



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

## **Ministry Council**

## **Periodic External Review Report**

Wycliffe Hall

May 2015

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## **GLOSSARY**

BAP	Bishops' Advisory Panel
BTh	Bachelor of Theology
BA (Hons)	Bachelor of Arts
BD	Bachelor of Divinity
CA	Common Awards
CTPS	Certificate in Theological and Pastoral Studies
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DDO	Diocesan Director of Ordinands
DTPS	Diploma in Theological and Pastoral Studies
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MTh	Master of Theology
SMT	Senior Management Team
CA	Common Awards
IME	Initial Ministerial Education
ISW	Integrated Study Week
MM	Mixed Mode
OCCA	Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics
OPTET	Oxford Partnership for Theological Education and Training
PPH	Permanent Private Hall
RME	Resourcing Ministerial Education review
SCIO	Scholarship and Christianity in Oxford
SED	(Annual) self-evaluation document
WebLearn	Online learning platform
WH	Wycliffe Hall

## **LIST OF REVIEWERS**

**Rev'd Lesley Bentley** Director of Ministry, Diocese of Lichfield

**The Rev'd Canon Dr Jane Freeman** Team Rector, Wickford and Runwell  
(Diocese of Chelmsford)

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

**Gertrud Sollars** Warden of Licensed Lay Ministers (Readers), (Diocese of Guildford) and Vice Chair of the Central Readers Council

## **THE PERIODIC EXTERNAL REVIEW FRAMEWORK**

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.

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

### **Confidence**

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

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

### **Confidence with qualifications**

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

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

### **No confidence**

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

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

# THE REPORT OF THE PERIODIC EXTERNAL REVIEW OF WYCLIFFE HALL

10<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> MAY 2015

## SUMMARY

### Introduction

Wycliffe Hall (WH) has been a Permanent Private Hall of the University of Oxford since 1997. The operation of the PPHs is overseen by the PPH Supervisory Committee of the University. WH is currently training 50 ordinands for the Church of England. Another 81 students are currently members of the Hall, comprising a mix of independent part-time students, independent undergraduates and postgraduates plus another 82 students over 2 semesters, present for one semester each, as part of the SCIO scheme (see section B).

The reviewers received the WH self-evaluation and other documents required by the PER documentation in good time. Members of the review team were made very welcome within WH and we would like to thank everyone for this.

Reviewers attended a Council meeting at which strategy was the main item. During the week of the review, reviewers attended communal worship, fellowship groups, lectures and staff meetings. WH staff, university staff representatives, the Chair and a member of the Council and the current chair of OPTET made themselves available for interview during the week. Reviewers met with senior teaching staff, tutors and placement supervisors, the bursar, administrative and support staff and students. Contact was made with local Bishops, DDOs and IME phase II officers. The reviewers were grateful for all the time and engagement given by those with whom they had contact.

Wycliffe Hall is widely perceived to have gone through a time of turmoil in its recent past. The Reviewers were pleased to find WH now in good heart. They encountered a community enthusiastic for the gospel with an appetite for learning and formation. On many occasions the Principal was lauded by teaching staff, support staff, ordinands and students for his leadership which the reviewers found to be exercised with humility and openness. It has been an express aim of the Principal to move the College to a place of greater openness to the breadth of evangelical understanding within the Church of England and to the breadth of the C of E as a whole.

The reviewers have a great deal of confidence in WH as a community in which ordinands can be trained for the Church of England. We express this below with

some qualifications, most of which concern matters of which WH was already aware at the time of the review and had begun to address.

*Fulfilment of the recommendations of the previous inspection*

At the second follow-up inspection in 2011, following the 2009 report, a small number of recommendations remained outstanding and the attention of the 'next Inspection team' was drawn to 4 particular areas, those of

- the ongoing collaboration of Wycliffe within OPTET
- progress in addressing the outstanding issues of Governance
- recruitment of a 'critical mass' of women ordinands
- further review of the practice of worship in the College Chapel

The reviewers are pleased to report that 2 of these matters are no longer a cause for concern. Chapel worship is dealt with later in this report (section E). A new structure and high attendance at corporate worship encompass the recommendations of the last inspection. Following the introduction of Common Awards the opportunities for co-operation in OPTET are much reduced but some progress has been made to establish co-operation within the new parameters (section B).

Many strides forward have been made with reference to the outstanding issues of Governance. A review of management and governance has taken place and the recommendations have been implemented. The one outstanding issue is oversight of staff appointments, terms and conditions. At the level of governance this is, in practice, being properly attended to, as sub-committee minutes make clear, but it remains to include this work in the terms of reference of one of the sub-committees. Alongside this the revision of the staff handbook requires completion.

The recruitment of a 'critical mass' of women ordinands has not taken place, although in a college with a low average age of student, this partly reflects low numbers of young female ordinands being selected nationally. Appropriate strategies are in place (see sections I and J) and the most recent figures are encouraging, given the low of 2013.

Recommendation 6 called for a review of leadership and delegation to determine the how this might be dealt with appropriately in a theological college. This was described as fulfilled in part at the time of the 2011 return visit. Conversations with the staff of WH, the Chair of Council, a representative of the university and

students, indicate that the present style of leadership and delegation is thought to be very appropriate, enabling the voice of students and tutors to be heard as well as ensuring a good degree of transparency. New management and governance structures, outlined in the Council handbook, promote this. There is effective working with the University (section B). The new Principal is clear that a significant part of his role is in healing the hurts of the WH community.

The development of a new strategic plan, recognising the changing requirements of the national church, expressed through discussions around Resourcing Ministerial Education and Resourcing the Future, is currently at the forefront of Council's thinking.

The introduction of Common Awards has meant the provision of learning pathways that integrate academic learning and practice. Work continues to make sure that those following other pathways, such as the Oxford BA, are able to cover all the IME Phase 1 criteria.

Staff training and development is now improved and peer review takes place on a regular basis (section I).

### **Summary of outcomes**

Our overall conclusion is that we have confidence, with qualifications, in Wycliffe Hall for preparing students for ordained ministry in the Church of England.

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

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

The Report is written in relation to the Criteria set out in the *Quality Assurance and Enhancement in Ministerial Formation Handbook* October 2014. The paragraphs follow the Criteria which are printed in *italic* type. The reviewers' comments are in normal type and the recommendations in **bold**.

### **Strengths**

The reviewers found many strengths in Wycliffe Hall:

- good and effective administration with clear lines of communication;
- in depth consideration of strategy and appropriate business planning in a rapidly changing national environment
- a recently revised structure for governance and management that makes lines of accountability clear and enables good participation by all staff and students at Wycliffe Hall
- a buoyant community with a clear sense of Christian commitment
- a good ecology of learning, where deep consideration of the scriptures and theology is considered important to faith by students and staff.

### **Areas for attention**

The reviewers found some areas requiring attention:

- completion of the Staff Handbook
- a place within the structure for a Council overview of human resources matters
- understanding of equality

- gender balance among ordinands;
- use of time and links between assessment and study in Mixed Mode training

# FULL REPORT

## SECTION ONE: AIMS AND KEY RELATIONS

### A Aims and objectives

*Reviewers will consider whether the institution's aims are appropriate, clearly articulated and understood.*

*A.i Its aims, objectives and policies should be appropriate to the preparation of students for ordained/lay public ministry within the breadth of the traditions of the sponsoring church(es).*

1. Since the arrival of the new Principal work has been undertaken on the development of a common vision. WH's current self evaluation notes that it is;  
  
'... currently articulated as the aspiration to be: i) a Centre for the Intellectual Renewal of the Church, and, through the Church, of Society; ii) a Centre for the Renewal of Christian Preaching; iii) a Centre for the Renewal of Christian Character; and iv) a Centre for the Renewal of Christian Prayer. This has not yet, however, been officially adopted by the Hall Council.'
2. The vision has been discussed among the staff and students and will be brought to Council for agreement in the Autumn.
3. The Ministry and Formation Handbook sets out the rationale for the training offered by Wycliffe Hall, stressing the benefits of residential and mixed mode training offered by WH and describing the community that it seeks to be.
4. The reviewers found this rationale and the aims stated above to be appropriate to the preparation of students for ordained ministry within the Church of England. Further discussion of the outworking of the objectives outlined in the Handbook is to be found in Section C, Curriculum for Formation and Education.

*A.ii They should be consistent with the current published policy statements of the sponsoring church(es).*

5. Wycliffe Hall has clearly worked with the Church of England Formation Criteria in establishing its teaching and ethos. Ordinands have been involved in discussion on this. Having reviewed the literature the Reviewers were concerned about two particular areas, that of enabling ordinands in the area of episcopate, collaboration and the enabling of the ministry of others, and that

of preparation for service in multi-parish benefices, both of which are key to ministry in the C of E today. On both these counts the reviewers were reassured by the nature of the placements that students undertake (see section C) and by the content of leadership training as described by the tutor concerned.

*A.iii The institution should show that it has built on earlier learning, including through action in response to previous PER, curriculum approval and follow-up reports; other external bodies' evaluation; and self-evaluations.*

6. Documents presented to the Reviewers showed progress in all areas highlighted following the last inspection (see above and individual criteria).
7. In an interview with the chair of the Permanent Private Halls (PPH) supervisory committee it was made clear that WH had addressed concerns expressed in a 2013 review concerning its governance structures. These included the management and governance of the Hall, the relationship with outside bodies, relationships with the University itself and issues relating to gender balance among students.

<p><b>The review team has Confidence with regard to Criterion A, Aims, Objectives and Achievements of the Institution.</b></p>
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## **B Relationships with other institutions**

8. WH is a Permanent Private Hall of the University of Oxford and, as such, has a clear relationship with the university, under the oversight of the PPH review committee (see section A iii). There is also a formal relationship with other local providers of theological education through the Oxford Partnership for Theological Education and Training (OPTET). In 2011 the Inspectors raised concerns about the participation of WH in OPTET but with the introduction of Common Awards it is no longer appropriate to address this issue in the ways then proposed. WH is participating fully in the ecumenical tutors' meetings and co-operative working is sought where geography and CA working permit.

*Reviewers will look at how well the institution engages with partners:*

*B.i There should be evidence of the institution's commitment to partnership with the other providers of theological education in the region.*

9. Current arrangements for ordinands' choice of theological college or course put training institutions in competition with one another for ordinands and the

funding that each brings. Nevertheless there is a working relationship with other ministerial training institutions through OPTET.

10. OPTET brings together the two Oxford PPHs St Stephen's House and WH, along with Ripon College, Cuddesdon, all of which train ordinands for the Church of England. Regent's Park College, which trains candidates for the Baptist ministry and Blackfriars Hall which trains candidates for the Roman Catholic priesthood are also members. In the 2011 follow up report it was envisaged that there would be greater sharing in teaching and general co-operation between the colleges. The advent of Common Awards, and the choice of modules by the individual colleges, has meant that some of the suggested teaching eg a joint study week is no longer appropriate. The complexities of timetabling a new set of awards in each college have meant that work between colleges in teaching has not been advanced. Geographical distance between the colleges has always presented a further barrier to this. However, the current Chair of OPTET, the Principal of St Stephen's House, was able to describe meetings between tutors and compulsory attendance at worship in other colleges for ordinands, once per term. There is some sharing of lecturers between the colleges where subject specialisms are needed and consultation happens prior to appointments, although the creation of shared appointments has proved logistically impossible. The Chair of OPTET expressed the hope that the Anglican colleges would be able to work towards some shared provision, particularly for year 3 undergraduate ordinands.
11. SCIO (Scholarship and Christianity in Oxford) is the UK centre of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU) which is itself an international body. SCIO works in partnership with Wycliffe Hall to run programmes for visiting students. In term time the majority of these are undergraduates who register as visiting students of the university and most of whom choose to take an active part in the spiritual life of the Hall. The university sees this as of benefit to Wycliffe Hall because of the contribution made by the students at all levels but at the same time is considering limiting numbers of such students. Such a move would be a significant loss to WH, as well as putting the Hall under financial strain.
12. WH began a relationship with Ravi Zacharias International Ministries in 2006, establishing OCCA, the Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics. The relationship became a cause of concern to the university when admissions to the centre were not clearly differentiated from admissions to the university. Admissions procedures have now been clarified although some concerns

remain for the university. For WH, the attraction of OCCA is important for recruitment to the Certificate in Theological Studies, particularly in relation to overseas students, whilst remaining clearly a separate entity. The independent students who had accessed the teaching of OCCA were very positive about it. A member of teaching staff is shared between WH and OCCA.

*B.ii The institution should draw fully on the resources of universities in teaching, quality assessment, staff development and the promotion of research.*

13. As a PPH of the University of Oxford, academic qualifications taught at the WH are either those of Common Awards (CA), taught with special permission, or those of the University of Oxford. The University qualifications currently open to new ordinands are offered with selected entry. Common Awards are open to ordinands whom the Bishop's Advisors consider able to benefit from theological training. Appropriate quality control is built into the teaching of these programmes by the universities concerned. Members of the teaching staff at WH are members of the faculty of Theology and Religion of the University of Oxford.
14. The provision of ordination training within the University of Oxford is currently under review. The licence for WH to offer CA, as a PPH, will be in place until 2019. The reviewers received assurances from the University of their commitment to the continued training of ordinands either on Common Awards or on an Oxford University programme, with exempted status given by the C of E. Recent amendments to the University's own guidelines make clear that the provision of training, validated by other universities such as Durham in the Common Awards scheme, is not excluded by Oxford University regulations. The reviewers noted the intention of WH, expressed in its self-evaluation, to negotiate a satisfactory outcome to the deliberations with the University Ordination Review Group, such that WH is able to continue to train all the different categories of students as ordinands within its role as a PPH.
15. WH will be taking advantage of University training for staff on gender equality this summer. The University is proud of its identity as a research-based university. As members of the University Faculty of Theology and Religion, the publication of research is encouraged among staff. The reviewers were present for a discussion in relation to this at the tutors' meeting. (See section J)

*B.iii It should engage effectively with local churches, other faith communities and secular organisations so as to enhance formation for public ministry.*

16. There is an engagement with many local churches through the placement of ordinands and other students for ministerial experience. Not all of these are Anglican and some include Local Ecumenical Partnerships. Many of the non-ordinand members of WH attend local churches and these are of a variety of traditions.

17. Engagement with other faiths appears to be limited to that of Islam. **The reviewers recommend that ways are found to increase exposure to and dialogue with other faiths through an appropriate means either within the assessed curriculum or otherwise.**

18. Engagement with secular organisations is also limited. A link with the Gatehouse provision for the homeless was mentioned and opportunities are given through the weekly Symposium. Some engagement is found by ordinands on placement and in local churches. The University itself offers opportunities for engagement in lectures, sporting activities and entertainment.

#### **Recommendation 1**

**The reviewers recommend that ways are found to increase exposure to and dialogue with other faiths through an appropriate means, either within the assessed curriculum or otherwise.**

<b>The review team has Confidence with qualifications with regard to Criterion B, Relationships with other institutions.</b>
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## SECTION TWO: CURRICULUM FOR FORMATION AND EDUCATION

### C Curriculum for formation and education

*Reviewers will consider the curriculum's design and content.*

*C.i There should be a theological, formational and educational rationale for the institution's approach to mission and to formation for ministry and discipleship.*

19. The Ministry and Formation Handbook states that Wycliffe Hall is an Anglican Evangelical Theological College with a particular emphasis on academic excellence, preaching, Christian character and prayer. The handbook links these clearly to the new IME Formation Categories of Christian Tradition, Faith and Life; Mission, Evangelism and Discipleship; Spirituality and Worship; Personality and Character; Relationships; Leadership, Collaboration and Community; and Vocation and Ministry within the Church of England. This is supported by the aim, stated in the self-evaluation document (SED), of training students to be 'faithful and able ministers of the Gospel'.

20. The Ministry and Formation Handbook presents a coherent argument for the above emphasis and a rationale for residential training. The conclusion is that residential training at Wycliffe aims to produce:

- Leaders who have the skills to lead growing and large Churches
- Leaders who have been trained by practitioners
- Leaders with an innovative, pioneering mind-set and who adapt their learning to their context
- Leaders who remain committed to the evangelical ethos of the Hall

21. Although the traditional emphasis has been the training of leaders for growing and large churches there has been a recognition over the past few years that some ordinands will serve some of their ministry in multi-parish benefices with a breadth of theological understanding and a variety of worship styles. This has resulted in a shift towards the teaching of a more facilitative leadership style and the increase in the diversity of placement opportunities. The reviewers would encourage further development in this area so that ordinands are equipped to better serve the whole Church.

*C.ii The institution should offer, and periodically review, a set of programmes that will enable candidates to be prepared for their ministries and/or meet their learning needs.*

22. As noted in the SED, the training offered is classified under three headings: academic, ministerial and formational. The aim of the academic training is, by teaching and example, to foster in their students a faith that is academically rigorous, reflexive and critical. They aim to encourage a faith that is eager to engage, respectfully and fearlessly, with all voices. They aim to offer the best possible training in the practical skills, attitudes and practices of responsible Christian ministry. They regard as being of equal importance the fostering of a pattern of life and habits of character.

23. The curriculum is in transition between the previous scheme that offered courses validated by Oxford University for both ordinands and independent students (BA, BTh, MTh, C/DTPS) to the new scheme which offers mainly Common Awards (BA (Hons) in Theology, Ministry and Mission; Diploma (HE) in Theology, Ministry and Mission; and BA (Hons) in Theology, Ministry and Mission (Mixed Mode) to ordinands (validated by Durham University) and BA, BTh, MTh and C/DTPS validated by Oxford University to independent students. A small number of ordinands (current plan 7) take the Oxford BA, which is the normal three year degree in academic theology but taken by ordinands in two years of concentrated study. Pastoral studies and other aspects of Christian ministry are mostly covered in the third year, for which they receive a certificate of ordination studies. Ordinands may also take the Oxford MTh.

24. Wherever possible modules across the schemes are co-taught but the variety of courses on offer during the transition period has led to resourcing and timetabling issues. The staff are to be commended for their flexibility in meeting these challenges.

25. The Common Awards curriculum has been successfully validated through the University of Durham and Ministry Division. The reviewers wish to note the high standard of the documentation presented for validation. Validation of the Oxford University awards are by the Department of Continuing Education (BTh, CTS, DTS) and the Faculty of Theology and Religion (BA, MTh, BTh, C/DTPS).

*C.iii The academic and formational assessment methods should enable the institution to advise church leaders on the suitability of candidates for their ministry.*

26. Ordination candidates taking Common Awards are assessed by a range of assessment types: examinations, language tests (written translations from the Biblical languages into English), presentations, placement/work-based learning, written theological reflection, portfolio, essay/written assignment, practical skills assessment, reflective journal, and placement report. No more than 25% of the assessment is by formal examination. The minority of ordinands who take the Oxford BA are assessed by 100% examination.
27. Formative assessment varies by module and is mainly focused on strengthening particular aspects of student learning, in particular reflection on the development of character in relation to the subject matter and the integration of learning across modules.
28. A Personal Development Log is kept by each student in which they are asked to write twice a year on their progress on the Ministry Division's criteria for IME phase 1. This is used by tutors, together with the report from the Bishops' Advisory Panel (BAP) and discussions with each student's DDO, to discuss the training needs of students. Internal reports are written for each student at the end of each year of training. Further details are given in the Ministry and Formation Handbook.
29. Where appropriate, the Disability Officer advises on the suitability of certain types of assessment for students with a disability and appropriate adjustments made. Students with SpLD (Specific learning difficulties), for example, have a cover sheet attached to their assignments so that allowances can be made when assessing their work. Pastoral support is given for students with disability. Checks are made each term to ensure that the students are receiving all of the concessions they need.

**The review team has Confidence with regard to Criterion C, Curriculum for formation and education.**

## SECTION THREE: MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT

### D Community and Corporate Life

*Reviewers will consider the institution's quality of common life. Is it a good place in which to live, work and study? How is community built across local training contexts and in 'dispersed' mode?*

30. The Wycliffe Hall community is very diverse: staff and students; ordinands and independent students. The students themselves vary in terms of courses of study – different qualifications, full-time, part-time and mixed mode – and age, gender, single or married, graduates and undergraduates, social and economic background, church tradition, nationality and race.
31. Looking at WH's self-evaluation, the aim of 'integration' is mentioned several times, in particular with respect to mixed mode, part-time and graduate students who form three of the five distinct student groups at WH, the others being full-time undergraduates (Common Awards, Oxford BA and MTh) and students of the Oxford BA. The 'centre of gravity' lies with full-time undergraduates. The College is aware of the challenge this presents in terms of holding the community together and has put structures in place to achieve this.
32. Community building is a conscious and deliberate endeavour, built into the structures of communal life. Fellowship Groups are mixed in terms of pathways and year groups; lectures, joint meals, worship and social occasions are timed to include the maximum number of students, including those who study on a mixed mode or part-time programme (see also K.ii).
33. Similarly, particular attention is paid to the integration of graduate students who could be quite isolated due to specialisation in their courses. For them, communal life happens in fellowship groups, the joint common room and ministerial and spiritual formation which is shared with the other students. Single graduates live in the Hall.
34. Particular effort is made to include students who live outside of the Hall, e.g. by allocating host families and organising events from September onwards to families moving to Oxford and by providing a free crèche during the weekly Bible study for spouses and free lunch for families afterwards.
35. A supervised crèche is available for 4 2-hour sessions per week, subsidised by the College. At all other times, the crèche room is available for the use of students and spouses.

36. 'Contact' is a group run by spouses for spouses; it arranges regular evening talks during term time, often covering issues around being a vicar's spouse. Spouses are allowed to attend lectures. They feel very welcome and consider life at Wycliffe Hall to be a good preparation for ministry together for future parish priests.

*D.i The institution should offer a clear statement of how it understands corporate life, reflected in its training for ministry and the working relationships between members.*

37. Wycliffe Hall's Ministry & Formation Handbook gives a clear description of what it aims to achieve in its communal life, linked to the Formation Criteria for Ordained Ministry.

38. In the words of the prospectus, WH aims to be a 'warm and vibrant Christian community that serves, studies, worships and prays together'. The reviewers spoke to staff and students, all of whom affirmed that there is an atmosphere of trust, openness and humour in the College. Fellowship groups are instrumental in establishing and deepening relationships and learning to live with difference. They meet once a week for fellowship, learning, worship, prayer, pastoral care and corporate theological reflection. Crucial to the success of these groups are the fellowship group tutors whose role includes pastoral and academic elements.

*D.ii There should be a clear statement of its understanding of issues of gender, ethnic grouping and disability and other matters of natural justice; its training, governance and community life should reflect this (see also I.v and J.ii).*

39. The Formation & Ministry Handbook affirms that WH wants to be a community where all are respected, loved and treated equally. The College's policies on equality and disability as well as the admissions policy reject discrimination on grounds of sex and sexual orientation, marital status, race, ethnic origin, colour, social background or disability.

40. Following a recommendation by the Permanent Private Hall Supervisory Committee in January 2015, all staff are required to undergo training in equality matters in the summer of 2015.

41. One of the tutors acts as the gateway to Oxford's centralised disability office; she organises assessments and needs assessments for students with any kind of disability; she ensures that their needs are met and provides them with pastoral support.

42. There is a loop system in the chapel for students and visitors with auditory impairment and also a loop facility in the teaching rooms.
43. The nature of the building makes adaptation for students and visitors with visual impairment or limited mobility extremely difficult. There is one wheelchair-accessible bedroom and bathroom, but participation in the social life of the College or attendance at chapel would be a significant challenge to a disabled student. Accessibility for wheelchairs is a high priority for a new buildings audit.
44. Issues of gender are high in the awareness of staff and students. All ordinands need to affirm their assent to the House of Bishops' Five Guiding Principles as part of their final report.
45. Female ordinands are made aware at interview that they will be joining a predominantly male institution. In their experience of WH, while a diminishing number of individual students may have sexist tendencies, the examples set by the leadership of the College and the teaching on gender, as well as the response to the few incidents of harassment experienced, are unequivocal in their acceptance of women. Women students emphatically state that WH is a good place to study and to be, and a wonderful community.

*D.iii Does the institution have clear and well-managed policies for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults?*

46. WH has a Safeguarding policy; all staff and students are DBS checked. Once the two safeguarding officers among the staff are fully trained, all-staff development will include safeguarding training.
47. All placement institutions are checked to have safeguarding policies and procedures, and students have safeguarding training before they go on mission or placement.
48. WH Safeguarding policy includes a chart detailing the appropriate response to safeguarding issues, 'What to do if...'; this is to be included in the revised student handbook.

<p><b>The review team has Confidence with regard to Criterion D, Community and corporate life.</b></p>
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## **E Worship and training in public worship**

*Reviewers will look at whether the arrangements for common worship and the policies underlying them are satisfactory.*

*E.i The institution's policy and practice in corporate worship should reflect the tradition and liturgical inheritance of the wider church.*

49. In response to a previous inspection, considerable effort was put into a review of worship in the College, resulting in a new pattern implemented in 2010. Recognising that this was not yet fully satisfactory, a further review of chapel worship was undertaken in 2013/14: the review committee included both staff and students, and drew on responses to questionnaires sent to staff, students, and alumni. The resulting proposals were adopted, with the proviso that in the second half of Trinity Term 2015 the Chapel Committee should review how well the recommendations had worked: the framing question for that review is: 'whether [the recommendations] have deepened our corporate experience of God and enriched our worship of Him.'

50. The pattern of chapel services adopted in 2014 has clearly been designed to meet the need for familiarity with and confidence in leading worship characteristic of the Church of England (see *E.ii*). Where worship is informal, the expectation is that it is based around the set elements of a Service of the Word. Those leading the weekly services of Holy Communion are robed in accordance with the Canon. The Revised Common Lectionary is followed, and material from both Old and New Testaments, including the psalms, is normally included at least once a day. Attention is being given to increased awareness of liturgical observation of the Church's year; for example, Common Worship Morning Prayer for Ascension Day was used in the week of the review, and ashing was offered on Ash Wednesday this year.

*E.ii There should be a policy on, and provision for, a balance of worship, including authorised and innovative forms, which recognises and equips candidates to work within the variety of practice within the sponsoring church.*

51. The College's understanding of worship and its intentions in framing the pattern of corporate worship are set out in the *Ministry and Formation Handbook*. The range of worship offered in the College chapel is intentionally broad. After an initial introduction to a variety of styles at the beginning of the first term, successive weeks in the year are allocated for services using Common Worship and the Book of Common Prayer and for informal worship, and reflective worship, and there is an all-age form of worship once a term.

Common Worship is most frequently used, potentially for half of the weeks of the term, in recognition that it is the most widely used liturgical form in the Church of England. Both men and women lead worship and preach and there are both male and female presidents at communion: in the week of the review, a female member of staff presided and there was a male visiting preacher.

52. The current pattern seeks to create a pattern of twice-daily prayer, intended to model, though not to mirror, the expectation of morning and evening prayer in ordained ministry and the value of that pattern in sustaining ministry. Morning Prayer is said on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday: on Tuesday morning students meet and pray in Fellowship Groups, and on Thursday a staff member gives a Biblical exposition. Evening prayer on Monday is led by part-time students, on Wednesday and Friday prayer for the middle of the day is offered, and on Thursday compline is said. The variation of times, particularly of the second service in the day, means that the aim of creating a rhythm of prayer and 'bracketing' the day can't be fully achieved, although the intent is clearly stated.
53. Attendance at morning prayer, Holy Communion, and at least one other midday or evening service during the week is required of ordinands and staff, and permission to miss services has to be sought. During the reviewers' visit, numbers of both ordinands and other students at morning worship, Holy Communion, and on Tuesday evening were high: other services were less well attended.

*E.iii Ministerial candidates should be effectively trained to plan, prepare and conduct public worship as appropriate for their ministry (lay or ordained), and they should receive critical and constructive comment from staff and peers.*

54. During Welcome Week and the first week of term, attention is given to introducing both the principles and rationale for liturgical worship and the range of liturgical resources of the Church of England. Additional help is offered to students who are unfamiliar with the Church's liturgy. Further study of worship and liturgy is offered later in the curriculum, including intentional training in other traditions: for example, the chaplain of Merton College leads a session on more catholic understandings and practice of the Eucharist. There is a major focus on training in preaching; in addition to substantial elements in the curriculum, students regularly preach at morning prayer and staff offer a model of exposition on Thursdays. Short and long placements provide experience in worship and preaching in different church traditions. Voice coaching is provided for all ordinands.

55. Chapel services usually are student-led, and responsibilities are assigned within Fellowship Groups. There is detailed provision for feedback by the Fellowship Group tutor, drawing on comment from group members. Feedback is also given on occasion by the principal. During the week the reviewers were present, Common Worship was being used: most students showed confidence in leading worship, and intercessions appropriately reflected the concerns both of the wider world and the community. Preaching is clearly a strength, and we heard some exceptional examples. We did not have the opportunity to observe informal worship, and staff have identified a need for further training in reflective worship.

E.iv *The liturgical space should be adequate for its purpose.*

56. The arrangement of the chapel is traditional, with pews facing the holy table, and additional seating in a gallery. There is space for a small worship group on the platform at the east end, and a screen for PowerPoint projection. For most services during the week of the review, the space was sufficient, although at Communion, in order to accommodate the numbers receiving, a second distribution point was in the corridor outside the chapel. The space is, however, inflexible, and difficult to use for less formal worship: this has long been recognised, but there is no obvious or immediate solution. For all-age worship, other spaces in the Hall are sometimes used.

<p><b>The review team has Confidence with regard to Criterion E, Worship and training in public worship.</b></p>
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## **F Ministerial, personal and spiritual formation**

*Reviewers will consider how well the institution helps learners in their ministerial, personal and spiritual formation and self-awareness, and in their understanding of the specific lay or ordained ministry to which they are called .*

57. The key document used in ministerial, personal and spiritual formation is Ministry Division's Formation Criteria for Ordained Ministry in the Church of England, IME Phase 1. These criteria form the basis of ordinands' Personal Logs which in turn feed into students' meetings with their fellowship group tutor (see also Section F.1).

58. Fellowship groups are the place where explicit attention is paid to formation for ministry. Students are encouraged to be reflective at all junctures and in all

situations, so that reflection is not an add-on but a way of life; they are helped to find ways of reflection that fit their personality and type, e.g. by journaling.

59. The Formation & Ministry Handbook states the rationale for theological reflection and describes the role of the fellowship group tutor as one who assists students to make the connections between what they are learning in the class room, what they are experiencing on placement and who they are as individuals who belong to the body of Christ.

60. The reviewers observed fellowship group meetings and found in them an atmosphere of trust and openness, with the tutor modelling these attributes, and encouraging students to make connections between what they were experiencing now with possible applications in their future ministry.

*F.i The institution should enable candidates to be immersed in the traditions of their own church denomination and to gain an empathetic understanding of church and faith traditions other than their own.*

61. WH stands in the evangelical tradition, and its students come from a range of evangelical backgrounds. The prospectus states the aim that, as WH embraces a wide range of worship and liturgical styles, it hopes to expand students' horizons in these areas. At least one placement is deliberately chosen to give them experience of a different church tradition, and there is termly joint worship within OPTET which provides opportunity to worship in the style of other denominations and traditions. Beyond reflection on these, there is limited formal teaching on other Christian denominations and on other faiths, apart from Islam. (See also Section B.iii and Recommendation 1.)

62. In terms of handling and dealing with diversity of viewpoints even within the evangelical range, the College fosters an attitude of dialogue and mutual respect. Students appreciate the way tutors model good relationships and the possibility of disagreeing constructively; they learn from tutors, the common room and lectures. Third year students say that it is the changed atmosphere of the last two years that has made such conversations possible.

63. In the spirit of the House of Bishops' Five Guiding Principles, Wycliffe Hall creates opportunities where conversation about matters of contention can be held together in a spirit of tolerance, love and respect and seeks to ensure that its public worship celebrates and promotes a common Christian belonging.

*F.ii It should offer corporate and individual guidance for learners, including encouragement to seek confidential spiritual counsel and to maintain a regular private prayer life.*

64. Growing in relationship with God is the first of seven key aspects of WH's vision for ministerial training as stated in the Formation & Ministry Handbook. Corporate and individual guidance is given in the context of fellowship groups, and fellowship tutors are in conversation with their students about their personal spiritual lives.

65. In addition to the fellowship groups, students are also allocated to cell groups/prayer triplets at the beginning of their time at WH. These are seen as places of mutual support and accountability.

66. Students are encouraged to meet with an external spiritual director, and the College holds a list of spiritual directors whom students can approach.

*F.iii. Its common life and the guidance offered should enable students to grow in Christian discipleship, in readiness to share their faith, and as theologically reflective practitioners, with a view to exercising a public role in ministry and engaging with the world.*

67. Ordinands are expected to go on weekly placements in Years 2 and 3 and a long summer placement, currently in their penultimate year, but moving to the end of the first year. In addition, they take part in several missions. Learning outcomes are agreed prior to placements and are linked to IME Phase 1. Students are encouraged to keep a journal of their placement, and their placement reports need to show evidence of theological reflection and processing of the experience.

68. Placements and missions are opportunities to engage with life outside College. Evidence of engagement with issues well beyond the College came in the intercessions in chapel which consistently mentioned national and international current affairs, as well as the persecuted church across the world.

*F.iv The teaching and ministerial staff should model an appropriate pattern of spirituality, continued learning and reflection on practice.*

69. Staff join in corporate worship. If a fellowship group tutor needs to be absent from chapel, s/he has to seek permission from the principal; if the principal is absent from chapel, he is required to write a letter of explanation and publish it on the notice board.

70. In the past, tutors with contrasting views on women in ministry have held open debates of their views. Other controversial topics are touched on in NT teaching and other subjects, but are not systematically explored in their own right. Students are encouraged to foster an attitude of humility and willingness to learn from those of different persuasions, as seen in the Statement of Academic Values and Virtues but also, more importantly, in the attitudes of their tutors and the principal.

**The review team has Confidence with regard to Criterion F, Ministerial, personal and spiritual formation.**

## SECTION FOUR: EDUCATION AND TRAINING

### G Teaching and learning: content, method and resources

*Reviewers will consider the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning activities, methods and resources.*

71. Examination results for WH students studying Oxford University qualifications are excellent. In 2014, 10 out of the 11 WH students gained 1<sup>st</sup> and 2.1 class degrees. Best performance overall and best undergraduate in theology prizes have gone to Wycliffe students since 2012.

72. Lectures observed by reviewers at WH ranged from excellent to unsatisfactory, from creative and engaging to unimaginative and limited. Of the latter, some lectures would have benefited from clearer aims and more structured teaching. The limited number of lectures on pastoral care observed by reviewers were not deemed to give ordinands a good theoretical and theological grounding for future pastoral ministry. See also G.ii.

*G.i The units of teaching and learning should be well structured, with clear and appropriate aims.*

73. Course outlines are published on WebLearn, where students can find aims and content of a unit of study as well as lecture lists and handouts. Modules taught under the Common Awards scheme have gone through validation by Durham University.

*G.ii There should be a proper balance between the academic, formational and practical aspects of training.*

74. WH make every effort to integrate their stated values, teaching, practice and relating. Much of the time, this is done totally convincingly, and what is avowed about openness and inclusivity by the leadership of the College is borne out by the way relationships play out in College. A letter is written to visiting preachers before their visit, requesting that they use inclusive language and avoid sexism. However, there were times in lectures on pastoral care when an underlying culture of gender stereotyping and a particular view of women was articulated by students and a tutor who did not challenge such comments. Reviewers welcomed the news that all staff would be required to complete training on Equality in the summer of 2015.

75. In the past, WH held Integrated Study Weeks (ISW) and Focus Days/Mornings to address cross-curricular and contentious issues, such as

diversity, men and women in ministry, issues in sexuality and others. The format of teaching these topics has changed due to the introduction of CA; much of the material has been integrated into CA modules. BA students, who gain their degree from OU in two years, cover these issues in their third year.

76. Mixed Mode (MM) delivery of CA seems particularly suited to provide a balance between academic, formational and practical aspects of training, and the prospectus claims that the MM course balances training, reflection and study between College and placement church. However, MM students spoke of a disconnect between academic study and placement, and in particular between assessment and placement. Staff are aware of this and the reviewers welcome the intention to address this. The leadership of WH acknowledges the validity of this criticism and say that assessment cannot always be tailored to context, but that they intend to set aside time in the summer for tutors to improve the tie-in between assessment and placement. The reviewers welcomed this.

*G.iii Learning programmes should be varied in format and method, with use of student experience, courses, seminars, tutorials, one-to-one, groups, placements and private study.*

77. There is a significant difference between programmes following CA and those validated by Oxford University. Both teaching methods and assessment for CA are more varied. However, students on Oxford University courses participate in ISWs, fellowship groups, preaching practice, placements and missions, all of which add to the variety of the learning experience.

78. Because MM students study the CA course with the other ordinands, but are only in college for two days, much of the academic teaching has been 'front loaded' to happen on Mondays and Tuesday. This has led to full-time students complaining that they were not stretched and had too much time during the rest of the week. The issue of 'spare time' is mainly due to the way CA allocate study time to modules, with a cap on contact hours, but other chunks of time set for directed learning and assignments. WH acknowledge that in the first term of teaching CA, students were not told very clearly that they would not be directed for some of their study time, but that they nevertheless needed to spend this time in study. **We recommend that tutors use the Common Awards Handbook to explain the way time is allocated on CA courses and help students on CA to direct their own time.**

*G.iv There should be an appropriate learning environment, with adequate resources including library and information and communications technology.*

79. Non-residential students are allocated study rooms for their use while at College.
80. Lecture rooms are equipped with projectors and electronic whiteboards; we saw the latter used once.
81. The nature and layout of the building means that the library is less spacious than might be desired. It is adequate at most times, though at exam times it can become crowded. There can also be pressure on resources if a large number of students are set the same assignment or if the same books are used by courses leading to different qualifications. There has been a request to adjust the teaching programme to spread demand; this is still under review. The management is aware of these limitations, and plans to deal with them are part of the College's development plan. All students also have access to all of the libraries of Oxford University.
82. Through WebLearn, Students have access to a wealth of online material (see also G.i); increasingly, the library can provide texts in electronic format, as well as access to online journals and other resources. Tutors populate and manage their own course sites. The tutors felt that the system can be unwieldy to work, but this refers to uploading material rather than accessing it.
83. WH has a wireless network which, according to students, has improved recently. Coverage is still better in some places than others, due to the nature of the building.
84. Students on all programmes including Common Awards can use Oxford University libraries and facilities; this is an arrangement negotiated and financed by WH.

*G.v Staff should provide students with constructive formal and informal feedback assessment, against published assessment criteria, in terms of both academic progress and preparation for beginning public ministry.*

85. Assessment criteria and guidance for writing assignments are published in course handbooks. Work submitted by students with specific learning difficulties is passed to the markers with a cover sheet attached, alerting them to the fact that it comes from a student with special concessions.
86. Marked work seen by the reviewers contained structured feedback in the case of assignments submitted under Common Awards and constructive and helpful critical comments on others. Work submitted under CA is awaiting moderation by Durham University.

87. In a few instances, assignments did not use gender inclusive language, and this was not picked up in the marking (see G.ii above).

## **Recommendation 2**

**We recommend that tutors use the Common Awards Handbook to explain the way time is allocated on CA courses and help students on CA to direct their own time.**

**The review team has Confidence with regard to Criterion G, Teaching and learning, content, method and resources.**

## **H Practical and pastoral theology**

*H.i The institution's learning structures and formational activity should integrate theory and practice and enable students to grow as theologically reflective practitioners in the context of the developing and diverse society in which they will minister.*

88. Since the 2008 Review, clear and conscious attention has been given to the integration of theological study and practice. The 2011 follow-up report found improvement in provision for year 3 ordinands, which had been a matter for concern. The Hall's self-evaluation tracks work on pastoral training and in 2012/13 and 2013/14 speaks of confidence in the excellence of 'pathways for ministerial training on both academic and pastoral fronts, as well as the integration of theory and practice'. Students are offered a rationale for and understanding of explicit and implicit theological reflection in the *Ministry and Formation Handbook*: reference is made there to work done by a current and a former staff member in producing a paper on 'Evangelicals and Contextual Theology' as a response to the assumption that there is a suspicion in the evangelical tradition of theological reflection. That paper has been given to staff and to MTh students.

89. Each ordinand is required to keep an extensive personal log, to be filled in twice per year and shaped around the formation criteria for ordination, which is designed to structure personal reflection and identify areas of growth and challenge. This is for their personal use, but it forms the basis for regular discussions with Fellowship Group tutors; some students noted that it was initially a somewhat daunting document, but tutors felt that it is proving a valuable tool. All ordinands, and most students, are members of Fellowship Groups, meeting weekly with a tutor. Among the multiple purposes of the

groups is to offer a location for corporate theological reflection and something of this was seen when we attended the groups during the review. More specific training is offered, and an intentional exercise in theological reflection is undertaken, in relation to the long summer placement.

90. In preparing ordinands for the breadth of the church and the diversity of the wider culture in which they will serve, placements have a significant role. We recognised that the weekly and summer placements available include a range of traditions, socio-economic settings, and church structures; students are expected to experience styles and settings with which they are unfamiliar. Given the changing patterns of ministry in the church, which mean that many clergy will be serving in benefices where there is more than one church or parish, we welcomed the inclusion of some multi-parish settings as placements, and encourage the Hall to ensure that all ordinands have some experience of such settings.
91. We also welcomed the equality and diversity training planned for staff in the summer of 2015. While the presence of international students offers opportunities to explore cultural difference, issues of gender are discussed, and there is an intention to reinstate an opportunity for an open discussion of the role of women in leadership in the church, it was not clear that there is specific and theologically grounded training for students across the full range of issues such as race, disability, and sexuality. The proposed reinstatement of ISWs, focus days, or their equivalent may provide for this. (*See G ii above*)

### **Recommendation 3**

**The reviewers recommend that provision be made for theologically-grounded training for students in issues of diversity.**

92. The expertise of the teaching staff is heavily weighted to biblical studies, in keeping with the Hall's ethos and tradition. A new member of staff has been appointed, principally to teach doctrine, but also to assist in specifically ministerial training, especially in preaching and mission, where the responsible staff member recognises that he is overstretched. We observed some poor teaching on pastoral care, both using and failing to challenge gender stereotypes and failing to draw distinctions between pastoral encounter and professional counselling. A lecture to final year ordinands in the last weeks of training offered a single definition of pastoral care without substantial discussion. While welcoming the new appointment and recognising that there are core staff members well qualified in areas of

formation and pastoral care, the reviewers believe that there is a need to strengthen further the teaching in this area.

#### **Recommendation 4**

**We recommend that teaching in the area of pastoral care is strengthened as soon as possible.**

**The review team has Confidence with qualifications with regard to Criterion H, Practical and pastoral theology.**

## SECTION FIVE: STAFF AND STUDENTS

*Reviewers will consider the recruitment, expertise, resourcing, appraisal and development of staff.*

### **I Teaching Staff**

*I.i The gender, lay/ordained and denominational balance of ministerial and teaching staff should model appropriate patterns of learning and of ministry and comply with denominational guidelines.*

93. The main tutorial body includes both ordained and lay staff, modelling a collaborative approach. The majority of the Senior Management Team are ordained; the team includes two ordained women, both with experience in parish ministry.

<b>The review team has Confidence in regard to Criterion I, teaching staff.</b>
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### **J All staff**

94. Both teaching and support staff appeared to the reviewers to be generally in good heart. It is noticeable that many of the support staff have been in post for many years. WH takes advice from, and retain the services of a professional HR company, to provide employment support and advice on a regular basis.

*J.i Staff recruitment and selection procedures should be transparent, fair and consonant with the policies of the relevant partner bodies.*

95. The staff recruitment policy sets out a transparent and fair means of recruitment with advice on such matters as the construction of job descriptions. The policy applies to teaching and non-teaching staff. Mention is made at the end of a Gatekeeper who will be 'responsible for checking annually whether there have been any legislative and/or University policy changes that are relevant to Wycliffe Hall.' ( Annex 3, recruitment policy)

96. Core teaching staff are recruited by open advertisement and application, and a member of the University of Oxford Faculty of Theology and Religion is involved in the process of selection and interview. The process for recruitment of occasional and adjunct teaching staff is less clear, and we welcomed the proposal for a review of these staff members in summer 2015.

*J.ii Job descriptions, terms of service and reporting lines should be clear at the time of appointment and reviewed at regular intervals.*

97. Job descriptions are provided and may be reviewed at the annual appraisal. Those sampled were clear. There is a clear organisational structure for both teaching and other staff.
98. The staff handbook, setting out the terms and conditions of employment, is out of date and in the process of review. The policies associated with it have been reviewed e.g. discipline, grievance, as have policies that relate not only to staff but also the whole College e.g. safeguarding. The handbook now requires re-writing. Some of the policies appear to be rather draconian e.g. the minimal legal provision for sickness but we were assured that this was only the bottom line and, in practice, WH is more generous. **The reviewers recommend that the review of the staff handbook is completed as soon as possible.**

*J.iii There should be an effective programme for the continuing professional development of staff, including annual appraisals for all staff.*

99. Annual reviews are expected to take place for all staff. For teaching staff these include student evaluation. A structured system of peer review for teaching staff, has been set up with guidance from the Institute this year; at the beginning of the academic year, each tutor is partnered with another to offer feedback over the year; the partnerships will change each year. Initial responses indicate that the system is felt to work well. Between reviews, line managers meet with staff at 6-weekly/2 monthly intervals for a short conversation. Some annual reviews (appraisals) of teaching staff have been postponed in the last year because of study leave. Since the last follow-up inspection, some staff have undertaken qualifications in teaching in higher education and training has been given by the Oxford Learning Institute on group learning and giving feedback. There is a stress on academic excellence: at a Senior Management Team meeting

attended by reviewers, staff were reminded of the time scale for the university's Research Excellence Framework.

100. All staff are invited to a termly meeting at the start of each term and a lunch at the end. The former is used to disseminate information about changes within the WH. Training is offered to all staff, appropriate to their role. For example, tutorial staff will undertake equality training this year. One of the maintenance staff is currently undertaking extra training to allow his professional training to be recognised within the UK.

*J.iv Staff should be sufficient in number and expertise, and resourced to fulfil their role adequately for the institution's and students' needs.*

101. Support staff seem to be sufficient in number and range of expertise to adequately fulfil the needs of WH.

- 102.** In conversation with support staff, it became clear that the flow of information with reference to forthcoming events was not sufficient for their needs. The reviewers understand that the termly meetings do take place and that emails are sent out with reference to events. However, support staff did not feel that they had sufficient detailed understanding of the day to day needs. They spoke of monthly meetings in the past with the Bursar or assistant Bursar and felt that these had been really helpful. Accordingly, **the reviewers recommend that monthly meetings between the support staff and the Bursar or Assistant Bursar are put in place to facilitate the detailed understanding of the requirements of WH.**

#### **Recommendation 5**

**The reviewers recommend that the review of the staff handbook is completed as soon as possible.**

#### **Recommendation 6**

**The reviewers recommend that monthly meetings between the support staff and the Bursar or Assistant Bursar are put in place to facilitate the detailed understanding of the requirements of WH.**

<b>The review team has Confidence with qualifications with regard to Criterion J, All staff.</b>
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## **K Students**

*Reviewers will examine procedures for student admission, welfare and support, appraisal and discipline.*

*K.i Policies on students' admission, welfare, complaints, discipline, assessment, reporting to sponsoring churches and arrangements for first appointments should be publicly available; and there should be evidence that they are applied.*

103. Wycliffe Hall has a full set of policies and guidelines, covering admissions, welfare (Bullying & Harassment, Disability, Equality, Freedom of Speech, Health & Safety and Safeguarding, Inclusive Language), academic complaints, academic discipline and plagiarism. These are published on the College's website and in the WH Student Policy Handbook on WebLearn. Assessment policies vary with different qualifications and are published in the relevant course handbooks. Reporting to sponsoring churches takes up a major section in the Ministry and Formation Handbook, and students are provided with Ministry Division's guidelines for arranging first appointments.
104. The Academic Registrar has responsibility for ensuring the regular review of all policies; policies checked by the reviewers were all up to date.
105. Policies can be complex, as Durham University and Oxford University elements need to be grafted together. Model policies from Oxford University have been adapted to reflect the Christian values of Wycliffe Hall.
106. Staff and students are made aware of the existence of policies and their rationale and content in the course of weekly Community Notices.
107. Because of the variety of academic pathways on offer, especially at the time of transition to Common Awards, the Admissions process is particularly complex. At interview with a tutor a recommended pathway is established, and this is specified in the offer made to the candidate.
108. Wycliffe Hall endeavours to encourage applications by women; there has been one women's vocation day held, and another one is planned; there has also been a day for Deans of Women's Ministry. Currently, the number of women ordinands at Wycliffe Hall is below the 15% stipulated

by Ministry Division; this is because there is no female ordinand in Year 3 and only one in Year 2 of the programme. In Year 1, 4 out of 19 ordinands (21%) are female, and out of 11 offers made so far for the next academic year, 2 (18%) are to women. Recruitment of female ordinands is improving from the low of 2012 when no new female ordinands were recruited.

109. The reviewers found the female ordinands at Wycliffe Hall speaking very positively about their experience as women in a minority. It was said that any hint of discrimination or gender specific confrontation is quickly dealt with by the tutors, and that opportunities are created to discuss gender specific issues in an informed and safe way.

*K.ii The institution's decision-making structure should enable students to take an appropriate part in its governance.*

110. Common Room meetings for all students take place twice a term. Students are represented by the Common Room Committee, whose members meet with staff formally each term. The Common Room President and President Elect regularly meet with the Principal; they submit a termly students' report to Hall Council and participate in Hall Council meetings.
111. Students are consulted on matters they are involved in, and there is evidence in the Self Evaluation reports and from students themselves that their views are taken into account when decisions are made. On the 2014 Oxford University Student Barometer, WH ranked above Oxford University average in 5/8 categories and above average in overall student satisfaction.
112. WH's self evaluation shows that in the past, part-time and mixed mode students did not feel fully part of the community. This has been addressed by holding the majority of lectures on the days when mixed mode students are in college, by including them in the fellowship groups, and also by holding the occasional Formal Hall on Monday evenings when part time students are present.

**The review team has Confidence with regard to Criterion K, Students.**

## SECTION SIX: GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE

### L Organisation and governance

*Reviewers will examine the effectiveness of the institution's governance structures and processes, recognising that these will be proportionate to the scale of the institution and will not apply identically to, say, a college and a diocesan course.*

113. The evidence of the Council minutes and the committee minutes point to a thorough review of its governance function, following the 2009 inspection report and the later report and recommendations of John Gladwin. In addition to this, and following the Gladwin review, WH has now established corporate charitable bodies limited by guarantee, bringing the trust deed into line with contemporary charity law and providing a limitation on liability for the Trustees (council members). Wycliffe Hall Company operates as a charitable company, with Wycliffe Hall Services Limited running alongside for the conference and hospitality arm of WH. Council members are trustees from the point of view of the Charity Commission and Directors and Members of the of the charitable company from the point of view of Companies House.

*L.i The institution should have clear financial, administrative and management structures and an up-to-date governing document, and the governing body should be constituted in line with it.*

114. Following the report to Council by John Gladwin in 2010, the Council now has a clear governance structure, discharging its duties with the aid of sub-committees for finance, governance and nominations, education, remuneration, development described within its Governance Manual. It was noted that no committee currently holds responsibility for matters related to human resources. Currently the governance committee is fulfilling this role although the governance handbook notes that the Remuneration Committee is expected to extend its remit to include 'all issues of HR, including oversight of staff appointments and the staff handbook'. The reviewers note that this is not mentioned in the 2014/5 self-review. **The reviewers recommend that the Council formally include oversight of all responsibilities relating to human resources**

**within the remit of a Council committee and agree the appropriate terms of reference for that committee.**

*L.ii There should be evidence that the Governing Body recognises and discharges its role and legal duties in respect of stewardship of the assets; setting and safeguarding the vision, values, reputation and effectiveness of the institution; operational and staff oversight and support.*

115. The responsibilities of the Hall Council were reviewed in 2013. The Governance manual makes it clear that the Council has considered its responsibilities in relation to these matters. Reviewers attended a Council meeting in March 2015 where a wide ranging discussion on strategy was taking place that demonstrated a careful consideration of matters relating to stewardship of the assets, setting and safeguarding the vision and the effectiveness of the institution.

*L.iii It should have the mix of skills and experience appropriate to its role; there should be a clear understanding of the respective roles of trustees and staff, with job descriptions for key officers and induction for new trustees; and ongoing training needs should be met.*

116. The Council has a good mix of skills except for the area of hands on experience of the formation of those newly in parochial ministry and those newly in positions of parochial responsibility. The Nominations committee reports regularly to Council, under reserved business. The minutes demonstrate the active quest to develop a Council with a wide range of relevant skills and experience. New members are provided with an induction pack containing all relevant documents, and meetings with the Principal and Bursar.

*L.iv There should be evidence of a structured contribution made by all community members - teaching staff, ancillary staff, the student body and individuals - so that they play an effective role in decision-making.*

117. The Principal and the Senior Management team cannot be appointed as trustees of the Hall but are in attendance at Council meetings and take a full part in discussion. It is a condition of the PPH licence that academic staff be involved in the decision making processes of the Hall. A regular Principal's report is provided for the Council. The Student President and President Elect are also in attendance (again in compliance with the PPH

licence), contributes with a regular report and is able to take part in discussion. In the September 2014 report a positive comment was made about student involvement in decision making and interviews, in the President's report. Non-teaching staff meet each term with other staff as described above (Jiii). At the Council meeting attended by reviewers in March, it was clear that staff and students were able to take an effective role in discussion.

118. The Senior Management team meets twice per month, attended by the Principal, the Vice Principal, the Bursar, the Senior Tutor, the Dean for Women and, currently, one co-opted tutor. The Reviewers attended one such meeting, chaired by the Bursar, and found a clear agenda with an openness to the contribution of all. The Fellowship Group Tutors meet alternate weeks. The reviewers also attended this meeting and found it to be equally open to the contribution of all.

*L.v The institution's audited annual reports should be produced in good time and filed with the Charity Commission/Companies House as appropriate.*

119. Returns to the Charity Commissioners are up to date. Because Wycliffe Hall and Wycliffe Hall Services are new companies no returns are yet registered.

### **Recommendation 7**

**The reviewers recommend that the Council include oversight of all responsibilities relating to human resources within the remit of a Council committee and agree the appropriate terms of reference for that committee.**

**The review team has Confidence with regard to Criterion L Organisation and governance.**

### **M Business planning and risk management**

*Reviewers will look at evidence for the existence and implementation of the institution's strategic policies. Subject to considerations of scale, as at section L:*

- M.i There should be a regularly-updated long-term strategy document agreed by the trustees and, in line with it, a business plan covering 3-5 years*

*which identifies short and medium term aims and objectives and identifies how the institution intends to meet them.*

120. The Bursar has undertaken a thorough strategic review in response to the changing external environment. This, along with the introduction of Common Awards, and the change from the Oxford University awards being awarded by the Faculty of Theology and Religion to being awarded by the Department of Continuing Education, has led to a need to examine the Hall's current positioning and likely future scenarios.
121. The Wycliffe Hall Strategy discussion document which was presented to the Hall Council in March 2015 sets out the current external trends in student numbers, the current competitive position of the Hall and the challenges faced by the introduction of Common Awards. The strategy document notes that the introduction of Common Awards has placed Wycliffe in a difficult position, given that the Church requires Durham University to validate the degrees of as many ordinands as possible, but the Permanent Private Hall (PPH) license prohibits non-Oxford Degrees (without special dispensation). Dispensation was granted by the University for a period of five years from 2014 and there is uncertainty as to whether this will be renewed.
122. The Report of Ministerial Education (RME) Task Group also proposes a number of changes to funding of ministerial candidates which will impact upon the strategic direction of the Hall, if they are agreed.
123. In the light of the above the current status quo is considered unsustainable and a number of alternative strategies are being considered. A key element of the current strategy is to remain flexible and to not commit to any particular direction until the future policies of the University and the Church are known. It is expected that this process of continuous review and development of the strategic plan is continued.

*M. ii Annual budgets should be prepared in line with the business plan.*

124. The Wycliffe Hall budget contains a detailed working of the first year of the Business Plan. Target student numbers are set for the next three years based upon assumptions regarding recruitment, the number of ordinands, full and part time etc. as this is the key driver of income. Other income from conferences, lettings, and bed and breakfast is also forecast.

125. The detailed budget is to be presented to the Senior Management Team (SMT) at the end of May, following which it will be scrutinized by the Finance Sub-Committee which comprises the Principal, Bursar, Vice-Principal, and two Trustees, including the Treasurer [SED: Management Structure and Decision-Making.]. The Budget is then to be presented to Hall Council for agreement at the beginning of June.
126. The Bursar keeps oversight on a continuing basis and reports to Trustees quarterly.
127. The Reviewers were confident that the Wycliffe Hall Strategy was being implemented through the business plan, and that the budget accurately reflected this plan for the next three years.

*M.iii There should be an effective risk assessment, review and management process, which should include physical (e.g. health & safety and fire), financial, business and reputational risks.*

128. The College maintains a detailed Risk Register under a number of headings, which the reviewers examined. Risks are assessed and are reviewed by the Finance Committee according to the agreed Risk Management policy, [SED; Status of Policy Review and Approval, as at 20.02.2015] based upon a combination of potential impact and relative likelihood of occurrence. A scoring system is used to rank the risks and to report them as red (high risk), amber (medium risk) and green (low risk).

<p><b>The review team has Confidence with regard to Criterion M, Business planning and risk management.</b></p>
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## **N Financial policies**

*Reviewers will consider the effectiveness of day-to-day operating processes:*

*N.i The institution should have policies to control and manage investments, expenditure and borrowing, and the annual report and accounts should contain an appropriate reserves policy.*

129. The College has Financial Controls Policy & Procedures (currently in draft form, awaiting final approval by Trustees SED: Status of Policy review and approval, as at 20.02.2015) which control and manage expenditure and borrowing. The policy notes that The Trustees of Wycliffe Hall recognise that

devising and implementing Financial Controls protects the interests of the Hall, its employees, and the Trustees, and that the fundamental responsibility for control of the Hall's activities and assets lies with the Trustees.

130. These policies and procedures cover, inter alia, the delegation of duties, the segregation of duties, reserves policy, budgetary control and income and expenditure control.
131. The annual Trustees Report and Annual Accounts contains a clear statement of the reserves policy.
132. A note to the accounts for the year to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2013 defines Wycliffe Hall as a Minor Responsible Body for the purposes of the Church of England Pension Scheme (Church of England Funded Pension Scheme(Debt Apportionment) (Amendment) Rules 2008) and as such it has negligible liability for any shortfall in the pension funds.

*N.ii Management accounts showing performance against budget should be produced at least quarterly and reviewed regularly by the trustees.*

133. On an annual basis the Bursar prepares budgets for the coming year, meeting with relevant budget holders to assess needs. Currently meetings with budget holders are informal but next year formal meetings will be held and budget holders will sign off on their budget once agreed. Budgeting decisions are driven by both priority of objectives and fiscal accountability. These budgets are presented to the Trustees for approval.
134. The Bursar produces quarterly financial reports to the Trustees which enable the Trustees to monitor in sufficient detail the Hall's financial activities against agreed budgets. The Trustees consider, modify and approve annual budgets prepared by the Bursar. The Reviewers examined documents prepared by the Bursar of the adjustments made to the budget to allow for changes in income due to the variation in student numbers.

*N.iii The institution should consider its sources of income and have strategies to identify and raise the funds it needs.*

135. The institution has a number of key sources of income: student fees, Ministry Division, residential income, alumni giving, conferences and bed and breakfast.

136. The strict financial controls, budget planning and prudent investments in property have turned a previous deficit into a surplus.
137. Fund raising is coordinated by the Development Officer. The officer is engaged in rebuilding relationships with alumni as a source of future donations, and in developing relationships with other stakeholders, including the Friends of Wycliffe Hall, who are a US based organisation.

*N.iv The institution should have adequate financial controls aimed at minimising waste and loss, and should be appropriately advised on tax-efficiency.*

138. In order to maintain control of expenditure, checks are in place to ensure that goods and services ordered are correctly authorised against budget, goods and services received are correct as to specification and quantity, and payments are only made against goods and services received. Separation is maintained between these areas to eliminate the potential for collusion. Controls are exercised in order to prevent any misuse of the Hall's funds.
139. The institution seeks advice from its Auditors on the efficiency of its taxation policy. The College is currently considering whether their current auditors have sufficient expertise in the sector to advise appropriately.

<p><b>The review team has Confidence with regard to Criterion N, Financial policies.</b></p>
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**O Statutory and operating policies**

- O.i Proper books of account should be kept, with computerised data regularly backed up and stored offsite.*
140. The College uses Microsoft GP to maintain its accounts. This is a computer software package which is used extensively by organisations of this size. The Reviewers were satisfied that the Finance Manager and Finance Assistant who maintain the ledgers are well qualified and experienced and keep their knowledge up to date. Regular backups of data are taken and stored offsite.

*O.ii Bank mandates should be up to date, with appropriate authority levels.*

141. The Financial Controls Policy & Procedures states that cheques above £5,000 must be signed by at least two authorised signatories. This is specified in the bank mandates. The mandate was verified to be up to date.
142. The Hall operates a sufficient 'pool' of signatories authorised to sign cheques. This 'pool' is greater in number than the minimum number of signatures required on the mandate. This is to prevent a situation where insufficient signatories are available, e.g. during popular holiday periods. The Policy allows the Trustees to appoint the Bursar and other Officers as signatories.
143. A current list of Authorised Signatories on the current bank account is noted as an appendix to the policy. Cheques made payable to a nominated signatory must never be signed by that person.

<p><b>The review team has Confidence with regard to Criterion O, Statutory and operating policies.</b></p>
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## **P Accommodation**

- P.i The i) public ii) teaching and iii) provided private living accommodation should be fit for purpose and suited to students' needs, with an ongoing maintenance programme and forward planning for future needs.*
144. The Hall's 19th-century buildings, grade II listed, are both a valuable cultural and financial asset and a practical challenge. Public, teaching, and living accommodation is dispersed throughout the buildings, as adaptations have been made over the years, and staff and students both acknowledged that it takes time to learn one's way around. There is a clear recognition that substantial changes and improvements are desirable, and these form a major part of the strategic planning which is currently under way.
145. The entrance to the Hall is not immediately obvious, and the reception office is not clearly within sight on entry. With the current student numbers,

- the dining hall worked well during our visit; queues for meals were not long, though we were told that this could be more difficult on Thursday lunchtimes when families are encouraged to come in. The Hall accommodated a formal dinner at near capacity during the week. The Upper Common Room was well used by students.
146. The two main teaching rooms, the Lower Common Room and the Lecture Room, have recently been refurbished and have space for large groups; seminar rooms in the Norham Gardens buildings are in less good order although SR3 in this building has recently been refurbished with new tables, chairs and a Smartboard. Because the curriculum is now delivered principally on Mondays and Tuesdays, there can be pressure for teaching space.
147. Priority for residential accommodation is given to ordinands, and no offer of accommodation is given to independent students until June. There are rooms for single students in the main building and in Norham Gardens and flats for couples in Norham Gardens; much needed improvements are gradually being made to bathrooms in the main building. The need for communal space for some students in Norham Gardens was raised and is being addressed. Families live away from the College, mainly in houses owned by or rented by the Hall; given the cost of housing in Oxford, this pattern will continue. As the College is not full, some rooms are let on a bed and breakfast basis: this brings a valuable income, but can be a source of friction.
148. In the last three years, a planned, active, and budgeted programme of maintenance has been undertaken. The reception area, main staircase, and lower and upper common rooms have been refurbished, and work on bathrooms is ongoing. A major cost this year will be the replacement of the south wing roof, which will limit other maintenance and improvement work. Attention is very evidently being given to care for the buildings as they are, within the context of wider planning for the future.
- P.ii There should be adequate provision for the needs of disabled students.*
149. The entrance to the Hall is wheelchair accessible, and there is one room and bathroom and one lecture room appropriate for someone with limited mobility. However, the many different levels and narrow corridors of the buildings present a major challenge for full accessibility.

150. The reviewers were pleased to note the maintenance projects planned for this year and the current discussions about improvements, to be made in conjunction with the strategic plan as decided by Council.

### **Recommendation 8**

**The reviewers recommend that Wycliffe Hall continue to upgrade its teaching and living accommodation, in line with current discussions, as the shape of the future becomes clearer.**

**The review team has Confidence with regard to Criterion P, Accommodation.**

### **CONCLUSION**

**Overall outcome: The review team has Confidence with qualifications in Wycliffe Hall for preparing candidates for ordained and licensed ministry.**

## **LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1. The reviewers recommend that ways are found to increase exposure to and dialogue with other faiths through an appropriate means, either within the assessed curriculum or otherwise.**
- 2. We recommend that tutors use the Student Handbook to explain the way time is allocated on CA courses and help students on CA to direct their own time.**
- 3. The reviewers recommend that provision be made for theologically-grounded training for students in issues of diversity.**
- 4. We recommend that teaching in the area of pastoral care is strengthened as soon as possible**
- 5. The reviewers recommend that the review of the staff handbook is completed as soon as possible.**
- 6. The reviewers recommend that monthly meetings between the support staff and the Bursar or Assistant Bursar are put in place to facilitate the detailed understanding of the requirements of WH.**
- 7. The reviewers recommend that the Council include oversight of all responsibilities relating to human resources within the remit of a Council committee and agree the appropriate terms of reference for that committee.**
- 8. The reviewers recommend that Wycliffe Hall continue to upgrade its teaching and living accommodation, in line with current discussions, as the shape of the future becomes clearer.**