrating the diocesan cohorts with RCC. The Bishop of Portsmouth chairs the Board of Governors at RCC.
123. As already mentioned, there is a clear tutorial system for all students. Feedback from placement supervisors is considered here and any concerns addressed. This is the forum where academic, formational and pastoral issues are discussed and integrated. Every student undertakes an annual self-evaluation against the Church of England formation criteria, which is drawn on and monitored during the training to ensure the candidate is developing. Some tutors are more deliberate and rigorous in this process than others.
124. It was clear that students had confidence in the staff and their assessment of character and formation. One former student described how he had been uncertain about the first title post suggested by his diocese. Having discussed this with Bishop Humphrey and his tutor he declined the offer and was then offered another title post where he was better able to flourish. Students expressed the view that they were treated as adults in the college, which encouraged interaction, debate and reflection.

D9. The student has, during and at the end of initial training, a personal learning plan or other clear basis from which to learn and grow further in ministry and discipleship.

125. The tutorial system brings together academic, formational and pastoral issues relating to each student. The examples of self-assessment forms provided demonstrate that progression is monitored during IME 1 training. Although each student has a personal tutor, it was clear that other staff pick up and feed their reflections into the process. It will be important to keep carefully monitoring progression of students on the PP and WEMTC because of the geographical separation between the central support / management systems in Cuddesdon and the main location of these pathways' communal life and work. Bishop Humphrey is able to monitor this to some degree because he reads and signs off all the end of year reports.
126. Students and staff emphasised the importance of ensuring the candidate has a sustainable pattern of ministry for the future. The new Candidate Formation Plan, required for ordination candidates from 2017, should enable a more consistent system of identifying and communicating learning goals – not least as the candidate moves from IME 1 to 2.

D10. The TEI learns from the pattern of its students' ministerial and formational achievement and acts on areas of particular need.

127. RCC has a strong sense of its responsibility to serve the Church of England. The SED says: 'Over the next five years the College will continue to develop the resilience and flexibility to remain a leading national provider of theological education in order to meet the needs of a rapidly changing context for ministry. The College is keen on continuing to promote, develop and further integrate its diverse and flexible pathways, each of which has much to contribute to the Church as a whole.'

128. The college is very responsive to students and partners to inform the development of its training programmes. Under the last Principal, the college entered into several partnerships that seem to have been largely constructed according to the needs and requirements of the partners. Whilst each pathway/partnership has required an individual and incarnated identity, there has not always been adequate consideration of the impact of such personalised pathways on the administrative and teaching staff. Consolidation, whilst remaining alert to the voice of students and partners, will be an important balance to keep.
129. The student voice is heard informally, but also recorded formally through module evaluations, college groups and termly liaison meetings. Students within the Portsmouth Pathway and WEMTC both described their pathway directors as 'championing' the students and ensuring they are treated at a level status with those on other pathways.
130. Module feedback is discussed openly at each Board of Studies. It was clear that in some cases, staff clearly take note of such feedback when developing the modules.

Recommendation 16

We recommend that RCC considers carefully how to ensure that responsiveness to the student/partner voice does not undermine the strategic need for consolidation.

131. Clearly there is much to commend under the heading of Student Outcomes. But our judgement is that RCC has further to go in exploring the deployment of staff and sharing of expertise across the pathways (D1), including drawing further on the expertise of CMS in mission and evangelism (D2); in resourcing students from charismatic or conservative evangelical traditions in their personal spirituality and equipping them for the worship-leading and preaching aspects of ministry (D3); as well as in balancing responsiveness to partners against the need at this stage for consolidation (D10). Hence:

The review team has Confidence with Qualifications with regard to Criterion D: Student Outcomes.

SECTION E: PARTNERSHIP WITH UNIVERSITY

E1. Quality control and assurance procedures governing the partnership are robust.

132. In light of the substantial partnership changes since initial validation, the review team focused its attention on evaluating whether governance structures, policies and procedures remained appropriate and robust for managing quality and standards across the multi-centre TEI. The review team concurred with the TEI's self-assessment that its size, breadth, and diversity had the potential to be a great strength within the context of the TEI working together as a single institution. The team explored how this potential strength was being realised, and whether there were other opportunities for the institution to work together and make the most of its diversity.

Management and oversight

133. The review team was of the view that the effective constitution and operation of the Common Awards Management Committee was crucial for the TEI to work as a single institution to manage the diverse portfolio of programmes delivered to different cohorts of students across a range of geographically dispersed delivery centres. The review team noted that the TEI's Common Awards Management Committee (referred to by the TEI as 'CAMC') was established, and now operates, in alignment with the Terms of Reference that are specified in the validation contract. In compliance with the requirements of initial validation (and, later, the approval of new delivery centres in Portsmouth and Monmouth), the membership of the TEI's Common Awards Management Committee includes staff and student members from each delivery centre (see Validation Visit Report, para. 46). The review team noted, however, that the minutes did not provide evidence of detailed consideration of matters relating to the Portsmouth and (more so) Monmouth delivery centres. In light of this, the TEI is encouraged to ensure that CAMC continues to consider relevant matters from within and across all delivery centres, and to document this consideration clearly within the minutes.
134. The CAMC minutes confirm that student representatives attend each meeting: there is excellent attendance from student representatives from the residential student community and OMC; attendance of representatives from WEMTC and CMS is good but more sporadic; no student representatives from Portsmouth appear to have attended Committee meetings, although a verbal report was provided at two meetings; no students from Monmouth appear to have attended, or reported to, the Committee meetings. During meetings with management staff, the TEI clarified that student representation on CAMC is challenging given the geographical dispersion of the delivery centres; student engagement is achieved more effectively through the centre-specific Boards of Studies meetings, which report to CAMC. Minutes from each delivery centre's Board of Studies (or the 'Course Board' of WEMTC) confirmed that the meetings operate as staff-student consultative committees. While the format and detail within the minutes varies between centres, all Boards of Studies address the review of modules, programmes, and teaching facilities. It was noted, however, that no Boards of Studies minutes for the Monmouth delivery centre had been provided as part of the PER documentation (see further paragraphs 191-2 for student engagement and Boards of Studies).
135. It was clear to the review team that the TEI actively encouraged meaningful discussions and connections between staff within and between different delivery centres. In addition to the regular staff meetings that were in place at the time of validation, the TEI had also reshaped its leadership and

governance structures and introduced three new workgroups to improve management, decision-making and communications across all centres. While the review team was encouraged by this, it noted that the remit of, and relationship between, the various formal and informal groups was not immediately evident. In some cases, this had the potential to result in a lack of clarity regarding decision-making. For example, curriculum development is considered in regular staff meetings, Boards of Studies, the curriculum review group, and CAMC, but it is not clear where decisions are made.

136. In cases such as curriculum development, it is essential the TEI retains institutional oversight of its provision in order to maintain commonality and coherence across delivery centres, rationalise the programme offering, and scrutinise proposals to ensure that any proposed differences between delivery centres are underpinned by a strong pedagogical rationale. The review team was of the view that, whilst sub-groups or sub-committees might be best placed to explore problems, analyse evaluations, and develop detailed proposals, the final scrutiny and decisions must remain the responsibility of the Common Awards Management Committee, while recognising that the TEI will need to take into account factors in the institution's life broader than just the Common Awards programme.
137. In order to ensure that CAMC continues to carry out its responsibilities to manage and oversee the entirety of its provision,

Recommendation 17

We recommend that the TEI should:

- (a) identify the main committees/groups relating to the Common Awards;**
- (b) illustrate the relationships and reporting lines between them; and**
- (c) clarify the roles and responsibilities of each committee/group in relation to Common Awards provision.**

138. The review team noted many examples of good practice in the operation of the TEI's Common Awards Management Committee: the clear and detailed minutes, which include attendance lists that identify student representatives; attendance levels among student representatives from the residential student community and OMC; the centrality given to the student voice in the discussion of module evaluations; the detailed consideration of key developments and action points from the Common Awards Management Board; the consideration of matters arising from each of the delivery centres.
139. However, the review team considered that the TEI would benefit from making more use of CAMC as a forum for reviewing and enhancing provision collaboratively as a single institution. For example, the collective development of TEI-wide baseline requirements would help to ensure consistency, remove unnecessary differentiation, and standardise provision and practice where appropriate. Shared baseline requirements would enable CAMC to measure, monitor and review provision across the whole institution while accepting the many deliberate and justifiable variations across delivery centres. Such institution-level reviews would help the TEI to maximise the potential of its diversity by identifying examples of good practice that could be rolled out more widely and enhance provision across all delivery centres.

- I40. In the light of the above, the recommendations presented throughout this report have been formulated to help the TEI work collaboratively with its constituent delivery centres to develop baseline requirements or minimum expectations that would help to improve consistency, share good practice, and enhance provision.

Engagement with the University

- I41. The review team noted that the role of the University Liaison Officer – including roles and responsibilities as a member of the Common Awards Management Committee – was not entirely clear to the TEI. While there were no specific issues or concerns about this, further clarification from the University on the roles and responsibilities of University Liaison Officers could improve the effectiveness of this mechanism.

Applications and admissions

- I42. The TEI's admissions policy and entry requirements apply to all centres including the delivery centres in Monmouth and Portsmouth. All admissions and APL decisions relating to the Common Awards programmes are managed through the College. There is slight variation in the admissions process for the newer centres: while the TEI makes all registration decisions, the Dioceses of Monmouth and Portsmouth are responsible for recruiting students. An Admissions Tutor provides specific advice to the residential student community, OMC, and CMS. The administrative functions within the Portsmouth centre provide specific admissions advice relating to the programmes delivered at Portsmouth.
- I43. The admissions process is used to identify students' additional needs. The TEI is responsible for ensuring that students' needs are met regardless of their delivery centre and whether or not they are training for ordained or lay ministry.

Assessment

- I44. The students whom the review team met confirmed that they were aware of the Common Awards assessment criteria, and knew where the criteria were published. One student commented that they found the assessment criteria unclear at the beginning of their programme but that their understanding of the criteria developed throughout their programme. Some students commented favourably on the value of formative assessment tasks for acquiring an understanding of the criteria, while others would have preferred additional guidance (such as exemplars) to aid their understanding of the criteria.
- I45. Students from all delivery centres submit their assessed work to a central email address that can be accessed only by the Academic Administrator and the Academic Dean. The TEI is planning to move to the submission of assessed work via Moodle. All marking and moderation is carried out anonymously. First marking is undertaken by module tutors, whether associate staff or the TEI's core staff. Additional support, mentoring, and feedback are provided to new markers and associate staff. Moderation is undertaken by TEI core staff. During the approval process for the newer delivery centres, the TEI confirmed that the same marking and assessment policies and processes would apply to the new pathway. The Course Directors for the Monmouth pathway and Portsmouth are members of the TEI's Board of Examiners. Marked work is returned to students via the Academic

Administrator. The quality of feedback is monitored by the internal moderators and the external examiner. The TEI requests that the Common Awards coversheets and Moodle are updated to enable moderators to comment on entire modules, rather than on an individual student basis.

146. A single TEI-level Board of Examiners confirms module marks and considers progression decisions for all students on the TEI's Common Awards programmes. The introduction of a new database within the TEI enables the Board of Examiners to access and analyse data on student performance across its different centres. The TEI did not have experience of operating Boards of Examiners meetings prior to the Common Awards Scheme. The TEI confirmed that, while the process was not complicated, the substantial volume of work relating to the large student numbers had been challenging; however, the TEI anticipated that the recent appointment of a full-time Academic Administrator would make the process easier.

In relation to the partnership with Oxford University (students for the BA in Theology and Religion, Master of Theology, and research degrees in Theology)

147. The College has recently signed a Partnership Agreement with the University of Oxford. This is robust, clear and fair and gives long term security to the relationship.
148. The students involved are matriculated into Oxford University on the same basis as all other students, and as such are directly subject to Oxford's quality assurance processes. The review team did not attempt to evaluate Oxford University's quality assurance processes but has no reason to doubt that they are excellent.

E2. Overall provision for academic and pastoral support and guidance is adequate.

149. The adequacy of overall provision for academic and pastoral support and guidance was confirmed through the initial validation process and (for the newer delivery centres of Portsmouth and Monmouth) through the partnership changes process.
150. The students whom the review team met confirmed that the induction process was valuable; some students from the DipHE and BA programmes considered that additional guidance from the teaching staff would have helped them to navigate and prioritise the large volume of documentation (see para. 150). The students spoke positively about Moodle as a great improvement to CAVLE but appreciated that the site was in an early stage and that further development could help to organise material and identify core information (see para. 151).

Course information

151. Information about academic programmes and modules is provided in different formats and communicated in different ways, including at induction, in student handbooks, via individual tutors, and through pathway guides that are produced by some (but not all) delivery centres. The students whom the review team met confirmed that they received a very large volume of information at the start of their programme, and that they would have benefitted from guidance to help them navigate the information and locate key information.

152. Moodle is used to provide academic resources, module information, handouts, discussion boards, and to contact students. The members of staff and students whom the review team met confirmed that staff use of Moodle varied. The TEI confirmed, however, that the minimum expectation is for all tutors to provide module information and handouts on Moodle. The new Academic Administrator was initiating a project to improve consistency of appearance across different module sites on Moodle.

Recommendation 18

We recommend that the TEI should clarify and implement its minimum expectations for core information to be presented on Moodle module sites.

153. Academic handbooks from all delivery centres except CMS were made available to the review team. The Portsmouth and WEMTC centres also produce individualised learning agreements. In most cases the information is comprehensive and, in some cases, standardised text is used to ensure consistency for programmes delivered across two or more delivery centres. The review team noted that the handbook for the Monmouth centre was extremely short and sparse, consisting of 1 side of A4 paper that provided the assessment details for two modules; the TEI explained that this was because an academic handbook was not necessary for such a small cohort of students.

Recommendation 19

We recommend that the TEI should require each and every delivery centre to develop and use an academic handbook that makes use of standard text and complies with the TEI's minimum expectations.

154. Additionally, the review team noted a small number of factual inaccuracies and errors in the student handbooks; for example, suggestions that Common Awards students are registered students of Durham University, and references to the resit cap for postgraduate assessment as 40% (rather than 50%).

Recommendation 20

We recommend that the TEI should review its academic handbooks to ensure that the content is accurate and up-to-date.

155. The review team observed that graduate employability and destinations were not considered at TEI level. The team noted, however, that centres within the TEI had considered graduate destinations previously; for example, CMS had commissioned an external evaluation to explore graduate destinations for non-ordinands.

Recommendation 21

We recommend that, as the Common Awards programmes progress and larger numbers of students graduate from the programmes, CAMC should give more detailed consideration to graduate destinations.

In relation to the partnership with Oxford University (students for the BA in Theology and Religion, Master of Theology, and research degrees in Theology)

156. In most situations the Oxford University students benefit from the parallel provision described above for Common Awards students.
157. The students interviewed on these courses were very satisfied with the distinctive support they received from the college staff, in relation to matters such as making choices with in the syllabus and arrangements for specialist teaching elsewhere in the university.

E3. Overall learning support and infrastructure in relation to the ability to meet requirements for awards are adequate.

158. Through the initial validation process, and the subsequent three requests to introduce new delivery centres, the TEI had confirmed the adequacy of its learning resources for its students. In its most recent Annual Self-Evaluation report the TEI raised concerns regarding a perceived lack of learning resources following the loss of access to the Bodleian Library. The students whom the review team met reported that learning resources provision would be improved if they were to have access to electronic books and a larger collection of online journals; more copies of core texts in the libraries; less competition for books between residential and non-residential students. Given the broad geographical dispersal of the TEI's students, and the recent acquisition of high speed broadband,

Recommendation 22

We recommend that the TEI should:

- (a) **explore possibilities for improving its collection of digitised texts; and**
- (b) **provide fuller information about all the libraries that students may access at present, including possibilities such as libraries in the Oxford-based Common Awards TEIs and (as suggested by the student representatives) the library at Pusey House.**

159. At present the TEI uses Moodle for programme administration, communication with and between students, and as a repository for information and learning resources (see para. 151). The TEI's recent acquisition of high speed broadband is likely to open new opportunities to engage with staff and students; for example, the TEI's recent attempts to establish a 'Student Council' might be facilitated by this. The review team encourages the TEI to explore these potential opportunities further.

In relation to the partnership with Oxford University (students for the BA in Theology and Religion, Master of Theology, and research degrees in Theology)

160. These students have the significant benefit of access to Oxford University libraries, IT resources and other learning support. Compared to most of their colleagues elsewhere in Oxford on these programmes, students benefit from the dedicated theological library within the college.

E4. Overall staffing (academic and support) in relation to the ability to meet requirements for awards is adequate.

Teaching staff

161. The adequacy of the overall staffing was confirmed through the initial validation process and the approval process for introducing the newer delivery centres at Portsmouth and Monmouth. The TEI ensures that core and associate teaching staff are appropriately qualified to teach on the Common Awards programmes. CAMC is responsible for approving new appointments; this process involves reviewing the candidate's CV to ensure that they are qualified to one academic Level higher than that which they would teach. The CAMC minutes provide evidence of this process in operation. Student feedback is requested and reviewed to improve teaching quality throughout the academic year (see further paras 190-91).
162. An updated 'Staff CV Summary' (T9) document was provided with the PER documentation, and reviewed in light of the academic programmes delivered by the TEI. The review team concluded that members of academic staff were suitably qualified and experienced to deliver the approved programmes. This review team's conclusions were in line with the views of the TEI's external examiner who, in his most recent report, describes 'a stable suite of courses led by expert academics with the necessary understanding and sensitivity to the ministerial formation central to the aims of Ripon College, Cuddesdon' (External Examiner Report, 2015/16, Section 3).

Teaching quality

163. The students whom the review team met commented positively on the quality of the teaching, referring to their experiences of 'superb' and 'excellent' teaching across different delivery centres. A small number of students commented slightly less positively but acknowledged the challenges that staff face when teaching very diverse groups of students including recent graduates as well as more mature students who are returning to education. The student representatives spoke extremely positively about the way in which teaching staff request, respond to, and act on student feedback promptly and regularly throughout the year. The review team considered that the students' opinions were accurately summarised and reflected in the words of one student who described the 'culture of deep conscientiousness' among teaching staff.
164. During the review visit the team was informed that most members of teaching staff identify with their local delivery centre; there are no formal cross-centre groupings between staff who teach in similar sub-disciplines. The review team was pleased to hear that the curriculum group was in the process of establishing connections between members of staff who teach biblical studies but are based across different delivery centres. Connecting together teaching staff in this way could foster a greater sense of belonging to the TEI, support individual professional development, share expertise, facilitate the development and sharing of resources, and enhance the quality of teaching across the institution. The review team encourages the TEI to pursue further developments in this area, particularly in light of the new opportunities presented by the recent acquisition of high speed broadband.
165. Since the initial validation process, the TEI has introduced a formal, institution-wide process for academic peer-review of teaching. The programme requires core and associate teaching staff to undergo peer-review once every 2 years. The review team was of the view that the academic peer-

review process was an essential mechanism for assuring and monitoring the quality of teaching within and across the different delivery centres within the TEI. However, at present the outcomes of peer-review are considered only on an individual basis (at staff review), rather than at institutional level.

Recommendation 23

We recommend that the TEI should develop further the academic peer-review process:

- (a) to ensure that cross-centre peer-review of core and associate staff takes place;**
- (b) to ensure that CAMC considers any relevant issues to be addressed;**
- (c) to formalise the process of identifying and sharing good practice within and between delivery centres; and**
- (d) to maximise the enhancement potential of peer-review as an opportunity for reviewers to learn from reviewees.**

166. A number of staff development activities take place across the TEI and focus on specific matters of teaching and learning as well as more strategic issues. For example, WEMTC's annual development day to share good practice in teaching and supporting learning has been successful and has strengthened relationships, facilitated the sharing of resources, and resulted in joint planning for curriculum developments. The review team was informed of TEI-wide events that had taken place, such as a development day that focused on innovative practices in teaching.

Recommendation 24

We recommend that the TEI should reflect further on how it might: make the most of its diversity and size; work corporately to identify best practice; and provide institution-wide professional development opportunities to bring together core and associate staff from across all delivery centres.

Support staff

167. The TEI recently increased its support staff team by employing a full-time Academic Administrator. Additional administrative support is provided within the Portsmouth Pathway and WEMTC. No further developments, issues or concerns were identified by the review team.

In relation to the partnership with Oxford University (students for the BA in Theology and Religion, Master of Theology, and research degrees in Theology

168. Students on the BA in Theology and Religion generally study for 5 out of their 8 papers with a tutor who is a staff member of RCC, and 3 (optional papers) with experts drawn from across the University. Students report that this is a good balance between the benefits of the closer relationship, and a sense of integration with formation for ordination, which comes from college tutors particularly in the early stages of the degree, and drawing on the expertise of the whole university, particularly in optional / more specialist papers.

169. Students on the MTh have their key teaching input weekly alongside students on this programme from across the university, drawing on a range of expert staff.
170. Students for research degrees have supervisors appointed by the University of Oxford, who may or may not be staff members at RCC.
171. A significant number of the teaching staff at RCC, particularly those teaching for these programmes, are members or associate members of the Oxford University Theology and Religion Faculty. As such they benefit from the university's programmes of staff development. Under Faculty bye-laws all Ripon College Cuddesdon teaching staff are eligible for appointment as associate members of the Faculty.

E5. The TEI has appropriate mechanisms to ensure the accuracy of all public information, publicity and promotional activity relating to the partnership.

172. The appropriateness of the mechanisms to ensure the accuracy of public information, publicity and promotional activity was confirmed through the initial validation process and (for the newer delivery centres of Portsmouth and Monmouth) through the partnership changes process. No further developments, issues or concerns were identified by the review team. (Ministry Division's PER framework does not require comment on Oxford University-related publicity but the general assurance at para. 148 applies.)

Subject to implementation of the recommendations in this section, the review team has Confidence with regard to Criterion E: Partnership with University.

SECTION F: TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

F1 The programme is viable in terms of market and likely number of entrants.

173. As noted at para 1, the TEI has experienced substantial growth in student numbers from 50 students in 2006 to 176 students on Common Awards programmes in 2017. As with other Common Awards programmes, future student numbers are difficult to predict. Changes to patterns for resourcing ministerial education contribute to the uncertainty regarding future student numbers. The TEI aims to achieve a 50% increase in ordination students but anticipates substantial competition between training institutions for residential students as a result of funding changes. It was more difficult to predict student numbers for other pathways, such as lay ministries, as recruitment depends on the sending dioceses.
174. Very early indications suggest that student recruitment for 2017/18 was not being adversely affected by changes in funding patterns, but it was too soon to draw conclusions. The TEI would continue to monitor student numbers throughout the year. The review team concluded that – should student numbers remain stable – the programmes should continue to be viable.

In relation to the partnership with Oxford University (students for the BA in Theology and Religion, Master of Theology, and research degrees in Theology).

175. The numbers involved in any given year on these programmes are small; yet the teaching methods involved and the interface with the University of Oxford means they remain viable. These courses are specialist options, with stringent entrance requirements, and in the case of the MTh and research degrees, they are dependent on the individual applying to the University with each application considered on its merits. RCC has an appropriate approach to recruitment for these programmes ensuring they are only undertaken by those students who will benefit from them.

F2. The structure and design of the curriculum are appropriate to the aims and learning outcomes, and to the target student body.

176. The aims and learning outcomes for the Common Awards programmes are defined in the relevant programme specifications. Each programme contains a 'syllabus' to define the programme structure, including credit requirements at each level of study and for each sub-discipline. The framework ensures that the structure and design of the curriculum are appropriate to the aims and learning outcomes. Through the initial validation process, the University reviewed the TEI's proposed programme regulations, module overview table, and curriculum mapping document. These documents confirmed that the structure and design of the curriculum was aligned with the programme specifications, and that the curriculum design was appropriate to the target student body.
177. The TEI has engaged with the curriculum development process to review and update its curricula in response to institutional review and student feedback. The TEI sought and received approval for each of the programme amendments, which included: the addition of new programmes for new and existing delivery centres; the inclusion of approved Common Awards modules; and changes to assessment options within modules. Despite the relatively large number of incremental changes brought about

through the curriculum development process, the TEI's programmes remain very similar to those which were originally approved.

In relation to the partnership with Oxford University (students for the BA in Theology and Religion, Master of Theology, and research degrees in Theology).

178. The Oxford University BA in Theology and Religion curriculum has recently been revised. The result is to offer more flexibility to students. This could have been adverse if (a) students chose options which were unsuitable for their ministerial training, or (b) choices by students elsewhere in the university made papers desirable for ministerial training unviable in a particular year. Both of these have been fully dealt with (a) by the college directing ordinands choice for 5 of their 8 papers, and (b) by the Theology Faculty agreeing a list of papers which for the sake of ministerial candidates they would deliver every year. The increased flexibility for the 3 remaining papers for RCC students is of benefit to them.
179. The curriculum for the MTh is appropriately designed for ministerial students.
180. RCC has a thorough process for ensuring that the overall learning of an ordinand who is on one of these programmes is appropriate to meet House of Bishops learning outcomes. In some cases this is via prior learning, in some by RCC's provision of extra content taken by all students, in some cases by students auditing teaching occurring on site. This can lead to a significant workload for some MTh / research students, but all those who spoke with the review team were still highly complimentary about the programmes they were on.

F3. The programme employs teaching, learning and assessment methods that will enable the learning outcomes to be achieved by typical students and that achievement to be measured.

181. The review team considered that the methods of teaching, learning and assessment remained appropriate to support students' learning, development, and achievement of learning outcomes. As had been approved through the initial validation process, in a small number of cases the assessment methods for a given module differed between delivery centres; in each case, the TEI had produced a clear pedagogic rationale for the difference. Consequently, the programmes remained common and consistent between delivery centres but with limited variation for pedagogical reasons. We **urge** the TEI to keep such variations under review.

Assessment

182. The students whom the review team met expressed mixed views on the volume of assessment tasks. Some felt that the volume was manageable and appropriate, while others (particularly those with no previous experience of higher education) felt that the volume was too great. The external examiner expresses the view that the range of assessments are well chosen for the given subjects (External Examiner Report, 2015/16, Section 4). The review team encourages the TEI to continue to keep this matter under review and reminds the TEI of its ability to change assessment methods within modules, or propose new assessment options to Ministry Division's Continuing Implementation Group.

183. The review team was informed by the TEI that the University's enhanced guidance on second marking and moderation had been received well, and that this had enabled the TEI to return marked student work more quickly within the 3 week turnaround target. The TEI has introduced a system whereby the Academic Administrator monitors marking against the turnaround target and contacts individual markers when marking is overdue.
184. The students whom the review team met commented unanimously and uncharacteristically negatively on the timeliness of feedback on assessed work. The students reported that they regularly receive feedback past the TEI's published target turnaround time of 3 weeks. Some students reported that it was a regular occurrence to be waiting for feedback on their first assignment at the time the second assignment was due to be submitted for a given module. One student commented that they never had the opportunity to submit a piece of work and receive feedback before submitting a second piece of work. The students also reported substantial variation in the quality of feedback provided; while some feedback is detailed, other feedback is very sparse.

Recommendation 25

We recommend that TEI should take a more proactive approach to setting assignment deadlines and monitoring feedback to ensure that, wherever reasonably possible, target turnaround times are met.

In relation to the partnership with Oxford University (students for the BA in Theology and Religion, Master of Theology, and research degrees in Theology)

185. These programmes employ a range of different teaching, learning and assessment methods. The students involved spoke very positively about the teaching, learning and assessment on their programmes and how it contributed positively to their formation for ministry.

Commendation 15

We commend RCC for continuing to provide the option of ordinands benefiting from the Oxford University BA in Theology and Religion, Master of Theology and research degrees in Theology.

F4. There are appropriate arrangements for placements.

186. The report of the initial validation visit documented the TEI's mechanisms for ensuring that arrangements for placements are appropriate. Since initial validation, the TEI has reviewed its placement provision and provided further information to confirm the appropriateness of its arrangements for: DBS checks; quality assurance of placement supervision; health and safety and insurance arrangements for overseas placements (see Condition 14 in the TEI's Validation Visit Report, para. 109-10; the TEI's action in response to Condition 14 was approved and signed-off by the University in May 2014). The TEI has introduced a 'Statement of Placement Ethics' that is published in some of the student handbooks (see para. 153).

F5. The programme appropriately addresses the University's Principles for the Development of the Taught Curriculum.

187. The validation visit process confirmed that the programmes appropriately addressed the University's Principles for the Development of the Taught Provision. During the review visit teaching staff updated the review team on the ways in which research is embedded in the curriculum; for example, in the research-led nature of the optional modules at Level 6. At CMS, qualitative research skills and ethnography are built into the programmes, and an annual 'research conversations' day involves presentations from invited speakers to deliver presentations on a given theme, and has resulted in published books that include the work of students.
188. Throughout the year the TEI runs several research seminars, a series of public lectures (on topics such as 'sport and theology'), and research days (on topics such as 'renewal and reform' and 'migration') in Cuddesdon to which all students and staff are invited. The review team encourages the TEI to explore new possibilities for involving students in a research culture in light of the recent acquisition of high speed broadband.
189. The students whom the review team met confirmed that they perceived and experienced a marked progression throughout their programmes, with higher levels of work demanding a greater depth of engagement, providing more academic challenge, and requiring more independent learning. Some students spoke of how teaching staff had drawn attention to progression explicitly at relevant points in the programme and outlined the different expectations for higher level work.

F6. The programme is subject to appropriate processes for curriculum review, including mechanisms for student representation and engagement.

190. Members of staff from all delivery centres are involved in the TEI's processes for curriculum monitoring, review and enhancement. Student feedback on teaching is requested frequently, and responded to promptly.
191. Teaching staff actively request student feedback via module evaluation questionnaires. The same module evaluation template form is used across all centres and is tailored and adapted to meet each centre's needs. In most cases students can provide their feedback anonymously; the review team strongly encourages the TEI to ensure that, wherever possible, students are confident that they can provide honest feedback anonymously. Feedback is requested in-year so that the data can be reviewed and necessary improvements can be made quickly to benefit the current cohort of students. The Programme Leader is responsible for reviewing the detailed module evaluation data, providing a summary to the teaching staff, and offering support to assist with the professional development of teaching staff. The detailed module evaluation data is summarised for the relevant Boards of Studies. This practice differs between delivery centres: in some centres a student representative reports the outcomes while in other centres the academic administrator reports the outcomes; in some Boards of Studies a full breakdown of the results is presented while in other Boards of Studies just a summary of headline points is presented. The review team advises the TEI to improve consistency between delivery centres in the administration and consideration of module evaluation questionnaires, in particular: to ensure that students can provide feedback anonymously; to clarify who has responsibility

for summarising evaluation data for the Board of Studies; to specify whether the Board of Studies should receive the detailed data or a summary of the headline findings.

192. The students whom the Durham review team met spoke extremely positively about the opportunities for student engagement and feedback (see para. 166). Each delivery centre operates a Board of Studies (or equivalent), at which students are present, and within which the results of module evaluations are considered. The review team saw evidence of Boards of Studies minutes being received and considered at CAMC, but there was not a clear record of which minutes had been received, or which matters were discussed in detail.
193. Given the importance that the TEI invests in student engagement at the level of delivery centres:

Recommendation 26

We recommend that the TEI should formalise the reporting structure between Boards of Studies and CAMC by:

- a) **developing common Terms of Reference and Membership for Boards of Studies;**
- b) **requiring Boards of Studies minutes to be submitted to CAMC routinely;**
- c) **ensuring that CAMC identifies and discusses issues arising from the Boards of Studies minutes (including common issues across different delivery centres, and examples of good practice); and**
- d) **clearly documenting within the minutes CAMC's discussion of these matters.**

194. Despite the recommendation in the previous paragraph, the review team commends the TEI for its deep commitment to working with students to review and enhance academic provision and support continuously. The students whom the review team met spoke extremely positively about the frequent opportunities for engagement and providing feedback to staff.

Commendation 16

We commend RCC for the quality of its commitment to working with students to review and enhance academic provision and support continuously.

195. Members of staff from each delivery centre contribute to the Common Awards Annual Self-Evaluation (ASE) process. The TEI expressed the opinion that the new ASE process is constructive, it supports the process of strategic thinking, and it provides the opportunity for the institution to reflect methodically and set SMART targets; however, the TEI would value a more prompt response from the University and Ministry Division following submission of its ASE report.
196. The review team concluded that, while there are appropriate mechanisms for reviewing the curriculum and involving students in that review, further clarification is needed regarding the respective roles and responsibilities of the different groups and bodies that review the curriculum, develop and propose changes to the curriculum, approve or support curriculum development

proposals, and oversee the portfolio of academic programmes across all delivery centres within the TEI (see paras. 135-6).

197. Although the team concluded that the TEI had sufficient and appropriate mechanisms for student engagement, the visit did not include the opportunity to meet students from the Monmouth delivery centre. Consequently, while acknowledging the challenges associated with geographical dispersal, the emphasis on centre-specific Boards of Studies (see para. 134), and the extremely positive views of the student representatives, CAMC is encouraged to consider ways of improving engagement with, and representation from, students from all delivery centres including the more remote pathways. For example, CAMC might consider video-conferencing or conference calls; scheduling meetings to coincide with residential events; alternating meeting venues between delivery sites; making more use of written or verbal reports for Portsmouth or Monmouth students who are unable to attend meetings.

Subject to implementation of the recommendations in this section, the review team has Confidence with regard to Criterion F: Taught Programmes.

CONCLUSION

Overall outcome:

The review team has Confidence with Qualifications in Ripon College, Cuddesdon in preparing candidates for ordained and licensed lay ministry.

LIST OF COMMENDATIONS

Commendation 1

We commend the College for putting into practice its 'calling to serve the Church' by forming new partnership and programmes to respond to the Church's needs.

Commendation 2

We commend the College's sensitivity to local context and needs in the development of pathways and partnerships.

Commendation 3

We commend the College's commitment to engagement with the breadth and diversity of the Church of England.

Commendation 4

We commend the College for the breadth and depth of partnerships which enrich the learning and formational environment for staff and students.

Commendation 5

We commend the effective formational community within each of the programmes offered.

Commendation 6

We commend the outstanding provision for spouses and families

Commendation 7

We commend the very good quality of accommodation for students.

Commendation 8

We commend the superb new chapel.

Commendation 9

We commend the excellent interaction between staff and students.

Commendation 10

We commend the implementation of effective financial controls and reporting.

Commendation 11

We commend RCC's placement provision and oversight for students, in particular its community placements and the CMS programme.

Commendation 12

We commend the quality of the teaching concerning mission and evangelism at CMS.

Commendation 13

We commend the development of leaders for the Church who are collaborative and can work with diversity.

Commendation 14

We commend the CMS pioneer training as an exemplar for pioneer ministry training.

Commendation 15

We commend RCC for continuing to provide the option of ordinands benefiting from the Oxford University BA in Theology and Religion, Master of Theology and research degrees in Theology.

Commendation 16

We commend RCC for the quality of its commitment to working with students to review and enhance academic provision and support continuously.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

We recommend that the Principal leads a thorough-going review of the range of partnerships and dispersed communities / pathways which form RCC to identify:

- (a) the uniting narrative, ethos or calling which creates a clear identity for RCC throughout these different communities;
- (b) the synergies or other benefits which could come from the breadth and diversity of these communities / pathways;
- (c) whether it is feasible for RCC to thrive while containing within it the current diversity of communities / pathways with diverse relationships to the 'centre';
- (d) structures and policies to set out clearly what activity and oversight takes places at the RCC level, and what is delegated to each community/pathway; and
- (e) the appropriate way of enabling the voice within the governance structures of dioceses for whom RCC is the provider of Reader and non-stipendiary ordination training.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that a clear set of criteria is developed and agreed by the Board of Governors which would guide any future consideration of further expansion/ diversification.

Recommendation 3

We recommend that once Recommendation 1 is implemented, the college reviews its publicity and communications strategy to ensure that it is appropriate and balanced given the emerging nature of RCC, and it communicates clearly and confidently the identity of RCC.

Recommendation 4

We recommend that RCC reviews the pattern of worship for the residential community, and the approach set out in the chapel handbook, against its own commitment to embracing diversity within the Church of England to ensure:

- (a) that students from a range of backgrounds and experiences find their own worship style and tradition respected and affirmed;
- (b) that students are helped to understand and embrace the range of worship traditions and styles which will be present in the churches in which they will serve; and
- (c) that the balance between order and creativity serves the formational and training needs of the students.

Recommendation 5

We recommend that, as RCC emerges from a period of rapid change and expansion, serious scrutiny is given to staff work-load and work/life balance.

Recommendation 6

We recommend that, once the review of the Strategic Plan is complete, the Governance Structures are reviewed to ensure that they enable the implementation of that plan.

Recommendation 7

We recommend that the process of review continues with a sense of purpose and the three workgroups fully report by the end of 2017.

Recommendation 8

We recommend that, in support of the emerging policy on appointment on the basis of expertise, the skill gaps in the current Governing Body are identified, and new appointments are made explicitly to fill those gaps.

Recommendation 9

We recommend that the process of the formulation of the Strategic Plan be pursued according to the agreed timescale

Recommendation 10

We recommend that the deployment of staff across the Pathways is reviewed, such that students on the PP and WEMTC are more frequently taught by Core members of RCC staff, and that the learning experience at Cuddesdon is enriched by the skills and practical experience of the associate staff.

Recommendation 11

We recommend that staff continue to be encouraged to further develop collaboration across the teams and share learning.

Recommendation 12

We recommend RCC explore how the whole student body might be enriched by more widespread opportunities for pioneering placements and how these might relate to and impact on existing models for mission and ministry.

Recommendation 13

We recommend that RCC explores ways in which the relationship between CMS and Cuddesdon might creatively develop further to bring to the benefit of the whole student body the strength of CMS' mission and evangelism teaching and its resources and culture for outward-facing engagement with the world and world church.

Recommendation 14

We recommend that as part of the process of consolidation, RCC focuses on core worship skills required by IME 1 and liaise with diocesan staff if there are concerns about IME 2 provision.

Recommendation 15

We recommend that further consideration is given as to how the college:

- (a) adequately prepares all students to be able to lead worship and preach in a parish of a charismatic or conservative evangelical tradition; and

- (b) supports students from a charismatic or conservative evangelical tradition in developing a sustaining pattern of prayer and worship.

Recommendation 16

We recommend that RCC considers carefully how to ensure that responsiveness to the student/partner voice does not undermine the strategic need for consolidation.

Recommendation 17

We recommend that the TEI should:

- (a) identify the main committees/groups relating to the Common Awards;
- (b) illustrate the relationships and reporting lines between them; and
- (c) clarify the roles and responsibilities of each committee/group in relation to Common Awards provision.

Recommendation 18

We recommend that the TEI should clarify and implement its minimum expectations for core information to be presented on Moodle module sites.

Recommendation 19

We recommend that the TEI should require each and every delivery centre to develop and use an academic handbook that makes use of standard text and complies with the TEI's minimum expectations.

Recommendation 20

We recommend that the TEI should review its academic handbooks to ensure that the content is accurate and up-to-date.

Recommendation 21

We recommend that, as the Common Awards programmes progress and larger numbers of students graduate from the programmes, CAMC should give more detailed consideration to graduate destinations.

Recommendation 22

We recommend that the TEI should:

- (a) explore possibilities for improving its collection of digitised texts; and
- (b) provide fuller information about all the libraries that students may access at present, including possibilities such as libraries in the Oxford-based Common Awards TEIs and (as suggested by the student representatives) the libraries at Pusey House.

Recommendation 23

We recommend that the TEI should develop further the academic peer-review process:

- (a) to ensure that cross-centre peer-review of core and associate staff takes place;
- (b) to ensure that CAMC considers any relevant issues to be addressed;

- (c) to formalise the process of identifying and sharing good practice within and between delivery centres; and
- (d) to maximise the enhancement potential of peer-review as an opportunity for reviewers to learn from reviewees.

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