

Ministry Development Board: Periodic External Review Report

Yorkshire Theological Education Partnership

St Hild College

Church Army

York School of Ministry

Leeds School of Ministry

College of the Resurrection

Conducted onsite, November 2024

Published 2025 by the Ministry Development Team of the Archbishops' Council

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Church House, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3AZ

Switchboard: +44(0)20 7898 1000 Email: ministry@churchofengland.org

Website: www.churchofengland.org

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Glossary

APL	Accredited Prior Learning
ASE	Annual Self Evaluation
CAMC	Common Awards Management Committee
CoR	The College of the Resurrection
CR	Community of the Resurrection
ELF	Evangelist's Learning Framework (Church Army)
EiT	Evangelist in Training (Church Army)
GMH	Global Majority Heritage
IICSA	Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse
LLF	Living in Love and Faith
LLM	Licensed Lay Minister
LSoM	Leeds School of Ministry
PiT	Pioneer in Training (Church Army)
PLF	Prayers of Love and Faith
TEI	Theological Education Institution
UKME	UK Minority Ethnicity
YSoM	York School of Ministry
YTEP	Yorkshire Theological Education Partnership

Reviewers

Revd Prof Jane de Gay (Lead Reviewer), Professor of English Literature, Leeds Trinity University; Associate Priest and Lecturer, Leeds Minster

Revd Prof Alison Baverstock, publisher, Founder and Director of Reading Force

Ven Hilary Dawson, Archdeacon of Gloucester

Revd Mike Gilbert, Associate Archdeacon Transition Enabler, Hallam and Ecclesfield, Diocese of Sheffield

Revd Canon Dr Elizabeth Jordan, Leadership Resources and Licensed Lay Ministry Trainer, Diocese of Chelmsford

Revd Dr Matt Prior, Tutor and Lecturer in Ethics, St Mellitus College

The Revd Preb Romita Shrisunder, Bishop's Director of Ordinands, Lichfield Diocese

Sue Waterston, Warden of Readers, Southwell and Nottingham Diocese

Angeline White, Lay Minister, Christ Church, Weston-Super-Mare, Diocese of Bath & Wells; Weston Hospicecare Chaplaincy Team

The Periodic External Review Framework

Periodic External Review (PER) is part of the Church of England’s quality assurance for its ministerial training institutions (‘Theological Education Institutions’ or TEIs), whereby the church conducts an external quality check of each TEI against national standards and expectations for ministerial training and formation.

On behalf of the church, review teams are asked to assess the TEI’s fitness for purpose in preparing candidates for ordained and licensed ministry and to make recommendations for the enhancement of its life and work. The reviewers’ report is made to the House of Bishops acting through the Ministry Development Board.

Church PER teams are appointed by the national Ministry Development Team from a pool of reviewers nominated by bishops and TEIs.

For TEIs that offer Durham-validated Common Awards programmes, representatives of Durham University’s Common Awards team will sometimes carry out their own academic quality assurance review in parallel with the church’s PER, to inform the university’s decision-making on: (i) renewal of the Common Awards partnerships with approved TEIs; and (ii) revalidation of Common Awards programmes that have been approved for delivery within TEIs.

Recommendations and Commendations

PER reports include Recommendations which are either developmental, naming issues that the reviewers consider the TEI needs to address, or encourage the enhancement of practice that is already good. They also include Commendations, naming instances of good practice that the reviewers wish to highlight. The reviewers’ assessment of the TEI is expressed as much through the balance of Recommendations and Commendations in their report as through its criterion-based judgements.

Criterion-based judgements

Reviewers use the following outcomes with regard to the overall report and individual criteria A-E:

Confidence

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

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

Confidence with qualifications

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

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

No confidence

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

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

Periodic External Review of the Yorkshire Theological Education Partnership and its Formation Centres

St Hild College

Church Army

York School of Ministry

Leeds School of Ministry

College of the Resurrection

Introduction

The Yorkshire Theological Educational Partnership (YTEP), founded in 2014, co-ordinates theological training across Yorkshire on behalf of its partners, currently St Hild College (which delivers tuition in sites at Mirfield, Sheffield and Lincoln as well as online), Church Army (based at Wilson Carlile College, Sheffield), York School of Ministry (YSoM), and the College of the Resurrection (CoR). The partners are Centres of YTEP, but each of these is also a training institution in its own right.

The partnership is constantly evolving: St Hild is undergoing significant growth; the College of the Resurrection joined the partnership in 2020 (and underwent PER as a separate entity in May 2022); and Leeds School of Ministry left the partnership in 2023, with responsibility for the academic education of licensed lay ministers (LLMs) for the Diocese of Leeds being brought under the umbrella of St Hild.

YTEP is the key partner to the Dioceses of Leeds, Sheffield, York and Lincoln for the training of ordained and lay ministries.

YTEP offers 10 programmes validated by Durham University, forming part of the Common Awards scheme for theological education and it has '200 students registered for Common Awards in a typical year' (YTEP Basic Information document).

The awards offered are as follows:

- Foundation Award in Theology, Ministry and Mission
- Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) in Theology, Ministry and Mission (120 credits)
- Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) in Christian Ministry and Mission (180 credits)
- Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) in Theology, Ministry and Mission
- BA (Hons) in Theology, Ministry and Mission
- Graduate Certificate (GradCert) in Theology, Ministry and Mission
- Graduate Diploma (GradDip) in Theology, Ministry and Mission
- Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert) in Theology, Ministry and Mission

- Postgraduate Diploma (PgDip): in Theology, Ministry and Mission (College of the Resurrection and St Hild) in Worship and Liturgical Studies (College of the Resurrection)
- Master of Arts: in Theology, Ministry and Mission (College of the Resurrection and St Hild); in Worship and Liturgical Studies (College of the Resurrection); in Contemporary Christian Leadership (St Hild)

These programmes are offered at the YTEP Centres as follows:

Centre	Fndn Awd	Cert HE (120)	Cert HE (180)	Dip HE	BA	Grad Cert	Grad Dip	PG Cert	PG Dip	MA
St Hild	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Church Army	✓	✓								
CoR				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
YSoM					(being taught out)	✓	✓			

PER process and evidence

We are grateful to staff at YTEP, St Hild, Leeds School of Ministry, York School of Ministry, and Church Army for providing extensive documentation for our review, including self-evaluation and scene-setting documents, formational criteria mapping documents, prospectuses and publicity material, student and staff handbooks, policy documents, staffing information, overviews of taught programmes, external reviews, module and programme documents, handbooks and policies, student feedback, and business and financial documents. We were also given access to representative modules on the virtual learning environment, Moodle, where learning materials are stored and where assessed work is submitted and marked via Moodle and/or Turnitin (marking software that also detects plagiarism). The national Ministry Development Team also sought independent stakeholder feedback on the TEIs and through this process we were provided with a set of comments on St Hild and Church Army.

The Lead Reviewer met with the YTEP Trustees at the Mirfield Centre on 29th May 2024 for a scene-setting discussion: representatives of YTEP, St Hild, College of the Resurrection, York School of Ministry, Leeds School of Ministry, and Church Army were present. A team of reviewers visited Wilson Carlile College for a Church Army weekend residential course on 15-17 November 2024 and another team visited St Hild College for a weekend residential course at the Mirfield Centre on 22-24 November 2024. During the visits, reviewers met students and staff informally over meals, attended worship, observed teaching sessions, and conducted interviews with key members of staff and groups of students. We are grateful to Church Army and St Hild for their hospitality and welcome on these weekends.

Two reviewers met with the York School of Ministry’s Director of Lifelong Learning and the Start of Lay Ministries Adviser on 22nd November 2024 in person, and they met two current LLM students, both in their first year, via Zoom.

Two reviewers observed a Board meeting of the Leeds School of Ministry on 22nd November 2024 and met with core staff: the Acting Formational Lead and Bingley Hub Host, the Training Officer and Mirfield Hub Host, the School of Ministry Administrator, and the Director of Studies, as well as two current student representatives (both in Year 1) and one continuing student in person. They met the Warden of Readers and the Director of Ministerial Formation and Development via Zoom.

One reviewer observed the Common Awards Programme Review of YTEP, conducted by Durham University, at the Mirfield Centre on 29th November 2024.

The College of the Resurrection underwent [PER in May 2022](#), with a [follow-up in May 2023](#). The review was conducted by the same Lead Reviewer as the current review of YTEP and she is grateful for all assistance provided by the College at that time. The current review team were given access to the paperwork from the 2022 review, a summary of responses to Recommendations written in 2023 and a short further update on developments since that review, written by the Principal in October 2024. However, there was no PER visit to CoR as part of the present review and there was no observation of teaching (though, as noted above, reviewers visited the Mirfield Centre, where the St Hild residential took place). The section on CoR below aims therefore to offer a snapshot of the College in 2024, and its progress since the follow-up to PER 2022, rather than a full review.

The report is written in relation to the PER Criteria in force for 2024-25 and available via the Ministry Development Team’s quality assurance pages on the Church of England website.

Summary Observations

Strengths

The Reviewers consider that the strengths of YTEP and its Centres lie in:

- Collaborative working across YTEP and between Centres
- Positive working relationship with Durham University
- Valuing of diversity in all its forms (all Centres)
- Variety of learning, teaching and assessment methods to cater for a wide range of learners (all Centres)
- Sense of community and belonging (all Centres)
- Focus on Mission (St Hild and Church Army)
- Level of individual care for ordinands (St Hild)

Areas for attention:

The Reviewers note that areas for attention are:

- Increasing registry capacity to meet demands created by varied pathways
- Mitigating risks of Centres overstressing their resources and losing their sense of purpose by diversifying their offering to generate income
- Helping students understand the expectations placed on them in terms of time-management, giving them tools to effectively manage their study-work-life balance
- Helping students navigate Moodle
- Reviewing provision of teaching in Biblical Studies (St Hild and LSoM)
- Maintaining dialogue with sponsoring dioceses to ensure that provision meets their needs (particularly St Hild)

Summary of Outcomes

CRITERIA	OUTCOMES					
<i>Centres</i>	YTEP	St Hild	Church Army	York SoM	Leeds SoM	Mirfield CoR
A Formational Aims	n/a	Confidence	Confidence	Confidence with Qualifications	Confidence	n/a
B Formational Context and Community	n/a	Confidence with Qualifications	Confidence with Qualifications	Confidence	Confidence	n/a
C Leadership and Management	Confidence	Confidence	Confidence	Confidence	Confidence	n/a
D Teaching and Learning	Confidence	Confidence	Confidence	Confidence	Confidence	n/a
E Ministerial Formation	n/a	Confidence with Qualifications	Confidence with Qualifications	Confidence	Confidence with Qualifications	n/a
Overall Outcome	Confidence	Confidence	Confidence	Confidence	Confidence	n/a

Overall, the Reviewers have **Confidence** in the Yorkshire Training Partnership (YTEP) and its Centres and regard them as fit for purpose for preparing candidates for ordained and licensed ministry.

Yorkshire Theological Education Partnership

1. The Yorkshire Theological Educational Partnership (YTEP), founded in 2014, co-ordinates theological training across Yorkshire on behalf of its partners, who are currently: St Hild College (which delivers tuition in sites at Mirfield, Sheffield and Lincoln as well as online), Church Army (based at Wilson Carlile College, Sheffield), York School of Ministry, and the College of the Resurrection.
2. On behalf its component Centres, YTEP:
 - Meets all the academic quality assurance requirements of Durham University, e.g. co-ordinating curriculum review and development, maintaining programme and module definitive documentation, operating a board of studies (Common Awards Management Committee) and Board of Examiners, liaising with an external examiner, and conducting the annual review;
 - Meets all the student administration requirements of Durham University, e.g. student registrations and transfers, issuing campus cards, processing student ‘concession’ requests, co-ordinating APL requests and administering the Common Awards Student Survey (CASS);
 - Liaises with the Ministry Development Team of the Archbishops’ Council of the Church of England;
 - Maintains a Moodle-based virtual learning environment (VLE);
 - Organises staff development across the Partnership.
3. As YTEP is not a formation centre but has an enabling role for its partner centres, the Reviewers limit their commentary, judgements, commendations and recommendations concerning YTEP to the two relevant PER criteria of Leadership and Management, and Teaching and Learning.

Section C: Leadership and Management

4. The reviewers have considered YTEP’s governance structures, team leadership and collaboration, support for trustees, and business planning, risk management and reporting.
5. During the review, we saw many examples of the effective working of the partnership, with staff from the Centres making significant contributions to YTEP as a whole. For example, a member of Church Army training team sits on the YTEP good practice group for curriculum leads across the partnership where policy and good practice are shared. The Director of Organisational Development and Training sits on the YTEP trustee body, and the Head of Initial Learning is on the Common Awards Management committee. YSoM works closely with YTEP and the Director of Lifelong Learning is a member of the YTEP Management Committee and chairs the YTEP Exam Board and the Student Affairs Sub-Committee, attending all meetings.

6. Centres were able to articulate the benefits of being part of a wider partnership. From interviews with Church Army, we learned that they were particularly appreciative of how full involvement with YTEP has had a positive effect in securing the support of wider church audiences.

Commendation 1

We commend the collaborative working across YTEP and the contributions made by the Centres to YTEP as a whole.

7. YTEP is led by Trustees drawn from each of the Centres. It is a decision-making body, except in regard to academic oversight and quality, which is done by the Management Committee. This is a small group, with no student representation. The reviewers observed a meeting of the Trustees, which was shorter than normal because the YSOM and Church Army Trustees were absent. The members who attended gave brief summaries of plans for diversification of provision, and we noted that St Hild and CoR in particular are looking to widen their offerings and build new partnerships. Given the significance of these decisions and the investment required to set them up, it would be helpful if members of YTEP would work more closely together to pool resources and make strategic decisions about future developments (see also Recommendation 9).

Recommendation 1

We recommend that the Centres liaise more closely over diversification of provision to make strategic decisions about future developments.

8. We noted also that the two Schools of Ministry reviewed have developed in different directions: on the one hand, York School of Ministry has withdrawn from Common Awards at Levels 4 and 5 to develop its own training offering while remaining within YTEP (it continues to deliver Common Awards modules at Level 6); on the other, Leeds School of Ministry has handed over its academic training of LLMs to St Hild while leaving YTEP. As we note below the two Schools of Ministry would benefit from greater contact with one another (see Recommendation 28).
9. From our conversations with staff across the centres, reviewers observed a strong relationship between Durham University and YTEP with the regular seeking of advice, and passing on of good practice, in addition to the process of formal and regular reviews. It was clear that the process of a Durham review – one of which was witnessed by a member of the PER team (Common Awards Programme Review of YTEP, conducted by Durham University, at the Mirfield Centre on 29th November 2024) – was seen as constructive and developmental rather than unwelcome. There was a positive atmosphere throughout and genuine support for suggestions made by both parties.

Commendation 2

We commend the positive working relationships between YTEP and Durham University.

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

Section D: Teaching and Learning

10. The reviewers have considered YTEP's role in supporting the programmes' appropriateness to the church's ministerial training needs including their resourcing, development and quality assurance.
11. We saw evidence that the quality-assurance process is working well and that the Common Awards Management Committee (CAMC) provides effective oversight of these processes. The Committee includes staff and student representatives from all YTEP Centres. From conversations with students, we noted that this representation is valued and that it is an effective way of getting the student voice heard.
12. We also noted that the process for Annual Self Evaluation (ASE) is working effectively: ASE is conducted at YTEP and Centre level and is approved by the CAMC, drawing upon reports to and minutes of Centre's academic committees, feedback from staff in the Partnership's five Centres, and students' comments in other settings. We saw from ASE documents provided that the process is conducted in a thorough manner, with due scrutiny paid to each of the Centres.
13. From the examples of applications for Accredited Prior Learning (APL), we noted that the formal approval process works effectively, with detailed rationales provided by the students, approved by YTEP level and signed off by Durham. We are confident that this is a robust system for ensuring fair and equitable treatment of requests by students.
14. The sharing of resources is a particular benefit of the partnership, and this was noted in conversations that the reviewers had with staff and students from all Centres. All students at the Centres have access to electronic resources provided by YTEP, including resources on Moodle and eBooks. YTEP manages the Moodle platform and provides general pages that are open to all students, while Centres are able to create and maintain pages for their own modules. We were given sight of a selection of Moodle pages, where the content was thorough, diverse in origin and well-organised. Feedback is provided via Turnitin or Moodle.
15. From conversations with students, however, we learned that some students struggled to use Moodle, with the result that some students felt confused about which modules they were taking and some students did not read their feedback because they did not know how to access it electronically. We heard this from students at St Hild, Church Army and the Schools of Ministry. As this issue is a YTEP-wide one, we recommend that YTEP finds a way of enabling students to become familiar with Moodle (and Turnitin, where relevant), for example by providing training materials that could be used across all Centres.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that YTEP finds ways of encouraging students to become familiar with Moodle and confident in using Turnitin.

16. We noted many examples of effective engagement with Staff Development across the Centres and colleagues appreciated the regular opportunities for shared staff development. The course on Decolonisation, anti-colonial theology and formation for ministry was singled out as being particularly helpful (Church Army D2).
17. YTEP provides academic administration for a particularly diverse student body: the Centres it represents are diverse and students within the Centres can take a variety of pathways. This was

The review team has Confidence in YTEP with regard to Criterion D: Teaching and Learning.

particularly the case with St Hild, who have a unique selling point of creating bespoke pathways for its ordinands. We are aware that YTEP may need to consider increasing its registry capacity to meet these diverse needs (see Recommendation 3).

Conclusion

In relation to the PER criteria considered above, the review team has Confidence in YTEP in its support for preparing students for Ordained and Licensed Lay Ministries in the Church of England.

St Hild College

18. St Hild College is the largest of YTEP's centres. St Hild was formed in 2017, when the Yorkshire Ministry Course (YMC, formerly the Northern Ordination Course) merged with the St Barnabas Theology Centre. St Hild has a number of centres: Mirfield (at the Mirfield Centre), Sheffield and, most recently, Lincoln, following the formation of a partnership with Lincoln Diocese. St Hild had a centre in York, but this has developed into another centre St Hild Online. St Hild also has a Centre for Church Planting and a Centre for Baptist Ministry. St Hild's most recent partner is the Leeds School of Ministry (LSoM).
19. St Hild trains Church of England ordinands from Yorkshire and Lincoln as well as surrounding Dioceses who see St Hild as an appropriate pathway for candidates. The College offers a variety of pathways: full-time contextual study, which involves academic study alongside full-time training at a church; part-time study; the Mirfield Residential Contextual Pathway, by which students live at the College of the Resurrection and are formed in its community, while undertaking training with St Hild; and the Caleb stream, for experienced lay ministers over the age of 55 train for ordination.
20. St Hild trains Licensed Lay Ministers, delivering the academic courses (under Common Awards) to students from the Sheffield, Lincoln and Leeds dioceses and it has appointed a St Hild Director of Reader Training to oversee this work. (See the review of LSoM for a review of the current and evolving position of LLM training.)
21. St Hild has an ecumenical foundation, so it also provides Baptist formation and training: the Baptist Church is a significant partner, especially in the Sheffield centre. They have also been able to support a Lutheran ordinand in training.
22. St Hild also welcomes independent students and it is seeking to recruit increasing numbers of these: it recently decided to undergo an inspection by the Office for Students (OfS), enabling eligible independent and Baptist students to apply for student loans.
23. St Hild has 20 staff including administrative and academic staff.

Section A: Formational Aims

A1 The TEI's formational aims are clearly stated, understood and owned within the TEI.

24. St Hild communicates clearly its formational aims. In its ordinand guide it states: 'Christ has set an adventure of faith before us. It will be demanding, puzzling, exciting, terrifying and great fun at various points and sometimes all at once! It's a great privilege to share the journey of vocation together with you'.

25. The theme of adventure is key to the college's foundation and identity today. St Hild notes in its own self-evaluation that: 'Our vision is for adventurous and Christ-like formation for the renewal of the church and the transformation of communities'.
26. The prospectus and website express this expansive vision with the strapline 'Deeper Roots, Wider Horizons'. From conversations with students and stakeholder feedback, reviewers noted that this articulated vision of a journey of formation together was shared by all parties. This vision is the maturing and outworking of St Hild's original founding purpose and hence is in line with its current governing documents and statements of purpose.
27. During 2023-4 St Hild worked with all staff, and then with governing Council and Executive Committee, to produce the refined and updated vision and embed it in its staff induction and oversight processes. From interviews with staff, it was clear to the reviewers that they support this expansive vision and seek to put it into practice in the day-to-day life of the college.
28. Stakeholder feedback affirms that there are good levels of communication and collaborative working between St Hild and its four key partner dioceses, who encourage both full-time and part-time ordinands to train with the college, and the seven other dioceses who also send ordinands to train on the various pathways.

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

29. There is evidence in the mapping documentation provided to the reviewers that St Hild has developed its formational pathways in line with the Church of England's qualities for discernment and formation and within the current Durham Common Awards frameworks.
30. The college takes seriously its responsibility to equip its ordinands for a church in which there is a mixed ecology of working either within or alongside the parish system. One stakeholder diocese commended the degree to which St Hild's ordinands still value the gifts and opportunities of parish ministry.
31. The college enables ordinands to take a non-anxious approach to different kinds of diversity. We commend the ability of St Hild to maintain an appropriate diversity of convictions and perspectives within its student body, reflective of the Church of England's own diversity. The college seeks to enable ordinands to hold well conversations concerning the *Prayers of Love and Faith* (PLF), emerging from the college's formational engagement with the Living in Love and Faith (LLF) process.
32. One ordinand commented, 'As regards my personal theology, I know I am in a minority of one, but I feel fully included, welcome and cared for'. The stakeholder evidence provided suggests that St Hild helps foster in its ordinands an ability to form meaningful friendships and working relationships with those who may disagree with them.

Commendation 3

We commend the ability of St Hild to maintain an appropriate diversity of convictions and perspectives within its student body, reflective of the Church of England’s own diversity.

33. A particularly impressive feature of St Hild is the degree to which it manages to provide a range of bespoke pathways, including ordained, lay and pioneer, within the Common Awards programme. One staff member noted that this is the college’s ‘Unique Selling Point’. From conversations with ordinands, there was clear evidence of an ordinand-centred approach to formation, with an individual learning pathway put in place for each and every ordinand. One stakeholder (from one of the seven dioceses who send occasional trainees to St Hild), said that they would like the College to place more focus on pioneering ministry within Church of England contexts, while acknowledging that this already happens ‘to an extent.’
34. Although the creation of a bespoke pathway for each ordinand is somewhat labour-intensive, St Hild has established processes to make this complexity of offering possible and will seek to increase its capacity in this area as needed, especially as regards relating to Durham Common Awards and communicating clearly with students. The college’s flexibility and variety in pathway provision is particularly appreciated by its partner dioceses, as is evident from stakeholder feedback received.

Commendation 4

We commend the level of individual care of ordinands at St Hild through the provision of bespoke pathways.

Recommendation 3

We recommend that YTEP increases its registry capacity to fully support the bespoke programmes for individual ordinands at St Hild.

35. The ASE provides evidence that St Hild has taken in hand the national Church of England *Simpler, Humbler, Bolder* agenda. The college also clearly values both traditional parish ministry and the need for a ‘mixed ecology’ of expressions of church, as witnessed by reviewers in sessions on the residential weekend. One stakeholder spoke appreciatively of the College’s commitment to church planting. St Hild offers a high-quality suite of modules on missional theology, including modules on Mission and Evangelism, Mission in Contemporary Urban Contexts’, and Mission Entrepreneurship.

Commendation 5

We commend St Hild’s offering of high-quality modules on missional theology.

36. An extended residential week at Easter 2024 was devoted to intergenerational worship and ministering to children and young people, and the Easter residential in 2025 will focus on the importance of emotional intelligence for ministry today.
37. These residential weeks ask for a considerable commitment on the part of ordinands, but they are clearly valued by both college staff and students. They are particularly important opportunities for St Hild's ordinands to build relationships with other students from different traditions within the Church of England, especially for those who are taught mainly online.
38. As advertised in its prospectus, the observed teaching sessions were fully interactive, encouraging ordinands in *how* to how to think and reflect theologically rather than in *what* to think. One former student commented positively on the openness of college staff in seeking to build friendships with ordinands and in learning from each other.
39. For the most part, students know what their training at St Hild will involve and choose it for its accessibility. In conversations with students, it was clear that many chose to train at St Hild because of its full-time contextual pathway and the flexibility this model affords, and especially for those with younger children who did not wish to relocate for residential training. St Hild seeks to offer thorough briefing documentation to ordinands entering training as well as a careful induction process to Common Awards study.
40. At the same time, a small number of ordinands told the reviewers that they had been surprised by what was required of them. Reviewers heard of the potentially isolating effect of weekly online sessions and the need to be supported in handling impactful topics outside of the context of embodied community. In nurturing its public profile, we recommend that St Hild is clear about what is expected of ordinands and the benefits and potential challenges of its in-person and online weekly centres, including within this the likely impact on their families and personal lives.

Recommendation 4

We recommend that St Hild is clearer in its publicity material and in its communications with DDOs about the relative benefits and potential challenges of the different patterns of study, and the likely impact on students' families and personal lives.

41. Funding has recently been secured for a pilot project for a non-accredited 'Alternative Learning Pathway' for ordinands from non-traditional backgrounds, which will launch at St Hild in September 2026. St Hild also offers the 'Caleb Stream' for ordinands over 55. One stakeholder reported in particular the valued partnership between their diocese and the College in working with neurodiverse students and candidates with limited educational experience.

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

42. There is evidence of good relationships and frank conversations between St Hild and its key partners and stakeholders in the region. In discussion, the College's Principal and Vice-Principal were able to relate the different and distinct expectations of three of its key partner dioceses and how the college has sought to refine its offer to address any concerns, whilst at the same time being aware of the danger of overpacking the curriculum. However, a stakeholder from one of the regional centres cautioned about the need for further reflection on 'what it means to be a multi-site college rather than a dual-site college. This will be particularly pertinent if further sites might be added in future years.'
43. Missional imagination in context is another identified priority among its stakeholders, and this is certainly the college's 'front-foot' position in its publicity materials and the variety of modules offered.
44. In its self-evaluation, St Hild expresses the desire to be 'world-facing' and already a significant number of its staff and students 'have roots, relationships and experiences that span the globe'. The reviewers observed that it was evident that members of the student body felt able to bring their perspectives and contributions into the learning setting.
45. Stakeholder feedback included a comment that St Hild should make it a priority to become more diverse in its student body as well as in its core teaching staff. St Hild has sought to increase numbers of UKME/GMH students but as noted in the previous PER, this is not an issue that the College can tackle in isolation from the wider ecology of its partner dioceses and institutions.

The review team has Confidence in St Hild with regard to Criterion A: Formational Aims.

Section B: Formational Context and Community

B1 The TEI draws on partnership with theological educators in the region and local faith and community organisations to enhance formational opportunities for students.

46. Durham encourages all teaching staff to undertake professional training in education and this is similarly encouraged by St Hild. The college participates enthusiastically in the annual Theological Educators Network Conference held at Durham University.
47. St Hild manages a very effective range of placement opportunities with local churches to ensure a rich and varied experience and associated learning. (See St Hild D5)
48. There are partnerships / relationships with other faith communities and the reviewers observed an effective and well-planned visit to Bradford Cathedral (at the heart of a multi-faith, multicultural city), which was clearly appreciated by St Hild students. The Dean of Bradford spoke of a 'faith walk' recently established around the local area which took in the buildings (and chance to meet the communities) of several other faiths. He commented that the synagogue had not been included in this, due to distance, but other arrangements were being set in place to connect with the local Jewish community. His lived experience and the cathedral's perspective on local racial harmony provided a healthy contrast to more popular, often sensational, presentations in the media. The group's understanding was extended by a talk from a previous student at St Hild, now a member of the team of clergy at the cathedral.
49. In order to augment the visit, or extend the usefulness of future such opportunities, it would be good to arrange them earlier in the day, or at a time when daylight hours are longer, to permit exploration of the area around the cathedral, and the buildings/practices of other faiths.
50. St Hild actively builds partnerships with churches, chaplaincies and community organizations. As stated in the self-evaluation document: 'In any given year, our students will be involved in extended and constructive participation in the work of over 150 local churches, chaplaincies, cathedrals, church plants and Fresh Expressions, para-church and community organizations.'

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

51. A significant plank of the College's formational offer is the dual system of core tutors (members of college staff) and personal tutors (clergy from the student's home region willing to act as spiritual accompaniers/mentors during the period of training). As noted in section 7 of the ordinand guide: 'Personal Tutors are drawn from experienced clergy across the region and provide a valuable perspective from outside the St Hild team. They can act as a mentor and guide in matters of formation, and feed in their comments to your Core Tutor for reporting'.

52. A recently appointed staff member oversees the personal tutor system as well as the system of ordinand placements. Accompanying documentation is in place informing students of how these structures work, as well as informing both potential personal tutors and potential placement hosts.
53. For the most part, these systems seem to be working and some students reported very positive relationships with their personal tutors. There is added value in the fact that personal tutors are often St Hild alumni who understand clearly what is expected of them in their roles. However, from meetings with students, the reviewers observed that some ordinands were either unaware of the personal tutor's role or unsure whether they themselves needed to take the initiative to meet with a personal tutor. Some first-year students had yet to be allocated one, though we understand that the allocation process takes place over the course of the first term and it had not been completed by the time of our visit.

Recommendation 5

We recommend that the dual system of core tutors and personal tutors at St Hild is more fully explained to students and that there is a process to ensure that any gaps in provision are addressed.

54. Policies relating to welfare and pastoral care including policies on Equality and Diversity, Disability Support, Fitness to Study Policy, and Parental Leave, are outlined in the Student Overview Handbook and accessible via Moodle. Policies and updated policies are approved by student representatives through the Formation Committee.
55. One stakeholder commented that St Hild should make it a priority to become more diverse in its student body and its core teaching staff. The College is aware of the need to diversify, as evidenced in the self-evaluation document, and it is keen to address this issue to ensure a wide range of individuals are feeding the national church, but their ability to do so is influenced by the pipeline of students coming through – which is beyond their direct control. Ministerial and teaching staff reflect a diverse age and ethnicity profile, include an appropriate lay/ordained and gender balance and experience in the practice of local church. We also noted the inclusion of neurodiverse staff as further evidence of diversity.
56. There is a clear process for safeguarding, with well-established checks and balances for how safeguarding issues are handled. These are articulated in the Safeguarding Policy, which is reviewed annually. The College has appointed a staff lead and a deputy, with processes for allocating cases according to sensitivity, and a system for cross-checking on progress of matters raised. Posters displaying safeguarding information, including the names and contact details of the Safeguarding Officer and Deputy Safeguarding Officer, are posted on noticeboards and in the Retreat House and affixed to Refectory doors while St Hild is in residence. This information is also displayed on the Moodle Homepage. Nonetheless, it was notable that while the students were sure that effective processes existed, and had no difficulty predicting that they would be able to access them if needed, awareness of who precisely was responsible was not widespread. We therefore

recommend better promotion of safeguarding information, for example by creating opportunities for introducing the Safeguarding Officer and their Deputy in person at strategic times, such as induction, and by drawing attention to safeguarding information.

Recommendation 6

We recommend better promotion of existing safeguarding provision and information at St Hild, by drawing attention to posters, community notices and handbooks. This could include introducing safeguarding officers to ordinands as they begin training and adding their photographs to the Ordinand Guide.

57. From our observation of a residential weekend, we noted a clear sense of community and shared experience. We observed that ordinands value their prayer groups as hubs of community life within the larger College body. From our interview with a mixed group of students, we sensed that communication across the student cohort was strong, and there was no perceived inequality between students studying at different centres and online. We also met one independent student, who said that they feel well integrated into the life of the college.
58. In the dining room, there was no evidence that people were routinely sitting in the same cliques or that course identity impacted on friendships. This may be due to the fact that every ordinand has a bespoke pathway, and so there is no default status which identifies students as being of a particular type (e.g. LLMs and ordinands). The system devolves a significant responsibility on the student to keep track of their modules and assignments, and as part of this it would seem that resourcing a personal sense of connection with other students has become part of the process.
59. There was a consensus among students that the bespoke approach was highly valued as part of the culture. However, it can lead to confusion. One ordinand reflected that it seemed impossible to find one other person with the same pathway as them, and hence compare notes on expectations. Another confessed that they had half-completed an assignment that they did not in fact need to undertake because of not fully understanding their pathway.
60. The system does depend upon the student's ability to navigate Moodle effectively. St Hild has sought to produce induction materials for this purpose in a variety of media (e.g. video, text) to cater for all ordinands, including a 'drop in and sit beside' offer for those who find Moodle particularly challenging. The approach to individual learning and formational needs does not just apply at entry but also at the beginning of each new year of training, where the Director of Studies meets each ordinand to review the year and plan for the next. We commend this level of individual care, though we recommend that steps are taken to manage the complexity of registration (see St Hild A2; Commendation 4 and Recommendation 3).
61. The PER Team were impressed by the extent to which the student voice is encouraged, heard and acted upon. Feedback is sought from the students on all teaching and social events, and this is encouraged at the mid-module point, in order to implement any desired changes while current

students still have the chance to benefit. Staff were also encouraged to complete a form at the end of the module, to reflect on how the teaching had gone, note any learnings from their point of view, and plan delivery for next time.

- 62. Students are represented at partnership governance, including CAMC, and time is given within formal sessions for year and module representatives to gather feedback and decide on which issues should be passed forward.
- 63. Throughout our visit, we picked up a true spirit of collaborative learning and a genuine respect for the views of both parties to learning. The reviewers observed a collegiate and collaborative atmosphere between staff and students, with regular messages given by staff eliciting feedback and commenting on how student feedback had made a difference to college life. One senior staff member described St Hild as having a culture of formative feedback which ‘works both ways’, staff to student and vice versa.
- 64. The situation of spouses and families of St Hild students is acknowledged, as outlined in the Ordinand Guide, and there are regular attempts made to include them within the life of the College at both informal events such as picnics and formal occasions such as services and the Commendation Weekend. Staff do however seek to pass on their understanding to students that committing to a course of theological study, whether full time or while managing employment, will have implications for the family, in both the short and long term (but see also Recommendation 4).

B3 The provision of public social and private living accommodation is satisfactory.

- 65. St Hild rents space for its residential courses from the Mirfield Centre and this accommodation, both residential and social, was of a high standard and well maintained.
- 66. The pathways between locations at the Mirfield Centre were quite rugged and it was not clear that wheelchairs would work well between them. Ramps were in place at building entry, but the latches on most of the doors made ‘press to open’ arrangements difficult. However, we were informed that when St Hild are resident, care is taken to ensure that students with impaired mobility are accommodated and taught in areas of the site that are easily accessible by ramp and/or lift.
- 67. St Hild has use of the Lower Chapel space at Mirfield: this was highly adaptable for different types of worship, as was witnessed over the weekend during a variety of different formats. Students are also encouraged to attend services in the Upper Chapel, used by the Brethren of the Community of the Resurrection: this was welcoming to all, including those not from the same tradition of worship. Both spaces were well accommodated to the needs of disabled people with ramps and press-to-open doors.

68. St Hild was awarded an Eco-Church Bronze Award by the charity A Rocha in 2017. The college website states that the ‘award celebrates and recognises the ways in which our students and staff are already considering the environment, and holds us to account to enable us to build on this over time,’ and affirms the College’s commitment to work towards carbon neutrality by 2030. The reviewers noted positive working practices including the provision of vegetarian meals by default on residential weekends and the encouragement of car-pooling and regifting. Students also spoke positively of the inclusion of questions of environment and sustainability in the taught content of the programme, through a module on Sustaining the World: Christian Faith and the Environment.

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

69. It was evident to the PER team that corporate worship was well established within the life of St Hild. Non-Eucharistic services, including Morning and Evening Prayer, were delivered effectively by the students during the weekend we experienced. Ordinands served at the Sunday Eucharist as a training activity, with the resident chaplain for the weekend mentoring two students (of different theological traditions) through the process. This was done with care and attention.

70. The various rites included over the weekend were varied, and were introduced with sensitivity, so students understood the rationale behind their presentation and delivery. During the weekend, the reviewers observed a teaching session designed to increase ordinands’ familiarity with Common Worship Morning and Evening Prayer and their dexterity to use it well. We also witnessed imaginatively-designed collective worship. Services were therefore varied in format and tone. Ordinands also had the option to attend Compline and Sunday Mass with the Community of the Resurrection. Mealtimes were managed in close connection to services, to make best use of the time available. At least one weekend each year is devoted to BCP worship, and there is at least one BCP service at the annual Easter school.

71. Students repeatedly told us they felt valued and acknowledged, even if their theological position was at variance with most of their fellow students. Staff were similarly encouraging of the wide range of inclusive practice, according to gender, tradition and differing recognised theological convictions. The Ordinand Guide includes advice on using inclusive language in worship and a statement that students’ consciences are respected if they do not feel able to receive communion for any reason, though they are expected to be present at Eucharist even if they do not receive.

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

72. There was consistent evidence of good interaction between staff and students. We observed this during the weekend. At mealtimes staff and students sat together and communicated freely. Provision was also made, through encouragement and positive affirmation, for those who wished to eat in silence – and their specific accommodation was encouraged. Social events were offered

on both nights of the residential, organized by prayer groups on a rota basis: these were well-received and, again, provided the opportunity for interaction between staff and students.

73. We heard many positive comments on staff-student relations from a large group of students who offered to speak to reviewers. In addition to hearing from the students as a group, we gave individual opportunities for feedback and again gained a positive impression. (See St Hild C2, D2).

The review team has Confidence with Qualifications in St Hild with regard to Criterion B: Formational Context and Community.

Section C: Leadership and Management

C1 The TEI has clear and effective governance structures.

74. St Hild College operates as a charitable company limited by guarantee. Its annual accounts documentation states that its Governing Body is appointed ‘with representation from the three Yorkshire dioceses of the Church of England and of regional Baptist Associations.’ The reviewers were provided with a set of documents on governance structures, including Terms of Reference for the St Hild Council Committee, the St Hild Resources Committee, the Formation and Academic Affairs Committee, and the Centre for Church Planting Steering Group. These show that clear and effective governance structures are in place within the College. From stakeholder feedback, we note that the College is seen as ‘very well run and effective.’

C2 The TEI has effective team leadership.

75. From interviews with staff and senior leadership of the College, there is evidence of good collaboration between the leadership body and Trustees, staff and stakeholders. Governance documents and interviews evidence a widely owned vision for excellence and a good motivational climate which encourages the learning and growth of the students. Informal discussion with some individual students over meals confirmed that this vision was shared by students.
76. The reviewers found clear evidence of a level of support that the staff team provide one another, and the non-anxious and empowering leadership style of senior staff. One staff member commended St Hild as having the healthiest culture of the three TEIs he had worked for, and another was able to describe the flexible pattern of his study leave arrangements to enable research and writing. This is extremely positive, though it led the reviewers to reflect upon whether there enough space for peer review and peer challenge, and we encourage the team to consider this.

Commendation 6

We commend the quality of teamwork and collaborative and empowering leadership within St Hild.

C3 Trustees are appropriately recruited, supported and developed.

77. The College’s recruitment policies provide evidence that staff and trustees are appropriately recruited by virtue of their skills and experience and that Safer Recruiting Policies are employed. The Trustees’ annual report provides a clear rationale for the constitution of the Board of Trustees: a Chair appointed by the Archbishop of York, two trustees appointed by the bishop of each of the partner dioceses (Leeds, Sheffield, York, and Lincoln), an appointment by each of the partner Baptist bodies, a maximum of two persons by the partnering bodies, and one person from the Community of the Resurrection. Additionally, there is a staff representative, a student representative, the Principal of the Charity, and up to two other co-opted trustees. The annual

report also restates the principal activities of the College, its aims and objectives, and affirms its adherence to charity legislations.

78. However, St Hild does not appear to have a Trustees' Handbook and we recommend that it produces one, in order to set out procedures for the mentoring and development of trustees, as well as expectations for how they should be engaged in the life and wellbeing of the college.

Recommendation 7

We recommend that St Hild produces a Trustees' Handbook.

C4 The TEI has effective business planning, fundraising, risk management and reporting.

79. There is evidence that the College takes seriously the requirement for financial transparency vis-à-vis the accounts. From the annual accounting information we were shown, we can confirm that St Hild complies with the Public Sector Equality Duty and demonstrates transparency so those who wish to do so can verify where funds are being spent. Financial reporting is completed in a timely fashion and is concordant with the requirements of the four Dioceses and other parties.
80. The College maintains a detailed Risk Register, which is reviewed regularly: it shows that the College gives consideration to a wide range of risks and takes effective action to mitigate these.
81. The College shows due regard to challenges facing the sector and the need to diversify to maintain its income. Recent initiatives and future projects include the Centre for Baptist Ministry, Seedbed – a lay church planting leadership programme, a Caleb pathway, a Camino training programme for church leaders and further Reader training partnerships. A PhD programme with Durham University, a DMin programme with Asbury have also been mooted. Stakeholder feedback noted the risks posed to the College in seeking to diversify its offerings, to the possible detriment of its foundational purposes. One wrote candidly that: 'I have a fear that with a great deal of running around after money for new projects which is part of the whole sector ecology, we are in danger of breaking up good collaborative working.' We recommend the College stays mindful of the dangers of overstretching its resources.

Recommendation 8

We recommend that St Hild develops an action plan for managing future developments, in order to mitigate against overstretching its resource.

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

Section D: Teaching and Learning

D1 The TEI offers programmes appropriate to the sponsoring church's ministerial training needs.

82. The curriculum offered at St Hild is validated by Durham University under Common Awards, ensuring that the offering is appropriate to the Church of England's needs. Students at St Hild have access to all 10 Common Awards programmes offered through YTEP. Students on undergraduate pathways study for 2 or 3 years, usually undertaking 60-90 credits p.a. (PT students) or 100-120 credits p.a. (FT students). Students on postgraduate pathways study for 2 or 3 years, usually undertaking a minimum of 60 credits pa (PT students) or 90 credits pa (FT students). All St Hild ordinands come together for a residential programme of six weekends each year and an annual Easter School. This programme includes a shared first-year module in Mission and Evangelism, fellowship groups which mix students from all the study centres, and a shared final-year programme, Preparing for Ordination.
83. The mapping documents for undergraduate and postgraduate levels show that the module outcomes have been mapped against the Church of England Formational Criteria. A suite of optional modules is offered under each criterion and there is a detailed commentary providing further information as to how the learning and formation under each criterion is further supported by experiences across the programme, including Easter School and placements. Each ordinand follows an individual route through the programme, with staff guiding them on their module choices, taking into account their prior academic experience, formational needs and personal circumstances and preferences. Analysis in the programme mapping documents is supplemented by a 'Formation Programme Mapping Document' that relates the programme to criteria for IME1.
84. In its self-evaluation, St Hild expresses the desire to be 'world-facing' and already a significant number of its staff and students 'have roots, relationships and experiences that span the globe'. The reviewers observed that it was evident that members of the student body were actively encouraged to bring their various perspectives and contributions into the learning setting.
85. We observed teaching sessions in which students were encouraged to relate the theological learning to examples from their lived experiences and their ministries. Students on a contextual pathway, who are placed in a parish setting throughout their training are encouraged to 'constantly relat[e] their academic studies to the reality of ministry' (ASE).
86. St Hild is aware of the priority of diversifying the materials used in the curriculum and programmes that it offers beyond traditional white, middle-class sources; it is seeking to address this through training for staff and also increasing the range of Associate Tutors.

D2 The TEI's taught programmes are appropriately resourced, developed and quality assured.

87. St Hild has 10 core teaching staff and a wide pool of associate tutors delivering modules in the various associated centres and online. From the summaries of CVs provided, we note that all tutors have extensive experience of teaching, and that all have qualifications in Theology at Masters level or above.
88. The Staff Handbook sets out a vision for staff to be active contributors to the College's strategies and affirms the values of wellbeing, staff development and mutual learning. Staff are encouraged to take regular retreats. They are expected to engage in research, and they have the opportunity to take research leave every 5 years. In interview, teaching staff told us that their levels of motivation and wellbeing were high, and that they were encouraged to undertake continuing professional development. They affirmed that the College enabled staff to conduct research, and we heard from staff members who had taken, or were about to take, research leave. The list of recent research-grounded staff publications suggests that these systems are working well.
89. As described in the Review of YTEP above, students have access to electronic resources, including Moodle. Students attending the various associated centres have access to print books in the libraries Sheffield and Lincoln. Students may join the College of the Resurrection library in Mirfield, at St Hild's expense. Some students noted that they can also access books through their local diocesan resources. Ordinands who are studying online-only do not have the same access to physical books, but they told us in interview that this was not a problem, that they were happy with ebooks, and were willing to make purchases when necessary. Indeed, our interview with a mixed group of students suggested there was no perceived inequality between the groups in this respect.
90. From our interviews with the students, staff, and the Principal and Vice Principal, we established that St Hild seeks students' feedback, acts upon it and generally completes the feedback loop by reporting back to students on changes made as a result. Tutors are encouraged to collect feedback mid-module, to solicit students' views and make mid-module changes; end-of-module reviews are used to make changes for subsequent years; annual course questionnaires are used to plan for the future. During our visit, we noted that students were strongly encouraged to provide feedback on the weekend course. We also heard of staff acting upon *ad hoc* unsolicited comments from students, though it was not clear whether the feedback loop had been closed by reporting back to the students concerned. Throughout our visit we heard of formal and informal mechanisms for gaining feedback from students and staff, including an end of module form for staff to reflect on their experience, which could feed into module-delivery in the year ahead.
91. As noted above, formal quality-assurance, including the ASE, is undertaken at YTEP level. Notwithstanding this, St Hild takes quality assurance seriously: it has applied for registration with the Office for Students and underwent assessment from 25 January 2024 to 21 May 2024, with an

onsite visit in May 2024. (Since the visit, St Hild has successfully registered with the Office for Students (as of January 2025)).

D3 There is a good mix of teaching and learning styles and assessment methods, and students are engaged.

- 92. At the weekend, we observed a number of sessions, all of high quality, where there was evidence of a healthy variety of learning and teaching methods, including small-group discussions, a field trip, a practical session on liturgical materials, and interactive presentations from tutors. The sessions we observed were all well-paced, including clear objective-setting, a mix of delivery methods, a variety of related exercises, well-designed slides, well thought out discussion points, and appropriate use of video clips and other visual aids.
- 93. From our interview with the Principal and Vice-Principal, we learned that St Hild has made a deliberate decision not to fill teaching sessions with lectures: this is highly appropriate for cohorts of mature students with varied experience of prior learning who are studying primarily during evenings and weekends. Rather, content is delivered in short presentations followed by activity or discussion to ensure understanding. From our interview with students, we heard of effective use of group projects as a learning method at Easter School.
- 94. We noted that in-person teaching was underpinned by judicious use of Moodle to provide an appropriate amount of preparatory work that was discussed in class. Moodle pages also presented useful suggestions for further study aimed at students at a range of levels.

Commendation 7

We commend the variety of learning and teaching methods employed in taught sessions.

- 95. The creation of a bespoke pathway for each ordinand (see St Hild D2 and A2) ensures that the programme content is inclusive and meets the needs of the individual student. Ordinands may apply for Accredited Prior Learning (APL), processed at YTEP level, in place of modules for areas where they have already have significant prior experience. Equally, ordinands aiming for a postgraduate qualification may be advised to take undergraduate modules where there is a particular gap in their prior knowledge. Consideration is given to students' personal and family circumstances to ensure that they follow a programme that is logistically possible. In interview, students expressed particular appreciation of this flexibility.
- 96. We saw evidence of tutors catering for specific learning needs, such as the routine provision of handouts on coloured paper and large-print handouts. There is also a specific module on Disability Theology and one student commented that they had chosen St Hild for this reason. The staff are aware of the increasing prevalence of conditions such as autism and ADHD among the student body, and we noted some sensitive announcements encouraging students to be mindful of the needs of others.

97. St Hild prioritize a broad range of views in teaching feedback and online offerings expand access for those with caregiving or medical issues. Plans are underway for a pilot project training ordinands from non-traditional backgrounds using a ‘problem-based’ learning approach. Students with protected characteristics were effortlessly integrated into the community.
98. We saw evidence of impressive variety of assessment methods, including written reports, oral presentations, group projects, essays and personal reflections: assessment for the Biblical Studies module featured an assessed conversation, which was particularly commendable. From our interview with the Principal and Vice-Principal, we learned that the team aims to keep conventional essay-writing to a minimum in favour of sermons and other practical activities, though it was difficult to make as much use of assessed groupwork as they would like due to the number of students in full-time work.
99. St Hild commits to providing feedback within 3 weeks of the date of submission. Students are informed of this via Moodle and staff assured us that any delays are communicated effectively. We also heard of an example of recorded audio feedback on a presentation being sent to students within a day in order to inform the related piece of written work. Feedback is constructive and forward-looking, and as it is viewed as assessment for learning, students are invited to book appointments with staff to discuss it further.

Commendation 8

We commend the variety of assessment methods used at St Hild, including the use of innovative assessment methods, such as assessed conversations, and the thoughtful approach to providing timely and helpful feedback.

D4 There is provision for students’ progression and development over the course of the learning programmes.

100. Progression over the course of the learning programme is built into the Common Awards provision validated by Durham. Students on the BA programme progress to study topics in greater depth at Levels 5 and 6, including writing a Dissertation or Independent or Extended Project. Students on the MA programmes complete a Dissertation or extended research project.

D5 Students are helped to integrate their academic learning and ministerial development.

101. The Formational Criteria Mapping Document states that ‘Reflective Practice modules are integrated into intermediate-year ordinands’ placements and weekend programmes.’ We also saw examples of assessed learning journals used as part of these modules. In addition to formal modules, opportunities for reflection are built in throughout the programme, including guided conversations in prayer-groups, one-to-one discussions with Personal Tutors, and regular not-for-credit reflective group projects.

102. Students are given practical guidance on relating theory to practice in classes. We observed a teaching session on Missiology during which theories were introduced and students were encouraged to relate these to their lived experiences of ministry in their own contexts. The tutor offered examples from his own experience as a guide.
103. All ordinands take a missional placement in their first year, comprising 40 hours between Advent and Palm Sunday. The 40 hours include time for theological reflection with the placement supervisor. Ordinands on the three-year programme take an additional placement in their second year; this is optional for ordinands on the two-year programme. Students were encouraged to arrange their own placements in consultation with staff.
104. Ordinands on a contextual pathway contribute to the placement church throughout their period of study. It is the responsibility of the DDO in partnership with the ordinand and the college to put in place full-time contextual placements for full-time ordinands.
105. From interviews with staff and students, we saw evidence of careful thought being given to the choice of placements, with consideration made of students' prior experience and their developmental needs, and with reference to Stage 2 discernment reports. Emphasis was placed on stretching students by exposing them to new experiences and new contexts for ministry. In interview, students recognised the value of being taken out of their comfort zones, though a few students expressed concern that protected characteristics needed to be taken into consideration more intentionally to ensure good match between the students and their placement settings.
106. From stakeholder feedback, we noted that whilst some ordinands deeply appreciated the freedom of choosing their own placements, some dioceses commented on the need to be more involved in arranging suitable placements for their ordinands. Feedback from a number of DDOs commended the College's flexibility and variety, although there was a concern about the need for more open consultation regarding ordinand placement contexts. Collaborating with those who have a local understanding of potential placement contexts as well as having a deep understanding of the developmental needs of ordinands is a priority for this model of formation and training.

Recommendation 9

We recommend there is open consultation with dioceses when choosing placements for ordinands.

107. Once a placement has been agreed, there is a thorough placement handbook outlining expectations on all sides including arrangements for safeguarding and expectations of accountability and reporting, and the student agrees learning goals, which are recorded on forms. The system appears to be working well with a range and diversity of placements either already available or for potential securing in future.

The review team has Confidence in St Hild with regard to Criterion D: Teaching and Learning.

Section E: Ministerial Formation

E1 The TEI's programme of ministerial formation enables students to grow in their love for God.

108. The array of modules offered at St Hild fosters intellectual enquiry into the aspects of the Christian faith, its history, and modern application. The schedules for the residential weekends and Easter school are centred around prayer and worship. Reviewers were encouraged to see that ordinands used a variety of liturgies to reflect different traditions and worship styles in the Church of England. As every Prayer Group has the opportunity to plan and lead worship, ordinands are able to use their creativity and develop collaborative leadership. Ordinands also benefit from participating in the prayer and sacramental life of the College of the Resurrection. Ordinands spoke warmly about their experience of Prayer Groups which enabled peer support and spiritual development. Ordinands are encouraged to have a spiritual director, and the presence of a male and female chaplain during residential weekends amplifies the importance of spiritual formation.
109. According to the programme mapping documents, most ordinands undertake at least two modules in Biblical Studies, and Bible teaching incorporates hermeneutical and contextual approaches. Reviewers saw that worship and teaching made appropriate use of scripture. However, some external stakeholders commented on the need for more biblical teaching at St Hild, with greater attention being paid to preparing ordinands to be confident in their use of scriptures, particularly the Old Testament.

Recommendation 10

We recommend that St Hild reviews the content of Biblical teaching, particularly the Old Testament, and considers developing this area.

110. The self-evaluation document indicates that module leaders include GMH voices in their resources, GMH speakers are invited to contribute to the teaching, and ordinands are encouraged to use liturgy to reflect Black History Month and Week of Christian Unity, thereby enabling ordinands to engage with diverse voices.
111. St Hild's self-evaluation document shows evidence of a 'world-facing' approach to training and formation through input from speakers from the Council of Christians, interfaith-engagement practitioners, and Jewish and Muslim speakers. Weekend teaching often incorporates one of the Marks of Mission and all placements have a missional focus. St Hild's ethical living promotes the understanding of integrity of creation and the centrality of mission in its training and formation embodies matters of social justice.

Commendation 9

We commend St Hild for its commitment to developing and enhancing the world-facing formational opportunities for its students.

E2 Students are enabled to grow in their calling to ministry.

112. Leading prayer and worship, peer feedback on worship, prayer groups, and the plethora of opportunities at their home, placement and context churches enable ordinands to grow in their discipleship and enable growth in others. St Hild's response to the strategic priority of General Synod 2021 to become a church of missionary disciples (GS2223), is evident in their ethos of academic, ministerial and spiritual formation.
113. The mapping document indicates that all ordinands are expected to undertake a Preparing for Public Ministry module, whether they need it for credit or not, which alongside the teaching on pastoral offices and sacraments enable ordinands to reflect upon, and develop their call to ordained ministry. Staff-led Eucharistic liturgies at St Hild, alongside the opportunity to participate in the services at the Community of the Resurrection enable enquiry and reflection into the distinctiveness of priestly ministry. Reviewers saw that there was opportunity for students to experience being a liturgical deacon at Sunday morning Eucharist. The variety of opportunities that are available for ordinands to explore during mission placements enable engagement with the diversity of the Church of England. The Multifaith Awareness module and the field trip to Bradford Cathedral provided ordinands an excellent opportunity to explore multicultural engagement and mission.
114. Although the Ordinand Guide incorporates the importance of support during training, there was disparity between ordinands' experience of balancing family, work and training, and more could be done to prepare would-be ordinands before starting training. (See St Hild A2 and Recommendation 4).

E3 Students are equipped to grow in their love for people.

115. Reviewers saw that prayer groups, placements and student interaction enabled ordinands to develop their empathetic listening skills. Reviewers observed that all aspects of safeguarding are often discussed in the context of placements. The College has clear safeguarding policy, which is displayed on the website, however reviewers saw inconsistency amongst students when they were asked if they knew who the safeguarding officer for St Hild was. (See also Recommendation 6.)
116. It was encouraging to see that the impact of the Makin Report was acknowledged during the residential, the victims and survivors were remembered in prayer, and space was created by the tutors during the weekend residential for anyone who needed to share their thoughts and concerns.

117. According to the self-evaluation document, St Hild is dedicated to fostering diversity and inclusivity in ministry training. They provide training on unconscious bias and insights on Black spirituality. Guest speakers share expertise, and academic dissertations address ministry challenges, such as working with refugees and neurodiverse individuals. New modules include Disability Theology and Mission on the Margins and modules on Biblical Perspectives on Social Justice and Equality promote reflection on diversity. Reviewers saw that the attitude and engagement of ordinands in matters of diversity concur to the ethos that St Hild is committed to promote.

Commendation 10

We commend St Hild for their commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion in the ethos and approach of ministerial training.

118. Mission is at the heart of St Hild's ethos to training and formation. Ordinands on the three-year programme undertake two placements during their training (and all ordinands take at least one) and the Ordinand Placement Handbook states that these are expected to have a 'missional focus,' meaning that students should identify a particular piece of missional learning that they need and choose a placement that can provide this. The placement may be in a parish, a secular institution or a programme run by a Christian or non-Christian organization.
119. The range of modules on the programme that take a lens of mission show evidence of St Hild's approach to enabling ordinands to engage in mission and to equip others to do the same. Reviewers were able to attest that ordinands were engaged in a variety of missional contexts in their home, placement and context churches. Members of staff engage in various services aligned with the 'contextual and missional vision' of the college. These include parish ministry, outreach, academic interests and input on diocesan and national levels.

Commendation 11

We commend St Hild for their dedication to mission-focussed training, which is embedded in the ordinand's training and formation and seamlessly modelled by the staff.

120. The Ordinands' Handbook includes the importance of self-care and support during training, however reviewers saw that some ordinands struggled to balance the multifarious demands of life and training. Due to the nature of training pathways which includes residentials and Easter school, some ordinands particularly with young families, but not exclusively so, have shared the impact of leaving their families for long periods of time. However, at the same time, they spoke about the joys and benefit of contact time and the value of space to pray, worship and learn together in a community. Ordinands expressed their gratitude to the College for their endeavour to integrate families into the life of the community. Reviewers were not able to ascertain if the recommendation to have a spiritual director was accomplished by all ordinands, but the presence of chaplains during residentials was deeply appreciated by everyone.

E4 Students are helped to grow in wisdom.

121. The provision of prayer groups and conversations with the personal and core tutors offered ordinands the space to reflect on their learning and experience. Context-based students also had the additional time allocated for ‘reflection with peers.’ Due to the nature of online pathway, students on online pathways felt slightly disconnected from the cohort, but emphasised the importance of prayer groups which offered mutual support and sense of community. Reflective Practice modules are included in intermediate-year ordinands' placements and weekend programs and woven into all training aspects, including groups and individual sessions. Considering the crucial role of personal tutors in enabling reflection on ordinand’s learning and experience and the input into the reporting process, reviewers witnessed that there was inconsistency amongst students’ understanding of the role and importance of personal tutors in their formation and reporting process, as noted above (see St Hild, B2). Some ordinands were unable to arrange meetings with their personal tutors due to their unavailability, some didn’t have a personal tutor, whilst others enjoyed fruitful relationship with their personal tutors (see Recommendation 5.)
122. St Hild’s values are ‘Prayerful, Creative, Collaborative and Pioneering’, which the staff and leadership team seek to model and promote. Group-led prayer and worship at residenceals, placements and prayer groups offer opportunities for leadership and collaboration. Teaching and placements are mission-centric; therefore, they provide opportunities for ordinands to learn and experience strategies for growth in mission. Reviewers saw that teaching and learning at St Hild enable students to engage and reflect upon the Five Marks of Mission alongside having the opportunity to study modules which focus on the 3rd, 4th and 5th marks of mission. All ordinands attend Easter schools that focus on an aspect of mission and all students on the BA pathway have to take at least one module on Mission. From the Formational Criteria Mapping documents, we note that students on the MA pathway will audit at least one module on mission and they are encouraged to have a ‘strong missional focus’ for their dissertations.
123. According to St Hild, ‘both through placement, and through our empowerment of students as worship leaders and as active and reflective learners, they build confidence while fostering growth in self-awareness’, during the visit, the reviewers were able to corroborate. The availability of counselling and the readiness of ordinands to access this provision showed their self-awareness and capacity to ask to help when needed. Neurodiverse students expressed their gratitude to the college for their support and for enhancing the experience of learning and development.

E5 Students are helped to grow in the quality of fruitfulness.

124. Reviewers were able to concur that St Hild ordinands are part of a diverse study community that promotes inclusive and respectful practices. According to the mapping document, 'Culture and ethos' are vital during student induction, with staff modelling a calm approach to diversity and supporting various worship styles. The residential programme has included topics on LLF/PLF,

IICSA Report, unconscious bias, women's issues in ministry and recently, space to reflect upon the impact the Makin Report has had on individuals. Prayer groups provide safe spaces for students, and placements help ordinands to engage with diverse church traditions, and social and cultural contexts.

125. Planning and leading worship using creative liturgy and communicating faith to diverse audience happens both at college during residential, and at placement contexts. Peer feedback on leading worship and sermon feedback from placement contexts enables positive critique and supportive evaluation. Reviewers saw some teaching on liturgy (use of Common Worship) that took place at the residential. Ordinands have the opportunity to undertake a module on Christian worship, though the college recognises that 'this is not always possible for those on part-time two-year courses.'
126. The mapping document indicates that many modules require a written theological reflection or reflective journal, encouraging students to critically reflect on their faith and spirituality. St Hild assigns one Easter School every three years to enhance skills in nurturing children's faith, which the college hopes to develop further. College worship includes student testimonies that inspire deeper faith and discipleship.
127. Ordinands had different experiences and perspectives on managing time for rest and recreation. However, ordinands expressed appreciation of training modalities and person-centred pathways offered at St Hild.

Commendation 12

We commend St Hild for their commitment to enabling students to engage with difference through the lens of mission-focussed ministry.

E6 Students are equipped to continue to develop their potential.

128. During the review period, reviewers were mindful that they had the opportunity to meet only the first- and intermediate-year students (the residential for the rest of the students had taken place during the previous weekend), therefore reviewers have relied partly on documentation provided by the college. Stakeholder feedback solicited by the Ministry Development Team – including one report from a curate who had studied at St Hild – spoke positively and appreciatively about St Hild's strengths in preparing students for curacies.
129. However, varied comments from stakeholders in the different dioceses suggested differences in diocesan priorities. They included parochial ministry ('not just planting'), mixed ecology of the Church, strengthening biblical teaching, encouraging students to do placements in unfamiliar traditions, and reviewing the impact of broadening the curriculum on contact time. We therefore recommend that St Hild continues to liaise closely with the individual dioceses, taking careful consideration of diocesan priorities when advising students on their module choices and placements.

Recommendation 11

We recommend that St Hild continues to liaise closely with the individual dioceses, taking careful consideration of diocesan priorities when advising students on their module choices.

130. Outside of placements, ordinands continue to worship in their home parish, enabling them to support ‘traditional’ church ministry. However, the connection and support from home parishes differed across the cohort. Easter school incorporates teaching on an aspect of mission whilst modules on Creating New Christian Communities and Church Planting in Perspective offer opportunities to study pioneering and Church Planting.
131. According to the mapping document, unless ordinands have prior theological learning, they are required to undertake a module on mission and evangelism. Placements offer the opportunity for ordinands to engage in mission and evangelism in multifarious contexts and prayer groups offer the space to share and learn from experiences. Reviewers saw that self-awareness is developed through leading worship, collaboration, prayer groups, reflective practices, conversations with personal and core tutors. During their visit, reviewers experienced an atmosphere of joy, support, gratitude, mutual respect and openness to learning. They also noticed that ordinands’ abilities to integrate their discipleship and ministry, work and personal life differed from person-to-person.

Commendation 13

We commend St Hild for creating of culture of joy and mutual flourishing.

E7 Students are able to demonstrate trustworthiness.

132. We saw the various ways in which ordinands are helped to develop a pattern of life grounded in prayer, scripture and reflection. Residentials and Easter school centre around prayer and worship. The Community of the Resurrection provides an additional and valuable resource for ordinands’ spiritual life. The presence of chaplains during residentials and expectation for ordinands to have a spiritual director, emphasises the importance of spirituality and spiritual wellbeing. Prayer Groups offer the space to reflect upon one’s prayer life and offer mutual accountability. Sessions on a Rule of Life, Daily Office, Examen, the use of Common Worship and the opportunity to be creative with liturgy while leading worship, all enable students to experience and develop a pattern of prayer life that is rooted and grounded. The College Introductory Workbook which also highlights the importance of prayer, scripture reading, self-care and accountability is provided to students before entering training. Reviewers were mindful that St Hild is a non-residential college, therefore the ordinands are responsible to develop and maintain their own daily pattern of prayer. Some ordinands commented that the ‘college doesn’t dictate but encourages a pattern of prayer that is suitable for student’s personal work and home life’. St Hild’s annual reporting process includes ‘self-reflection which is discussed among peers and with personal and staff tutors’.
133. According to the mapping documents, ordinands are encouraged to read and reflect on the ‘Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy’. Prayer groups further enable reflection on

the discipline of the Church. In addition to this, the mutual accountability that is embedded in prayer groups seems effective. From discussions with groups of students, reviewers found that ordinands were less familiar with their diocesan visions and expectations and how the visions and values integrate into their training and formation.

Commendation 14

We commend St Hild for providing sufficient tools for ordinands to develop a healthy pattern of prayer life and understand how discipline and accountability work in the Church.

134. The expectation of having a spiritual director, home church incumbent, placement supervisor, personal and core tutors, offer a multilayered accountability structure. However, reviewers found that there was inconsistency between different ordinands' experience of having spiritual directors, personal tutors and fruitful relationship with home church incumbents and DDOs (often due to changes in staffing). It is with the core tutor that a student's relationship and accountability appear to be most effective. We were mindful of the possibility that, due to this complexity, there may not be adequate mechanisms for sharing concerns or positive feedback about an ordinand.

Recommendation 12

We recommend that, wherever applicable, St Hild develops clear structures whereby both affirmation and concerns between home parish and personal tutors may be established so that accountability is interwoven into the processes.

135. Reviewers saw that matters of safeguarding were discussed in the context of home/context and placement churches and/or with personal tutors. All St Hild ordinands undertake Safeguarding training in relation to Leadership, Domestic Abuse, and Safer Recruitment and People Management in their final year. However, the experience varied between ordinands. The St Hild safeguarding policy is clearly displayed on their website and information on safeguarding is included in a variety of handbooks, but as mentioned earlier, not all ordinands were familiar with who the safeguarding officer was (see Recommendation 6).

Recommendation 13

We recommend that St Hild emphasises the need to provide feedback on the ordinand's understanding of the importance of safeguarding practice in the care of children and vulnerable adults in the Placement Feedback Forms.

136. The Code of Conduct and the session on Digital Evangelism informs students about the opportunities and challenges of the use of social media, though there does not appear to be a copy of the Social Media Policy in the set of policies on the College Moodle homepage.

Recommendation 14

We recommend that a copy of the Social Media Policy is published on the St Hild Moodle homepage.

E8 The TEI has sound procedures for the interim and end-of-training assessment of students' knowledge, skills and dispositions, reporting on their achievement and identifying further learning needs for the next stages of training and ministry.

137. Reviewers saw that students' learning journal, reflective practice models and self-assessments show evidence of students increased self-efficacy and genuine development. Peer feedback, sermon feedback, placement reports and personal tutors' input into end of year reports, are determined against the training and formation criteria of IME1 and are further refined by the core tutor.
138. The penultimate and final reports clearly specify the areas of development mentioned in Stage 2 report, how the areas of development are being addressed or have been addressed during training, students' strengths and achievements, and developmental needs during IME II. The placement reports that feed into the penultimate and final reports also show evidence of students' progress and how placements are leading their students' learning and experience. The penultimate and final reports were found to be of good quality – the reports were clear, developmental and helpful.
139. However, reviewers noticed that there was no evidence as to how students' engagement with their home church is monitored, particularly as there is no obvious 'checking in' or reporting process between home church incumbent and the personal tutor. Whilst the reviewers recognise ordinands may not necessarily exercise ministry in their home parish, they recognised a gap in the reporting process (see Recommendation 14).

The review team has Confidence with Qualifications in St Hild with regard to Criterion E: Ministerial Formation.

Conclusion

The review team has Confidence in St Hild in preparing students for Ordained and Licensed Lay Ministries in the Church of England.

Church Army

140. Church Army trains students to be licensed for public ministry in the Office of Evangelist under the authority and behalf of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and Commissioned as Church Army Evangelists. This training programme offers two routes: a Certificate of Higher Education in Theology, Ministry and Mission (validated by Durham University under Common Awards), and a Church Army award. The programme sits within a wider context of learning and development within Church Army, with pre-theological training offered nationally through its Church Resources suite and post-commissioning offered through the Leadership Development Programme. The Centre delivers its teaching primarily at the Wilson Carlile College, the Headquarters of Church Army.
141. In order to ensure long-term sustainability of training, Church Army has entered into partnerships with Anglican provinces and dioceses, including the Diocese of Blackburn and the Scottish Episcopal Institute. A significant development since the last PER has been Church Army's partnership with the Church of Ireland in 2024 to train their Pioneers (PiTs) alongside Church Army Evangelists in Training (EiT).

Section A: Formational Aims

A1 The TEI's formational aims are clearly stated, understood and owned within the TEI.

142. The formational aims of Church Army are clearly stated in the ASE as 'supporting the CofE's aims of developing ministers who are missional, collaborative, flexible, adaptive and diverse by training Evangelists able to understand and discern God's mission for their communities and how to join in with that mission, and informed about the skills needed to work with other church ministers (lay and ordained), secular stakeholders and ecumenical partners.'
143. The prospectus and the website are explicit and name both the GRACEUP values (Generous, Risk-taking, Accountable, Collaborative, Expectant, Unconditional, Prayerful), and the DARE strategy (Doing, Advocating, Resourcing and Enabling). This is reinforced throughout the Wilson Carlile campus, which is the national Headquarters of Church Army as well as one of the Centres of YTEP. The Values are boldly emblazoned within the building itself. The history and charism of the organisation were on display, with the trombone of Wilson Carlile, the founder, as a visual reminder.
144. The values are also clearly owned by the staff and students. Three random third-year students, when asked, could clearly and fully articulate the values of Church Army without prompting.

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

145. The explicit and specific nature of Church Army as an organisation of Evangelists allows the Centre to train specifically with evangelism and evangelists front and centre. Evangelism practitioners and church planters are well represented on the staff team. The ASE states: 'Our formation aims support the CofE's aims of developing ministers who are missional, collaborative, flexible, adaptive and diverse by training Evangelists able to understand and discern God's mission for their communities and how to join in with that mission'. During the review period, we noted evidence of collaborative teaching: students were given the chance to cross-fertilise with active evangelists as they mix at Church Army HQ. We also noted the diverse nature of the student body within the classroom: the mix of students arriving from their different contexts were encouraged to share and encourage one another and the teaching often centred back to each student's specific context.

Commendation 15

We commend the fact that the Formational Aims and the distinctiveness of the evangelistic calling of Church Army are evident, nurtured and encouraged within every strand of the life of the Centre.

146. The Irish Pioneers in Training (PiTs) that we met clearly share a similar DNA, though there are important differences. In a teaching session we observed, an Irish EiT asked questions about how the content of the session would impact her, and comments from the PiTs suggested that they were aware that theirs was a very different context. The Irish tutor seemed aware of the issue and acknowledged these differences. From this, we conclude that attention needs to be given to the distinctive training requirements of the Church of Ireland (see also Church Army D1). Equally, care needs to be taken to retain the distinctiveness of Church Army when expanding training beyond the traditional cohort of the Centre.

Recommendation 15

We recommend that Church Army gives attention to the distinctive training requirements of the Church of Ireland.

Recommendation 16

We recommend that Centre remains attentive of the distinctives of Church Army when expanding formational development beyond Church Army EiTs.

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

147. Church Army training is perhaps unique in the fact that the Centre is wrapped up within the larger institution of Church Army. It is therefore not a stand-alone organisation. The Centre activity is therefore wrapped up in Church Army's perennial attempt to be recognised and celebrated by the parishes which, we are told, can feel like an uphill task. Most people within the Church of England even at clergy level are at best only vaguely aware of Church Army and they often do not associate it with the structures of the Anglican church. DDOs do not seem to see Church Army as a viable vocational option.
148. Nonetheless, Church Army's full involvement with YTEP has had a positive effect in securing the support of wider church audiences. Recent engagement in events such as the recent Lambeth Palace Conference on Theological Education for Evangelists is to be commended.

Recommendation 17

We recommend that Church Army continues, through all possible channels, to raise the profile of the options and advantages of a Church Army theological education.

The review team has Confidence in Church Army with regard to Criterion A: Formational Aims.

Section B: Formational Context and Community

B1 The TEI draws on partnership with theological educators in the region and local faith and community organisations to enhance formational opportunities for students.

149. Church Army values its partnership with Durham, attesting to the external scrutiny that enables reflection and challenge on teaching and learning. Reflecting, learning and growing are at the heart of the training ethos and an openness coupled with a welcome lack of defensiveness amongst the staff team was noted by reviewers. A first-year session on study skills was observed and afterwards the Head of Initial Learning praised Durham’s willingness to enable reasonable adjustments when students submit assessments.
150. A member of the training team sits on the YTEP good practice group for curriculum leads across the partnership where policy and good practice are shared. There are also regular opportunities for shared staff development. The Director of Organisational Development and Training sits in the YTEP trustee body, and the Head of Initial Learning is on the Common Awards Management committee.
151. Individual staff have various links into national vocations and training networks which strengthen the sense of partnership across the theological education context. We heard that staff took part in the Theological Educators Network conference on mental health at Durham University in 2024, and the Lambeth Palace event for theological educators on evangelism. From informal discussions with tutors and students, we learned that students are encouraged to form partnerships across faith and community organisations locally, including ecumenical collaboration in their contexts. Students were able to reflect on these with reviewers.

B2 There are well understood and embedded practices of corporate life so as to enhance students’ formation.

152. Church Army clearly makes the effective building of community its highest priority. Students speak of a family feel, of being supported and valued. A sense of joy and belonging was threaded through the residential weekend – evident in worship, at meals and during learning. From the outset, and modelled by the Head of Initial Learning, it was clear that all members of the community – including visitors – are welcomed and valued. It was notable that first-year students, gathering only for their second weekend, described feeling settled and ‘at home’ almost immediately. Contact was maintained by students and staff with those who could not be present at the weekend via WhatsApp. Reviewers observed strong participation in worship and confident contributions in teaching sessions.

Commendation 16

We commend the strong sense of community and welcome at Church Army.

153. Two chaplains were present for the duration of the weekend and their ministry was well-received by students and appreciated by staff. This was the first weekend they had attended, but they expected it to be the only one. Reviewers wondered if it might be even more beneficial to have greater consistency in the provision of chaplaincy, with the same chaplains committed to as many weekends as possible.

Recommendation 18

We recommend that Church Army considers finding two chaplains who will commit regularly to the formation weekends.

154. Safeguarding procedures, training and policies are in place and reviewers were advised that the annual safeguarding report was being submitted to the training committee the week after the review took place. Reviewers noted that there is no distinct policy for welfare and pastoral care although both are referenced in both student and tutor handbooks and we recommend that this omission is addressed.

Recommendation 19

We recommend that that Church Army considers putting a policy in place covering pastoral care and student welfare.

155. A student raised a pastoral issue within a tutor group session that prompted reviewers to reflect on how, and by whom, significant pastoral concerns are addressed. We were told that Church Army's main structure of support for students consists of three main people: a Personal Tutor who meets with them once a term and visits them in their context once a year; a Local Supervisor to whom trainees are accountable in their local context, and who reports annually on the students' growth and development; and a Reflector, a commissioned Church Army Evangelist who students should meet with twice a term, who provides a 'safe space' for the students to talk about their training and mission context. Pioneers in Training from Ireland are also accountable to a Diocesan Pioneer Accompanier. In theory this provides ample support for students, though responsibility lies largely with the student to access the support network and if students do not arrange to meet with their reflector or have issues with their local supervisor, there is potential for problems to go unaddressed. Nonetheless, the Head of Initial Learning did give an example of an instance when Church Army Centre stepped in directly to address a complex and serious pastoral situation.
156. The student voice is listened to carefully with the opportunity for anonymous feedback after each weekend. Reviewers were given examples of when feedback led to changes being made. When a student reflected that a particular module was inappropriately Church of England centric and not sufficiently relevant to Church Army, staff reflected on the content of that module and amended it. Last year, Year 2 students had given feedback that the designation of the spring term as a non-residential formational journey meant that their cohort did not gather at the Wilson Carlile Centre for some months. This year a 24-hour residential retreat in Sheffield has been added to the

programme to remedy this gap. The staff team provide a written response to the student feedback after each weekend which goes to the whole student body. The student voice is also represented on the Training Committee and through year group representatives.

157. The student body is diverse in terms of gender, age profile, class background and educational experience. However, the Centre recognises in its self-evaluation document that neither the staff nor student body is particularly racially diverse at present, though it is seeking to address the situation through its vocation strategy and EDI work, including active participation in the Durham University ‘Diversifying the Common Awards Curriculum’ project.

B3 The provision of public social and private living accommodation is satisfactory.

158. The Wilson Carlile Centre provides very good accommodation for social interaction, learning, worship and residential needs. There is a real benefit in having the rest of Church Army operation in the same building, fostering for the students a sense of belonging to something bigger. The accommodation is well-maintained and fit for purpose. Reviewers noted the aspiration to upgrade the accommodation to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030, but also the resource constraints that are currently preventing this from being achieved.

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

159. Corporate worship underpins the residential programme. A number of changes to the worship pattern have been made recently: liturgy is regularly used from across the Anglican Communion and reviewers experienced worship from the Church in Wales, Church of Ireland, Church of England and from the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia. Student-led worship has been broadened to encourage students to share worship that they lead in their own contexts. Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, Holy Communion and informal, creative worship such as Soul Space ensure that a breadth of worship styles is offered.

Commendation 17

We commend the developments in worship at Church Army to include liturgy from across the Anglican Communion and to ensure a breadth of styles within student-led worship.

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

160. It was very evident to reviewers that there are strong and positive staff/student relationships and interaction was very good across learning, worship and social contexts. Staff draw heavily on their own practice as Evangelists. They are conscious that one of the greatest challenges for students is establishing good rhythms of prayer, work and rest and so model good examples as an encouragement. In one tutor group we observed, the tutor was able to share something of his own

experience of life and ministry. Reviewers had a strong general impression that tutors appropriately talked with students in ways that brought in their wider interests and lives. Several times both within conversation with tutors and between tutor and EiTs the context that the tutor was working in was given as an example.

The review team has Confidence with Qualifications in Church Army with regard to Criterion B: Formational Context and Community.

Section C: Leadership and Management

C1 The TEI has clear and effective governance structures.

161. The Centre’s document on Governance and Structure states that ‘the strategic and operational work of Church Army’s Training Team is scrutinised by the Training Committee, which meets three times a year as a sub-committee of the Board of Trustees.’ In our interviews with three members of the Training Committee, we noted a clear sense of ownership of decisions and responsiveness to students. The three student representatives on the committee we met spoke positively about their voice being heard and instanced examples where that had happened.

C2 The TEI has effective team leadership.

162. When meeting the teaching staff together, the whole PER team sensed the strength of collegiality. Everyone, including administrative staff, spoke highly of each other. There was an atmosphere of mutual respect that emanated from the Centre head through all the staff. Despite a dispersed team, there was evidence of a willingness to work together: for example, Team Days, where issues and teaching practice were shared, clearly featured and strengthened this collaboration. We encourage the Centre to explore further ways in which collaboration can be strengthened.

Commendation 18

We commend the warm, collaborative and responsive nature of the leadership at Church Army.

C3 Trustees are appropriately recruited, supported and developed.

163. In conversation with the reviewers, the Director of Organisational Development spoke of the considerable thought and effort that is put into the selection of trustees. The emphasis on the staff is to select practitioners to teach practice. The appropriate safer recruitment policies are in place.

C4 The TEI has effective business planning, fundraising, risk management and reporting.

164. Because the Centre is a section of Church Army as a whole, it enjoys certain protections: being a large national charity, Church Army has a business plan with financial risk management and reporting. The audited accounts show a deficit and a commitment to reduce expenditure. Despite the deficit budget the acting CEO informed us that the training budget was to be maintained and is ringfenced. It was, however, persuasively argued by Church Army Training leadership that because the Church of England, as a whole, benefits from trained Evangelists there should be at least some measure of financial recognition for this. The inspection team concurred with this view and agreed to flag it up.

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

Section D: Teaching and Learning

D1 The TEI offers programmes appropriate to the sponsoring church's ministerial training needs.

165. Church Army has a clear framework for learning and formation – the Evangelist's Learning Framework (ELF) – which measures trainees' progress in three key areas of personal faith development, understanding vocation and pioneer evangelism. This framework is articulated well to students through the EiT module handbook where they are encouraged to reflect on the various elements with their personal tutor throughout their course. The ELF Mapping Document clearly links each module, workshop, and element of the course (e.g. placements, gathered worship, tutor groups, reflective practice, etc.) to points in the ELF Framework. Teaching sessions observed included information for students about learning outcomes and skills.

Commendation 19

We commend Church Army on the quality of the Evangelist Learning Framework and the way they have integrated it successfully into all modular and formational teaching and learning.

166. The Church of Ireland PiTs focus on developing nine characteristics which overlap with ELF. Two residentials per annum for Pioneers are held in Dublin at the Church of Ireland Theological Institute which, as some students noted during the review, allows for teaching and learning from an Irish perspective.

Commendation 20

We commend Church Army on the strength of their training for evangelists being recognised by the Church of Ireland, leading to the current partnership.

167. However, it will be important to make sure that teaching on joint residentials (for EiT and PiT together) is relevant and applicable to both contexts. Concerns were also raised by some students that the noticeable difference between PiTs from different contexts across the Church of Ireland would need to be addressed, acknowledging that their situations and backgrounds are very different (see Church Army A2 and Recommendation 17).
168. Students are constantly challenged and encouraged to relate their theological learning to their individual mission contexts. The module directors attempt to include a variety of world 'voices' in their teaching and students are encouraged to broaden their study to include theologians from diverse backgrounds. They are looking to widen their range of library books in this regard.
169. Tutors are teaching at Level 4 (in the UK national qualifications framework), which the Head of Initial Training summarises as 'exploring'. They aim to teach sophisticated ideas in accessible ways and, when possible, go a little deeper than Level 4. On the whole, the Reviewers' observations support this].

170. Church Army offer two pathways to students: a Certificate of Higher Education in Theology, Ministry and Mission (validated by Durham University); and a Church Army award. It had previously been possible to work towards a Diploma and some current and past students expressed a desire for higher academic options to be offered again. The Centre feels that by doing a Certificate instead of a Diploma, students are able to focus on formational, reflective and practical aspects of the course. From conversations with students, it was clear that some concurred with this view, whereas others would appreciate the option of studying for a Diploma. The Centre would be open to offering a Diploma again if they received funding towards it and we support this as a way of meeting some of the needs of more academically able students.

D2 The TEI's taught programmes are appropriately resourced, developed and quality assured.

171. Tutors are qualified at or working towards postgraduate/doctorate level and are experienced practitioners in evangelism. Over the past year in termly tutors' meetings they have developed professionally in various aspects of teaching and in subjects relevant to their students. The Centre's annual self-evaluation lists professional development at team level in the following areas: creativity and kinaesthetic learning; racially diversifying teaching and learning; eco-evangelism; apologetics; exploring as a team, 'Soteriology in Evangelical Practice: a view from the street' (Paas, S, 2022, *Exchange*, 51(4), 323-342. <https://doi.org/10.1163/1572543x-bja10015>) and 'New things: A theological investigation into the work of starting new churches across 11 dioceses in the Church of England (Foulter, W, 2024, The Centre for Church Planting Theology and Research, Cranmer Hall: Durham). The team have also attended professional development in good practice within YTEP: Decolonisation, anti-colonial theology and formation for ministry. Additionally, at national level they have taken part in: 2024 conference for Church planting theology and research; 2024 Theological Educators Network conference on mental health; event at Lambeth Palace for Theological educators on evangelism.
172. When at residential weekends, students have access to physical books and journals in the onsite library. At other times, online resources for Certificate students can be accessed through the YTEP Hub. After each residential weekend, students are asked to provide anonymous feedback via Moodle. Reviewers heard examples from both tutors and students of feedback being taken into consideration and acted on.
173. Church Army training leadership team are openly supportive of the link with Durham Common Awards and the added scrutiny and opportunity to learn and develop this brings with it.

D3 There is a good mix of teaching and learning styles and assessment methods, and students are engaged.

174. Each module is taught in multiple 90-minute sessions at residential weekends. These sessions consist of a variety of teaching/learning approaches: direct teaching from the tutor, interactive

questioning, activities to help students think creatively, movement. The tutors relate theoretical learning to practical contexts. Guidance on creative teaching and learning is provided to tutors in The Module Directors' Handbook.

175. The training team have put great thought into best practice for teaching students with additional learning needs or a limited academic background. Reviewers also saw evidence of encouraging mature students who have been away from education for a while.

Commendation 21

We commend Church Army tutors' use of a strong variety of teaching methods. They are excellent at encouraging students with limited academic background and mature students who are nervous about returning to education.

176. At the residential observation we had some concerns that those who are more academically able may not be challenged sufficiently, particularly in class discussions. This was reinforced to us in conversation with some students. Course reading lists give students suggestions for doing more in-depth study and we were told that it is their responsibility to do this if they want to, but we recommend that Church Army considers taking a more proactive role in encouraging students who are more academically able.

Recommendation 20

We recommend that Church Army considers taking a more proactive role in encouraging students who are more academically able.

177. Students on the Durham pathway are assessed academically by assignments completed for each module. Those on Church Army pathway can be assessed in a variety of ways. The example was given of one student who is being assessed through oral submissions. One student observed that feedback on assignments varies in quality depending on the tutor but the examples we saw were encouraging and constructive. One limitation is that feedback is currently provided via Turnitin, which means that some students do not access the comments (see Recommendation 2).

D4 There is provision for students' progression and development over the course of the learning programmes.

178. The progression of modules over the course has been carefully thought-through to enable students to develop. The first year covers introductory subjects, moving to deeper exploring in the second year, culminating in the final year with learning which specifically helps students to prepare for their own ministry.
179. Students are informed of learning outcomes at the beginning of each session and with the module assignment. They are provided with a reading list to allow them to study beyond the initial module reading.

D5 Students are helped to integrate their academic learning and ministerial development.

180. Teaching and formational learning are always applied to practical contexts. From the beginning of their training, students are encouraged to become self-aware through reflection on their growth in three main areas: personal faith development, understanding vocation and pioneer evangelism. They meet with a personal tutor once a term to discuss their growth in elements of these key areas and set goals for further development. These are also discussed in peer groups. Fortnightly emails provide students with something to read, watch or listen, and they are encouraged to discuss or reflect on these in a variety of ways.
181. In their second year, students are introduced to various methods of theological reflection and they are asked to employ one of these methods to reflect on a 24-36 hour placement with a Church Army Evangelist or Centre of Mission.

Commendation 22

We commend Church Army's excellent structure for students' formational development and spiritual growth.

The review team has Confidence in Church Army with regard to Criterion D: Teaching and Learning.

Section E: Ministerial Formation

E1 The TEI's programme of ministerial formation enables students to grow in their love for God.

182. Through formational learning timetabled into the training programme students are encouraged to deepen and grow in their relationship with God. The tutors' handbook instructs tutors to meet with EiTs once a term to discuss three aspects of the ELF Framework for the student to work on, ideally including personal faith development (see also Church Army B2 and D1.)

E2 Students are enabled to grow in their calling to ministry.

183. Students are recognised and affirmed as evangelists from the beginning of the course. Church Army has a very distinct 'DNA' and the students have the opportunity to imbibe that as they study at Wilson Carlile Centre, surrounded by Church Army employees (see also B3).

184. In class sessions, reviewers observed tutors encouraging students to consider how their role fitted within their local parish.

E3 Students are equipped to grow in their love for people.

185. The strong sense of community and welcome at Wilson Carlile Centre is important for helping students grow in their love for people (see B2). At its very core, Church Army is focused on mission and evangelism, and this thread runs through the three years of training for EiTs and PiTs, not just in a theoretical way but practically in the students' local contexts.

186. Whilst the TEI would acknowledge the importance of self-care, an issue raised by one student and how it was addressed caused the reviewers to question what action would be taken to assist someone who was struggling in this regard and they were given an example of when the Centre stepped in to address a difficult pastoral situation in the past (see B2).

E4 Students are helped to grow in wisdom.

187. Students' life experience is recognised but they are encouraged to show humility in learning.

188. Through modular and formational learning, as well as practical experience, students have the opportunity to develop in leadership and team-work, most obviously in a third year module, 'Pioneering leadership', as well as in their weekly practical mission and evangelism ministry in their local context. Leadership and team-work skills are also developed in other areas of the ELF Framework such as managing conflict, creating and articulating vision, valuing and respecting others, and enabling the Church by raising up evangelists and leaders.

E5 Students are helped to grow in the quality of fruitfulness.

189. It is emphasised to students that they will learn in a diverse community and the Centre stresses the importance of disagreeing well with those who hold different theological viewpoints. Reviewers were given an example of two tutors who modelled this in a debate where they shared their own theological differences to show how they can disagree with humility and civility. This was supported by informal conversations with tutors.
190. Since September 2024, there have been more opportunities for students to plan and lead gathered worship at the residential weekends. They are encouraged to be creative and share ideas from their own contexts. Students are also assessed leading a short act of gathered worship in their local setting. Students showed genuine passion as they spoke to the reviewers about their faith and discipleship journeys.
191. Reviewers saw students drawing alongside one another to offer support and encouragement. Students are encouraged to develop good practice in their rhythm of life but are generally left to themselves to instil patterns of work, rest and recreation, and we heard of a past instance when this created serious problems for a trainee. We recommend that the Centre puts procedures in place to proactively identify those who are struggling to maintain a healthy balance of work, study, rest and family/friend time, so as to help and when necessary direct them to make changes.

Recommendation 21

We recommend that Church Army puts procedures in place to identify struggling students and make sure that they are using the available support structure.

E6 Students are equipped to continue to develop their potential.

192. The ELF enables students to assess their growth in the three key areas of personal faith development, understanding vocation and pioneer evangelism. Through setting goals with their personal tutors and reflecting on different aspects of the framework, students are able to work towards a healthy integration of discipleship, ministry, work and personal life.
193. Modules such as ‘Creating New Communities’, ‘Mission and Ministry in Context’, ‘Pioneering Leadership’ and ‘Pioneering Mission and Evangelism’ help to prepare students for the future and to discern God at work in their context.

E7 Students are able to demonstrate trustworthiness.

194. The importance of being collaborative and accountable is emphasized to students from the outset: on their first residential weekend, first year students examine Church Army’s Vision and Values which includes these qualities.

195. The residential training weekends model a regular pattern of life grounded in prayer, scripture and reflection. Some Church Army trainees find themselves on the edges of parish church life, feeling that they do not quite fit in or that they are misunderstood by the local church. This leads to a danger that, for some, the Centre can become their ‘church.’ Personal Tutors, Local Supervisors and Reflectors should be alert to this possibility and work with the student to help them find a local church they can be part of.

Recommendation 22

We recommend that Church Army be alert to students who are not attending a local church and do what they can to encourage this aspect of the students’ life.

E8 The TEI has sound procedures for the interim and end-of-training assessment of students’ knowledge, skills and dispositions, reporting on their achievement and identifying further learning needs for the next stages of training and ministry.

196. The students’ progress is assessed through meetings with their Personal Tutor, Local Supervisor and Reflector, as well as on specific formational residential weekends. The EiT Handbook informs them that, at the end of each academic year, feedback will be gathered by the Personal Tutor from the EiT, their Local Supervisor, Reflector and the Training Team and compiled into a written report by the tutor. After this has been shared with the EiT, they meet with a Review Panel consisting of a Church Army Board member, one of the Senior Leadership Team and a Commissioned Evangelist. After this meeting, the Training Review Panel writes to the EiT to encourage and affirm them as well as make recommendations for the future. The report is shared with the EiT’s diocesan bishop, vocation advisor, incumbent as well as the Local Supervisor and Reflector.
197. During their final third year formational term, students reflect on their training so far and consider what further equipping and training they will need as they are commissioned as Church Army Evangelists (or Church of Ireland Pioneers). Some students are encouraged to pursue further academic study. Church Army also offers ongoing leadership development through their online LEAD course.

The review team has Confidence with Qualifications in Church Army with regard to Criterion E: Ministerial Formation.

Conclusion

The review team has Confidence in Church Army in preparing students to be licensed for public ministry in the Office of Evangelist in the Church of England.

York School of Ministry

198. York School of Ministry (YSoM) provides training of Licensed Lay Ministers. Its work is embedded within the wider remit of the diocesan Lifelong Learning Team, which emphasizes continuing ministerial development for both licensed and authorised ministers, both lay and ordained.
199. This review took place during a period of transition for the York School of Ministry. YSoM has made the decision to part with Common Awards for LLM training, so that LLMs are now trained in-house up to the point of licensing; the opportunity to engage in Common Awards Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma is now available as part of Continuing Ministerial Development. The non-accredited Foundations in Ministry is open to all those who wish to explore ministry and has been well received in the diocese.
200. We commend the enthusiasm and commitment of all we met. Clearly a lot of thought and work has gone into the development of the new programme which remains in a state of transition, but there is growing confidence that progress is being made. There was great energy and anticipation as the new programme was launched. We also recognise the state of transition in which the diocese of York at present, with two new bishops recently appointed and the national responsibilities of the Archbishop changing at short notice. These remarks are intended as assistance and suggestion about possible paths forward.

Section A: Formational Aims

A1 The TEI's formational aims are clearly stated, understood and owned within the TEI.

201. In the Formational Overview document, the vision of Licensed Lay Ministry is aligned with that of the Central Council of Readers, as 'Teachers of faith, enablers of ministry and leaders in Church and society.' A review within the diocese had identified the need for training to be accessible, less academic and flexible in delivery as the reasons for leaving the Common Awards provision.
202. However, this vision was not clearly articulated across the paperwork we saw.
- Though the ASE stated that 'The new programmes for LLM and ALM have been designed specifically to address the new qualities framework and the national church's vision for lay ministries, whilst taking account of Diocesan strategy and expectations', it was less clear how the vision of the Central Council of Readers meets the particular needs of York Diocese at this time, i.e. the fourfold aim of 'Living Christ's Story.' Item 6 of the Lifelong Learning Team Development Plan, Jan 2024 identifies the four diocesan strategic goals, the qualities and characteristics of national Reader/LLM formation framework (2021), GS Misc 1265 Vision for Lay Ministry (2020), the Church of England's Five Guiding Principles and the Five Marks of Mission as priorities to be addressed.
203. We also noted that terminology used in the documentation varied between 'LLM' and 'LLM (Reader).' This might suggest that other forms of licensed lay ministry are envisaged.

Recommendation 23

We recommend YSoM provides clarification of the particular focus of LLM (Reader) ministry, also considering whether other forms of licensed lay ministry are present or to be developed.

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

- 204. The vision for licensed lay ministry as 'Teachers of faith, enablers of ministry and leaders in Church and society' is repeated on the diocesan website in a report about the September 2024 licensing service, but there is little elsewhere on the website about lay ministry.
- 205. Both Foundation courses and LLM Formation courses have been mapped against the Church of England's Formation Framework.
- 206. There is a clear desire to promote life-long learning. LLMs are licensed mid-training for two years, and the licence is not renewed if they do not continue to engage with their studies. The Lifelong Learning Team Development Plan of January 2024 records the aim to provide quality formational programmes for all stages of ministry.
- 207. While recognising that the diocese itself is in a process of changing structures, we recommend that work is undertaken to present and publicise the particular ways in which Licensed Lay Ministry is aligned to the diocesan priorities so that this ministry is well embedded in the Senior Leadership discussions, diocesan publicity and deanery plans.

Recommendation 24

We recommend that YSoM presents and publicises the particular ways in which Licensed Lay Ministry is aligned to the diocesan priorities so that this ministry is well embedded in the Senior Leadership discussions, diocesan publicity and deanery plans.

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

- 208. The promotional material which the reviewers saw included a Diploma prospectus, prospectus for ALM students, with module description and a YTEP handbook which was full of Common Award guidelines. As stated above, the website is very thin and the reviewers wondered how prospective candidates found out about the existence of LLM.

Recommendation 25

We recommend that YSoM pays attention to publicity for LLM, outlining the vision for this ministry and paths to application, including clarification about the use of 'Reader' and 'LLM.'

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

Section B: Formational Context and Community

B1 The TEI draws on partnership with theological educators in the region and local faith and community organisations to enhance formational opportunities for students.

209. There are strong relationships with local churches and in different contexts enabling students to gain wider experience of mission and ministry in a variety of areas. These include a mix of rural / semi-rural contexts and within different Anglican traditions. Each student in the first year has a mentor in their context as well as a supervisor.
210. The students study part-time and therefore many are active in work or involved in community projects. Importantly this provides an opportunity for them to see how faith informs life outside of the church building, the students we met referred to this and they clearly found it valuable. The placements which are part of the pre-licensing year focus on experience in a different church context or a hospital or other community place enabling them to gain wider mission and ministry experience.
211. YSoM works closely YTEP and the Director of Lifelong Learning is a member of the YTEP Management Committee and chairs the YTEP Exam Board and the Student Affairs Sub-Committee, attending all meetings. The connection with other theological educators is strengthened further with the Chair of YSoM Oversight Group being a Trustee of YTEP and a member of St Hild College's Formation Committee.
212. Nonetheless, we recommend further contact between YSoM and the Leeds School of Ministry, as the two have very similar aims and cultures. Additionally, the SWOT analysis identifies the courses offered by St Hild as a potential threat to numbers enrolling on YSoM courses, so we recommend that work is done to identify more clearly the distinctive benefits of studying with YSoM (see also Recommendation 2).

Recommendation 26

We recommend further contact between YSoM and the Leeds School of Ministry.

Recommendation 27

We recommend that work is done to identify more clearly the distinctive benefits of studying with YSoM.

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

213. As is stated in the Formational Overview Document, it is the heart of the vision 'to see men and women grow and flourish as disciples of Christ and ministers of his Church, equipped to be interpreters of God's life-giving Word, exemplars of Jesus's loving service and instruments of the

Spirit's dynamic activity in the world.' It is recognised that the wellbeing and welfare of the students is paramount to achieving this.

214. It was clear from our discussions that there is a high level of awareness of the need for safeguarding, and the training of both staff and students is completed in accordance with Diocesan guidelines. There is a written complaints policy, with a form for presenting a complaint to the Director of Lifelong Learning: in conversation, students said that they knew how to make a complaint and to whom they should speak when this was necessary. We noted from the Formational Overview document that both pastoral and academic support is offered by the tutors as required.
215. The promotion of diversity in all its forms at YSoM should be commended, as well as an increasing development of resources for those who are neuro-diverse. It is clear from previous feedback that engagement with GMH and disability voices were areas for development and there is evidence that these areas are being addressed. For example, one student noted that 'It's great that you are able to be yourself.' From conversations with students and the staff, interactions between all can be said to be positive and good, with frequent online meetings both in gathered and dispersed modes.

Commendation 23

We commend the promotion of diversity in all its forms at YSoM, as well as an increasing development of resources for those who are neuro-diverse.

B3 The provision of public social and private living accommodation is satisfactory.

216. Much of the teaching is delivered online and this is appreciated by students more geographically distant from York. Gathered teaching for the academic programmes takes place at the Diocese of York Office. Teaching space is limited but the best use was being made of the space available and there is a small chapel. All rooms used for YSoM purposes have wheelchair access.
217. Teaching for the formation programmes takes place in three local centres, with gathered days for LLM (Reader) formation training taking place at Wydale Hall, which has meeting rooms and two chapels. Meeting rooms are either on the ground floor or accessible via a seated lift.
218. There is no private living space, but Wydale Hall provides accommodation for weekend courses, including en-suite rooms and one fully accessible bedroom.

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

219. The worship policy emphasises the need for students to participate in acts of worship before each taught session as well as in their own home contexts. Such worship is rooted in Anglican liturgy. From conversations with students, they are glad of the approach to worship encouraged by YSoM.

One student from a more ‘traditional’ worship background commented on how much he appreciated the learning he had experienced from other students around the different ways in which faith can be communicated in worship.

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

220. From the Formational Overview document, staff can and do adopt their preferred teaching styles but also see themselves as guides in the learning process rather than ‘experts’. From speaking to staff and hearing feedback from students, we are in no doubt that there is enthusiasm for learning and theological study. Students feel more confident and equipped to be leaders in the church, and more confident of being able to walk with others in their contexts because of the modelling shown by the staff. This resonates with the statement in the Overview document that they ‘model [their] role as “lead learners”.’ Staff are encouraged to take time for retreats and these are noted in their annual appraisals.

Commendation 24

We commend the enthusiasm for learning and theological study shown by staff at YSoM.

221. The staff with whom we spoke reiterated the importance of lifelong learning and model it, stating it is an integral part of discipleship. The reviewers were provided with a flowchart showing how the various parts of the Team are linked to each other. The Lifelong Learning Team comprising the Director of Lifelong Learning / Warden of Lay Ministries, senior administrator and a further administrator (still to be appointed) sit in the middle of the ‘web’. They are responsible to ensure the provision of Lay Ministry Formation, Lay and Ordained CMD, Personal Spiritual Development and Spiritual Direction, Pastoral Care and Counselling (of both lay and Ordained Licensed Ministers), Racial Justice Education all in conjunction with York School of Ministry and the Vocations Team addressing lay vocations, discernment and deployment. This is accomplished through the appointment of a Lifelong Learning Tutor (full-time, currently vacant), a curate on placement (0.6), Associate Tutors (voluntary posts) and Archdeaconry Co-ordinators (voluntary), a Racial Justice Education Advisor (0.5) and a Lay Ministries Advisor (0.5). A Pastoral Care Adviser (full time) was to join the team in January 2025.

The review team has Confidence in YSoM with regard to Criterion B: Formational Context and Community.

Section C: Leadership and Management

C1 The TEI has clear and effective governance structures.

222. At the time of our visit, the governance and oversight structures at YSoM were still under review. However, the reviewers were provided with two documents to be presented to and approved by Diocesan Synod setting out roles and accountability from the ground up. This includes involvement of local churches, Deaneries and Bishops, all reporting to the Programme Board.

C2 The TEI has effective team leadership.

223. From conversations with the staff there is clear evidence of good collaborative team leadership. The Formational Overview document demonstrates that a clearer direction for leadership has been developed over the last two years, since the activities of YSoM were brought within the remit of the Lifelong Learning Team. The leadership are supportive of each other and highly motivated, even excited to continue with the steps being taken. There is a widely owned vision for excellence and a highly motivated climate. The students with whom the reviewers spoke echoed this.

Commendation 25

We commend the strong collaborative team leadership at YSoM.

C3 Trustees are appropriately recruited, supported and developed.

224. Safer Recruiting processes are followed and from discussions it was clear that the staff feel supported and encouraged to develop their skills. CPD is stressed. Staff have annual appraisals and tutors are encouraged to speak openly about their faith where appropriate.

C4 The TEI has effective business planning, fundraising, risk management and reporting.

225. YSoM does not have its own business plan, but it is part of the business plan of the Diocese of York. Due to reorganisation in the Diocesan leadership structures in the last few months, detailed strategic priorities and plans have still to be finalised. The acceptance of the revised programme structure at Diocesan level will make it easier to firm up business plans for the future. As stated in the ASE, an Oversight Group has been set up and it meets regularly to assess governance needs in the light of developing Diocesan strategy and the emergence of the new programmes.

226. YSoM finances are controlled by the York Diocesan Board of Finance, so finance is not part of the TEI's governance structure. YSoM keeps a risk register, which is reviewed regularly.

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

Section D: Teaching and Learning

D1 The TEI offers programmes appropriate to the sponsoring church's ministerial training needs.

227. The decision to stop training under Common Awards, and to bring LLM training in-house, was a response to a desire to be more accessible to students from non-traditional educational backgrounds and younger candidates who would not otherwise access training because of family or work commitments. The students interviewed said that this had been achieved. The intention is to pitch the course at Level 4, but with more practical and project-based forms of assessment.
228. The non accredited Foundations in Ministry is open to all those who wish to explore ministry and has been well received in the diocese. The discernment to LLM training is 'rigorous' in the words of the students.

D2 The TEI's taught programmes are appropriately resourced, developed and quality assured.

229. The programmes are designed to respond to Diocesan priorities. From the Formational Overview Document, we note that the LLM Formation and Foundations in Ministry programmes are contextually based, with local supervision and regional mentor groups. Course content is delivered via classroom and online live sessions and via Moodle.
230. The Common Awards Management Committee and the Common Awards Team approved arrangements put in place to support those students who were finishing their Common Awards programmes – these were Certificate and Diploma Students who successfully completed their programmes in 2024.
231. Students have access to books from YSoM library resources; these are supplemented by online books and resources, and students are given clear guidance on how to use online materials.

D3 There is a good mix of teaching and learning styles and assessment methods, and students are engaged.

232. There is evidence from student feedback and a document detailing the sessions offered for LLM Formation Year 1 training that the subjects being taught lend themselves to a variety of assessment methods. Students complete Learning Journals and build a portfolio of all their completed work. Students describe their learning as stimulating and enjoy both the online and Moodle experiences. They also spoke of developing the ability to think critically through group and one-to-one sessions while reflective practice skills are also developed.
233. The Formational Overview outlines the contextually based training, including supervision and regional mentor groups. Whole-cohort content is delivered via classroom and online gatherings,

supported by resources on Moodle. Practical skills and spiritual formation are nurtured in the local context and through the provision of spiritual directors.

D4 There is provision for students' progression and development over the course of the learning programmes.

234. It is clear from the Formational Overview Document and also through discussions with the students who feel that their skills and knowledge have grown greatly, boosting their confidence and raising their awareness that there is more to be learned. For instance, theological reflection was not necessarily something they had encountered before. One student commented that 'I feel that my learning validates what I am doing and where that fits in my study of theology.' This same student spoke of getting a firm foundation through YSoM with additional academic skills.

D5 Students are helped to integrate their academic learning and ministerial development.

235. Journalling is encouraged which encourages theological reflection. In addition, placements in different contexts also encourage theological reflection and the development of new skills which the students describe as a means to develop their missional calling as lay people (see YSoM D3.)

The review team has Confidence in YSoM with regard to Criterion D: Teaching and Learning.

Section E: Ministerial Formation

236. Both Foundation courses and LLM Formation courses have been mapped against the Church of England's Formation Framework.
237. The YSoM aims to shape formation not only by the content of the course offered but also in the manner by which they are offered. From the Formational Overview document, we noted that the teaching staff are expected to model a life of discipleship. The high quality of the tutors and core staff, and their links to diocesan, YTEP and national bodies was noted as a strength in the SWOT analysis and is to be commended.

Commendation 26

We commend the high quality of the tutors and core staff at YSoM, and their links to diocesan, YTEP and national bodies.

E1 The TEI's programme of ministerial formation enables students to grow in their love for God.

238. There is worship before each taught session, rooted in Anglican liturgical tradition embracing a variety of styles and churchmanship. The worship policy states that students are expected to participate in these acts of worship and to be regular worshippers in their home context.
239. 'Becoming more like Christ' is the first element of the diocesan vision, 'Living Christ's Story.' The context-based nature of the programme is designed to foster trust in God and engagement in God's world. The study of Scripture, rooted in worship and the traditions of the church, prevents this becoming a solely academic exercise.

E2 Students are enabled to grow in their calling to ministry.

240. The importance of spiritual direction and ongoing discernment is noted throughout training: students are expected to be listening to God.
241. The staff are clearly committed to lay ministry and the development of the community of the cohort fosters a corporate sense of calling.
242. The distinctiveness of licensed lay ministry amongst other ministries in the diocese is one that is still emerging. However, it is clear that elements of leadership in a public, world facing ministry are being established.

E3 Students are equipped to grow in their love for people.

243. The increased diversity within the student group has enabled mutual learning from a wider body of people. The SWOT analysis of Sept 2024 identified the different genders, church traditions, socio-economic and educational backgrounds as a strength. The students interviewed said that,

as a result of the engagement in learning so far, they were much more confident in their role as leaders and in walking with others. The ongoing discernment which is integral to the programme had asked them to reflect on their activities and relationships beyond the church, directing them to consider all God's people.

E4 Students are helped to grow in wisdom.

- 244. The integration of learning and ministry development, it was stated, has been aided by the move away from Common Awards. It has made possible a programme which, rather than focussing on one topic for several sessions can move from, say, Biblical Studies to pastoral care, to spirituality – and links can be effectively made between these subjects. The effectiveness of this would depend on close communication between the tutors.
- 245. The emphasis on reflective practice and lifelong learning is designed to promote godly wisdom. The participation of a mentor, spiritual companion and the parish priest is also essential as links between aspects of the programme are made.

E5 Students are helped to grow in the quality of fruitfulness.

- 246. One of the diocese's aims is to 'grow churches of missionary disciples.' LLMs are called to be Leaders in ... Society, able to share the faith imaginatively and relevantly with those who have little or no connection with Church.
- 247. Through interviews with staff, we learned that time is spent in reflecting on the Five Marks of Mission. The Qualities Mapping document shows that the Five Marks of Mission are covered in the Foundations in Ministry course and in years 2 and 3 of LLM training.

E6 Students are equipped to continue to develop their potential.

- 248. The decision to withdraw from Common Awards was partly a response to the lack of inclusion of global majority and lower income students. There has been a wider diversity of students entering the course from non- professional backgrounds, but so far, entrance of global majority and those with physical and educational needs has not been seen. YSoM has recently appointed both a racial justice education adviser and an associate tutor who will focus on disability awareness, both of whom will deliver material in the training. It is hoped that the student cohort will become more diverse as a result.
- 249. The use of Moodle as a learning platform, delivering both existing resources and developing new ones looks enterprising and creative. It has the potential to greatly widen participation in all manner of training.
- 250. There is a continuing emphasis on listening to God's call as part of personal discernment of vocation and reflecting on God's activity in the world as a contribution to joining in mission.

E7 Students are able to demonstrate trustworthiness.

- 251. The development of self-awareness is fostered through reflective practice and relationships with other students, mentors, tutors and spiritual companions. Diocesan and national safeguarding guidelines are followed by YSoM and students in formational training are required to undertake Foundation, Leadership and specialist modules in safeguarding, as per national guidance.
- 252. As LLMs are called to be ‘Leaders in Society,’ students are expected to develop a public profile, both within the church and in secular society, and this encourages the development of the quality of trustworthiness. The course encourages reflection on the needs of others – particularly of the vulnerable – good self-management and awareness of good practice in the use of social media and other communication.

E8 The TEI has sound procedures for the interim and end-of-training assessment of students’ knowledge, skills and dispositions, reporting on their achievement and identifying further learning needs for the next stages of training and ministry.

- 253. Readers in training submit personal ministerial development plans and annual training reviews with sub-Wardens. The Portfolio tasks – sermons placement reports and reflective tasks – are regularly reviewed.

The review team has Confidence in YSoM with regard to Criterion E: Ministerial Formation.

Conclusion

The review team has Confidence in YSoM in preparing students for Licensed Lay Ministry in the Church of England.

Leeds School of Ministry

254. Leeds School of Ministry (LSoM) provides lay training for the Diocese of Leeds, including Introduction to Theology for those exploring a call to ministry, and training for licensed lay ministers (LLM). Training is delivered face-to-face at two learning hubs, Mirfield and Bingley, monthly on Sundays, with an online offering once a week, midweek.
255. In 2023, LSoM decided to partner with the College of St Hild, who will deliver the academic part of the LLM training programme, through Common Awards. St Hild is to become the online academic element of the LLM programme whilst LSoM will maintain the formational aspects of the programme including placement and non-academic formation. LSoM will retain provision of non-accredited courses including reflection and pastoral care.
256. 2023-24 was therefore a year of transition for LSoM, in Phase 1 of its partnership with St Hild. They revisited how they delivered Reader training and seconded a Director of Studies from St Hild to work with LSoM and put in place a more thorough partnership. By the time of the visit, LSoM had entered Phase 2 of the partnership, and the Director of Studies had been replaced by the direct employment of a St Hild Director of Reader Training.
257. As a consequence of the partnership with St Hild, LSoM has left YTEP. They are therefore included in this report as a retrospective review of LLM training within the diocese, with some remarks on the direction the partnership with St Hild may take in the future.

Section A: Formational Aims

A1 The TEI's formational aims are clearly stated, understood and owned within the TEI.

258. The formational aims of LSoM are defined by the terms of reference of the review of Reader ministry undertaken by the Diocese of Leeds in 2019. In this review, the Diocese adopted the definition from the Central Reader Council review that Readers are to be 'teachers of the faith, enablers of mission and leaders in church and society.' The Overview document states that particular emphasis is placed on the element of 'Teachers of the Faith.'
259. We noted that there is a conscious intention for these aims to be invoked in selection criteria, interim reports, reviews of work, self-assessments, and assessments as well as final recommendations. Each follows the national 'Qualities' framework approved by the Ministry Council in November 2021.
260. This vision is communicated by the Reader Student Handbook and in publicity material. Building a bridge between the Church and the world, Readers are distinguished in the exercise of leadership in a local context, rooted in the parish, the life of the community and the secular world. Thus, their ministry of teaching, for example, is to be active not only – or solely – within church but also in schools, colleges, chaplaincies – wherever faith can be communicated.

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

- 261. The diocesan review of Reader ministry identified the need for training to be accessible, both in geographical provision and in widening participation. So far numbers signing up for the exploratory (non-accredited) year (Introduction to Theology) have been ‘promisingly high.’
- 262. The involvement of the Warden and Assistant Wardens of Readers in the governance of training is seen as an important contribution to linking training with Reader ministry across the diocese.

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

- 263. The communication between the members of LSoM and the senior leadership of the diocese appears to be good, and at the time of the review, the Director of Mission and Ministry sat on the Leadership Team. The diocesan website is impressively clear about the role of LLMs and how to apply.
- 264. LSoM has consciously responded to the Church of England’s vision of missionary discipleship, a mixed ecology and a young and more diverse gathering. The Warden of Readers told us he is active in trying to recruit from within GMH congregations and a younger group. The success of this was apparent in one student we met who was in her early twenties – though she did say she was attracted to this ministry as it was part-time and so would not involve her leaving her present occupation, rather than a recognition of the distinctiveness of lay ministry. There are, apparently, an increasing number of applicants and even commissioned LLMs who have not been confirmed in the Anglican church. Though this has necessitated some rapid confirmation services before licensing, it does evidence the presence of people from non-Church of England backgrounds in LLM training.

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

Section B: Formational Context and Community

B1 The TEI draws on partnership with theological educators in the region and local faith and community organisations to enhance formational opportunities for students.

265. The diocesan review of 2019 included widespread consultation with Readers, their incumbents, Bishop's Staff, the Diocesan Board and Diocesan Synod. This example of collaborative work has continued in the current practice during the delivery of Reader Training, including building the relationship with St Hild.
266. From the ASE, we note that hub-based training is working well and is being developed. The Diocesan Lay Training Team makes use of diocesan clergy and lay people in the delivery of the academic teaching and also with other aspects of formation such as formational mentors and serving as sermon assessors. All placements for students during their training are missional by design.
267. Conversations with both the students and staff confirmed clergy that are very supportive of the training as they develop Lay leaders from and within their parishes. They understand from the outset what it means to be a LLM/Reader – not least from the information contained on the Diocesan website.
268. The communication between the members of the School of Ministry and the senior leadership of the diocese appears to be positive, and the Director of Mission and Ministry sits on the Leadership Team.

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

269. The students have formational mentors from the beginning of their training. They meet with a core tutor once a month and each are provided with a personal tutor. Incumbents in the students' home parishes are integral to the formational development of their Readers, as are those in contextual placements where students may be placed.
270. The pastoral support of the students is a priority and the students with whom we spoke endorsed this view. The tutors and other staff are approachable and accessible so students have no fear about raising any concerns they may have. Safeguarding training is a priority – both staff and students are trained in accordance with Diocesan and wider Church requirements. As well as pastoral support, academic support is offered by the tutors as required. The students also have student representatives who can raise issues if required.
271. Diversity is recognised as essential by the Leadership Team. A priority is to expand the age spectrum of students and this is slowly succeeding (one student the reviewers met was twenty). They are also seeking to achieve greater diversity through attracting people from different socio-

economic and employment backgrounds. There is a team leader with a special brief for widening participation in training, seeking to attract those with specific learning disabilities, as well as students from a range of ages and diverse ethnic groups.

Commendation 27

We commend the close attention paid to diversity at LSoM.

272. From conversations with students and the staff, interactions between all can be said to be positive and good, with weekly online meetings both in gathered and dispersed modes as well as face to face meetings one Sunday a month. A residential weekend led by experienced LLMs, held the previous September, was much appreciated and contributed to the ‘corporate life’ of the educational offer.

Commendation 28

We commend the positive relationships between staff and students at LSoM.

B3 The provision of public social and private living accommodation is satisfactory.

273. Much of the teaching is delivered online and this is appreciated by students more geographically distant from the hubs. The Bingley Hub is the Trinity Centre, owned by the Diocese, and is also used as the Bradford Episcopal Area Office. It is a modern building with excellent disabled access. The Mirfield Hub is based at the Mirfield Centre (also used by St Hild and the College of the Resurrection). The Diocese rents this space. As noted above (St Hild, B3), there are limitations to the disabled access around the Mirfield buildings. There can also be competition for space when St Hild has a residential at the same time as an LLM training day: this situation may be eased when the new partnership arrangement comes into effect.
274. There is no private living space.

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

275. Corporate worship is valued by the TEI and put into practice. Students participate in leading worship in their home contexts. Such worship is rooted in Anglican liturgy. The lay-led residential weekend last September provided students with the opportunity to broaden their experiences in worship and this was valued.

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

276. According to the Overview Document, as well as the three key staff positions (St Hild Director of Reader Training, the Diocesan Formational Lead and the Diocesan LLM Pathway Administrator) there are several other people whose behaviour may be modelled by their students vis-a-vis

spirituality, learning and reflection. These include Module Leaders, Honorary Hub Hosts, Formational Mentors, Sermon Assessors and Learning Support Accompaniers. In conversation it was clear that relationships between students and staff are seen as important; this includes the acknowledged need to ensure that the best examples can be given to the students in all these areas. This includes having spiritual directors and seeking spiritual accompaniment, and the keeping of spiritual journals. Much training is delivered by lay leaders who are role models for the students as well.

The review team has Confidence in LSoM with regard to Criterion B: Formational Context and Community.

Section C: Leadership and Management

C1 The TEI has clear and effective governance structures.

277. There are clear and effective governance structures in place. These are described in the ASE. Before the partnership with St Hild, LSoM was governed by the Leeds School of Ministry Advisory Group (LSOMAG), which included the Warden of Readers, an Assistant Warden of Readers, an LLM with change-management experience, the Director of Ministry and Mission, the Director of Ministerial Formation and Development and two members of the LSoM delivery team. This body oversaw the transition to the new partnership with St Hild. In Phase 2 of the partnership, the Governing Body of St Hild will oversee the academic side of LLM training, with the Director of Ministry and Mission serving on this body. LSOMAG will be subsumed into a newly-formed Diocesan Ministerial Oversight Body, chaired by one of the Area Bishops.
278. From the Memorandum of Understanding between St Hild College and the Diocese of Leeds for more information, we note that there are clear and effective governance structures in place going forward. Many of the policies adopted by the Leadership were gleaned from St Hild.

C2 The TEI has effective team leadership.

279. From conversations with the staff there is clear evidence of good collaborative team leadership. The leadership with whom we spoke are supportive of each other and highly motivated to produce strong lay leaders of the future. There is a widely owned vision for excellence and a highly motivated climate. The students with whom the reviewers spoke echoed this.

C3 Trustees are appropriately recruited, supported and developed.

280. Safer Recruiting processes are followed and from discussions it was clear that the staff feel supported and encouraged to develop their skills. CPD is stressed. Appropriate records are maintained evidencing these. Each study day there is a Tutor Forum where tutors exchange information and experiences.

C4 The TEI has effective business planning, fundraising, risk management and reporting.

281. Since 2023 and the changes described in the Overview Document, and from governance documents provided to the reviewers, it is clear that there is in place effective business planning and fundraising as well as financial and risk management and reporting. The use of diocesan staff and 'local talent' (as described in the Overview document) for some of the academic training and non-academic formation helps with the overall financial position.

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

Section D: Teaching and Learning

D1 The TEI offers programmes appropriate to the sponsoring church's ministerial training needs.

282. The involvement of the Warden and Assistant Wardens of Readers in the governance of training is seen as an important contribution to linking training with Reader ministry across the diocese, to ensure that training meets the needs of the church.
283. Under the partnership arrangement, St Hild offers academic courses through Common Awards. Other non-accredited courses have been retained which are appropriate to the sponsoring church's ministerial training needs. These include the training of Lay Pastoral Ministers, a short ten-month Lay Leaders course, courses for occasional preachers (introduced three years ago) and courses for Eco Mission enablers. The vision behind these courses is to grow churches and build confidence in lay people in so doing.
284. However, in conversations with students, they reported there are gaps in their knowledge which could be improved, such as good practice around Biblical Criticism. We recommend that staff address these gaps.

Recommendation 28

We recommend that staff at LSoM conduct an audit of topics covered on the syllabus and look to address any gaps: specifically, in good practice around Biblical Criticism.

D2 The TEI's taught programmes are appropriately resourced, developed and quality assured.

285. The programmes are designed to respond to Diocesan priorities. As Director of Ministerial Formation and Development is involved in the formation of students, both lay and ordained, as a result of the partnership with St Hild, he has played a critical role in the development of both programmes. Course content is delivered via classroom and online in-person sessions as well in the different contextual settings where the students are placed. Training for funeral ministry is mainly led by experienced LLMs, one example of creative resourcing. Module evaluation is conducted through anonymised questionnaires. This feedback is reviewed by line managers who discuss it with the tutors.
286. We heard of an example when a student commented that one set of assignment requirements was vague, but this was picked up by the Director of Reader Training at St Hild and action was promised.

D3 There is a good mix of teaching and learning styles and assessment methods, and students are engaged.

287. This criterion has been met. There is evidence from student feedback that the subjects being taught lend themselves to a variety of assessment methods. Students complete Learning Journals and are encouraged to build a portfolio of all their completed work. Students describe their learning as stimulating and enjoy the online and other experiences. The LLM course begins with a residential weekend, which was an opportunity for the students to share their experiences with each other. They also spoke of developing the ability to think critically through group and one-to-one sessions while reflective practice skills are also developed.

D4 There is provision for students' progression and development over the course of the learning programmes.

288. Students feel that their skills and knowledge have grown, boosting their confidence and raising their awareness that there is more to be learned. Lifelong learning is encouraged both through the courses and by their tutors. That said, those we spoke with acknowledged that the amount and level of work that was required in training had not been clearly indicated at the start – or that they had not been able to envisage the impact of training on their own timetables (see LSoM E5 and Recommendation 31).

D5 Students are helped to integrate their academic learning and ministerial development.

289. The Student Handbook encourages Readers to consider the training as a means to integrate their academic learning and ministerial development by building a bridge between the Church and the world. This is especially the case where they exercise leadership in a local context, rooted in the parish, the life of the community and the secular world. Journalling is encouraged which, in turn, encourages theological reflection. In addition, placements in different contexts also encourage theological reflection and the development of new skills which the students describe as a means to develop their missional calling as lay people.

The review team has Confidence in LSoM with regard to Criterion D: Teaching and Learning.

Section E: Ministerial Formation

290. The LSoM has adopted many policies, such as on safeguarding and worship, and handbooks, from St Hild.

E1 The TEI's programme of ministerial formation enables students to grow in their love for God.

291. Prayer and worship are integral to the training. There is strong encouragement to have a spiritual director and to keep a spiritual journal, based on the template Experience/Explore/Reflect/Respond.

292. Stronger links are being made with for training incumbents to provide them with clearer guidance about the formation of their LLM candidates.

E2 Students are enabled to grow in their calling to ministry.

293. There is a clear vision for licensed lay ministry as leaders in local and non-church settings which students are called to inhabit. The commissioned year acts as a preparation for life as a licensed minister, contribution to the formation of this identity.

294. Closer attention has been paid to resources given to all who are in contact with those preparing for this ministry. One example is the new sermon assessment template matched to the Qualities framework.

295. Training with ordinands at St Hild has the potential to clarify the distinctiveness of lay ministry, though can lead to a downgrading of it. LSoM has tried to ensure that the leadership and presenters at joint clergy/lay ministry events includes well regarded and impressive lay people.

E3 Students are equipped to grow in their love for people.

296. The review of Reader training emphasised the importance of access to training, both geographical and in terms of learning styles. This is achieved with two learning hubs – Bingley and Mirfield – and the ASE has shown that consideration has been given to wheelchair access, unconscious bias and needs of neurodiverse students.

297. This structural activity at leadership level sets an example for participants in training about care for and love of all God's people. Participants are encouraged to explore ways in which they can learn from each other. The students we met voiced their appreciation of the diversity of the group which enhanced this opportunity.

E4 Students are helped to grow in wisdom.

- 298. The decision by LSoM to retain delivery of the non-accredited parts of the course has been motivated partly by a desire to shape delivery of formation. Formation mentors, for example, are given guidance in encouraging theological reflection and the development of reflective practice.
- 299. Readers in the Diocese of Leeds are called to a leadership role. This is modelled by lay ministers who deliver training and by Assistant Wardens of Readers, who are lay. This leadership is to be exercised in the local context. The discernment of God's activity in mission in their locality is a key feature.

E5 Students are helped to grow in the quality of fruitfulness.

- 300. The Readers are to be leaders in mission through their own action and in enabling others. We were told of a training event which focussed on mission and included the participation of experienced Readers who shared their own experiences. The parish-based training focuses particularly on helping students learn to speak openly of their faith and to model a life of discipleship.
- 301. The students interviewed said that the amount and level of work that was required in training had not been clearly indicated at the start – or that they had not been able to envisage the impact of training on their own timetables. The development of healthy patterns of work and rest is a necessary feature of growing in ministry.

Recommendation 329

We recommend that LSoM is clear about what is expected of trainees and the benefits and potential challenges of the pattern of study, and the likely impact on their work-life balance.

E6 Students are equipped to continue to develop their potential.

- 302. There is a strong encouragement to engage in life-long learning, both through the provision of Common Awards modules and local events. However, the students interviewed noted that there is a conceptual gap between the non-accredited Introduction to Theology year and the later years of Reader training which require a more academic approach, and that this could be a hard transition for some to make.

Recommendation 30

We recommend that LSoM provides support and guidance to help students manage the transition from non-accredited study to formal training, including referring students to resources available at St Hild.

- 303. Staff have attained training in neurodiversity and unconscious bias, so as to be able to apply insights to their delivery, enabling all to develop their potential.

E7 Students are able to demonstrate trustworthiness.

304. Relationships with training incumbents, mentors and spiritual directors are each focused on the development of a pattern of personal prayer and discipleship which undergirds developing self-awareness and accountability. The sessions on safeguarding emphasise personal responsibility together with the example set for others.

E8 The TEI has sound procedures for the interim and end-of-training assessment of students' knowledge, skills and dispositions, reporting on their achievement and identifying further learning needs for the next stages of training and ministry.

305. All stages of selection, training and evaluation are mapped against the national Qualities criteria. All assessments are based on national Qualities Framework.

The review team has Confidence with Qualifications in LSoM with regard to Criterion E: Ministerial Formation.

Conclusion

The review team has Confidence in LSoM in preparing students for Licensed Lay Ministry in the Church of England.

College of the Resurrection

306. The College of the Resurrection (CoR) is a theological college training ordinands for the Church of England. It was established in 1902 by the Community of the Resurrection (CR), an Anglican monastic order founded by Charles Gore in 1892. Until recently, the College was staffed predominantly by the Brethren, but it now has an entirely salaried staff. The present Principal, appointed in 2019, is the fourth not to be a member of CR and there are currently no CR brothers on the staff. However, the College retains close links with the community and shares in its pattern of worship, which provides a significant opportunity for integrating study and formation. As the College website states, ‘The College of the Resurrection is a unique place: the only theological college in the Anglican Communion that shares its life with a monastic community.’
307. Although ordination training is its primary purpose, the CoR founded the Mirfield Liturgical Institute (MLI) in 2008 as a centre of excellence in Liturgical Study that resources the wider church. As described below, it is seeking to further diversify its offering.
308. CoR is located in a 22-acre parkland site in Mirfield, West Yorkshire that comprises the Community House and Retreat Centre as well as the College buildings. It is part of the Mirfield Centre, which is the ‘Community’s platform for jointly organised events between the partner institutions: onsite study days, workshops or residential conferences.’
309. The Mirfield Centre is used by YTEP and its partners, because YTEP, St Hild and LSoM rent spaces there from the Community of the Resurrection. YTEP has a small office on the site, whilst St Hild has offices and uses the classrooms during evenings and weekends and uses the Lower Church for worship. St Hild uses accommodation in the College of the Resurrection and the Retreat House for weekend residentials. LSoM also uses teaching-rooms at Mirfield for study-days.
310. The reviewers have not added section judgements to their commentary on CoR as this update is limited in scope and evidence, being based mainly on document review. Nonetheless there has clearly been good progress in each area since the 2022 PER.

Section A: Formational Aims

311. At the time of the review of CoR 2022, there was little shared worship or learning for students at St Hild and CoR, apart from during Advent when students from the two programmes joined together to plan and lead worship. The reviewers recommended that CoR should find imaginative and flexible ways for residential and non-residential students to work together at the Mirfield site. We are pleased to hear that more opportunities have been created for students at St Hild and CoR to share liturgy and to eat together.
312. Additionally, in 2023, CoR entered into partnership with St Hild to develop the Mirfield Residential Contextual Pathway: students will live at the College of the Resurrection, who will provide formational context through its community, some teaching, an additional placement and the

experience of Holy Week liturgy, while St Hild will oversee the academic pathway and principal placement. This pathway has attracted applicants, but they were not able to take up their places because the timing of the two-stage national discernment process (formerly BAP) did not allow sufficient time for them to give notice to work and relocate their families.

313. The College produced a new prospectus in 2023, which makes a good job of highlighting its distinctive offering of formation within a College community that draws strength and spirituality from living alongside a religious community. Efforts to increase recruitment have included gaining charitable support to offer bursaries for enquirers to take part in Holy Week at CoR, and a series of open days. In his update, the Principal reported that in 2024, CoR admitted 8 new ordinands, with a 50/50 gender balance, including 3 married students, one GMH student and a wheelchair-user.

Section B: Formational Context and Community

314. The 2022 PER found that the campus was not easily accessible for wheelchair users or those with limited mobility. The College had offered to produce a map of the campus and to make adaptations in consultation with a disabled student. However, the 2024 reviewers visiting Mirfield noted that the campus still presents challenges to those with accessibility requirements (see St Hild B3 and LSoM B3). As the responsibility for accessibility improvements rests with the Community of the Resurrection, who own the site, we recommend that all partners using this site continue to review arrangements in dialogue with the Community as appropriate.

Recommendation 31

315. **We recommend that all partners using the College of the Resurrection site continue to review accessibility arrangements and liaise with the Community of the Resurrection over possible improvements.** Notwithstanding this, we saw evidence of improved provision for disabled students, including adaptations made for an ordinand who is a wheelchair-user and the publication of a Disability Policy co-created by students. There is a designated Disability Officer on the staff, who has a specific role in creating plans for students with specific learning disabilities, neurodiversity and physical disabilities.
316. Improvements have also been made to provision for married students. The College has appointed an independent Chaplain who attends the College weekly on a voluntary basis to share lunch with ordinands, have general conversations and offer confidential appointments. The College Students' and Spouses' Handbook has been refreshed by married students and is updated annually. A meeting for students and partners is included in Induction Week. We were also pleased to see that the College website presents the offering to married students and families in an engaging and welcoming way.
317. The 2022 had recommended that CoR re-examine the commitments on students during term-time – including serving at church and household tasks around College. This was because reduced student numbers had created additional burdens for students, placing particular pressure on

married students and those with young families. In dialogue with CR, students have reduced contributions to serving in the Upper Church, there is an earlier end to directed time on Fridays and the number of posts needing to be filled by students has been reduced.

Section C: Leadership and Management

318. The 2022 PER made a number of recommendations in relation to governance and finance, and CoR has made several changes in response to these. A new Governance Manual has been produced. Posts have been filled on College committees – Finance and General Purposes Committee (which functions as the Standing Committee), the Staffing Committee and the Formation Committee – and meetings are taking place.
319. CoR is essentially owned and operated by the Frere Educational Trust, a charitable trust whose principal activity is to run CoR. The Frere Educational Trust is a wholly owned subsidiary of CR which also owns and manages all the buildings used by the College and employs all CoR staff. The Frere Trustees have recruited two new members from beyond the community. Membership of College Council is also being monitored to ensure that it is representative of stakeholders and that it has the right balance of expertise.
320. A significant development since the collaboration between St Hild and CoR has been the appointment of a new bursar. He is focusing on income generation: a particular focus has been on increasing student numbers to improve financial stability and this has included diversifying the offering. CoR has recently entered into discussions with the University of Huddersfield with the possibility of offering an ordination and teacher-training pathway. The qualification would be validated by Huddersfield, but its design would draw on experience gained through Common Awards and it would share a number of modules with the existing pathway. CoR is also considering offering an apprenticeship for certain lay ministries. The 2024 PER reviewers attended a meeting of the YTEP Trustees where updates on these plans were presented.
321. We were informed of improvements in Safeguarding procedures, including the incorporation of safeguarding materials in the Student and Spouse College Handbook. Mirfield College Council receives a safeguarding report, which they send to the Diocese of Leeds for consideration. Students are required to complete safeguarding modules, and paper evidence is presented to the ordaining bishops before ordination.

Section D: Teaching and Learning

322. The curriculum has been refreshed since the PER of 2022, partly in response to recommendations. The ‘Theme Weeks,’ which had covered significant topics in isolation from the rest of the programme, have now been integrated: Living in Love and Faith is now discussed earlier in the students’ training; Leadership also comes earlier in the programme, and can be taken as a

Common Award module; and Black Theology is now available as a Common Awards module. The latter is available to other Centres across YTEP, though this offer has not, as yet, been taken up.

323. The Five Marks of Mission have been made more prominent in the programme and the College concentrates on one of these each year. Working with young people has also been integrated more closely into the programme.
324. Efforts have been made to enhance provision of web-based tools for online teaching, though students' engagement with these has not increased. (This is a recurring theme across YTEP – see Recommendation 1.) The MA in Worship and Liturgical Studies is offered as an online programme, and it is hoped that this will increase the take-up of online provision.
325. There has been diversification of assessment methods to include assessed conversation and journaling.

Section E: Ministerial Formation

326. Attention has been paid to diversifying placements on offer in order to give students greater experience of the breadth of the Church of England. Adjustments have been made to the Mirfield timetable to allow for greater engagement with the placement church during weekdays and longer time in a parish on a Sunday.
327. Concerns had been raised through meetings with students during PER 2022 about unhelpful feedback being given amongst peers. We are assured that feedback is now carefully managed in classroom contexts and that feedback on liturgy is limited to students in particular roles. An official feedback sheet has been created for students to seek feedback from their peers.

Summary of Commendations

Commendation 1

We commend the collaborative working across YTEP and the contributions made by the Centres to YTEP as a whole.

Commendation 2

We commend the positive working relationships between YTEP and Durham University.

Commendation 3

We commend the ability of St Hild to maintain an appropriate diversity of convictions and perspectives within its student body, reflective of the Church of England's own diversity.

Commendation 4

We commend the level of individual care of ordinands at St Hild through the provision of bespoke pathways.

Commendation 5

We commend St Hild's offering of high-quality modules on missional theology.

Commendation 6

We commend the quality of teamwork and the collaborative and empowering leadership within St Hild.

Commendation 7

We commend the variety of learning and teaching methods employed in taught sessions.

Commendation 8

We commend the variety of assessment methods used at St Hild, including the use of innovative assessment methods, such as assessed conversations, and the thoughtful approach to providing timely and helpful feedback.

Commendation 9

We commend St Hild for its commitment to developing and enhancing the world-facing formational opportunities for its students.

Commendation 10

We commend St Hild for their commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion in the ethos and approach of ministerial training.

Commendation 11

We commend St Hild for their dedication to mission-focused training, which is embedded in the ordinand's training and formation and seamlessly modelled by the staff.

Commendation 12

We commend St Hild for their commitment to enabling students to engage with difference through the lens of mission-focused ministry.

Commendation 13

We commend St Hild for creating a culture of joy and mutual flourishing.

Commendation 14

We commend St Hild for providing sufficient tools for ordinands to develop a healthy pattern of prayer life and understand how discipline and accountability work in the Church.

Commendation 15

We commend the fact that the Formational Aims and the distinctiveness of the evangelistic calling of Church Army are evident, nurtured and encouraged within every strand of the life of the Centre.

Commendation 16

We commend the strong sense of community and welcome at Church Army.

Commendation 17

We commend the developments in worship at Church Army to include liturgy from across the Anglican Communion and to ensure a breadth of styles within student-led worship.

Commendation 18

We commend Church Army tutors' use of a strong variety of teaching methods. They are excellent at encouraging students with limited academic background and mature students who are nervous about returning to education.

Commendation 19

We commend the warm, collaborative and responsive nature of the leadership at Church Army.

Commendation 20

We commend Church Army on the quality of the Evangelist Learning Framework and the way they have integrated it successfully into all modular and formational teaching and learning.

Commendation 21

We commend Church Army on the strength of their training for evangelists being recognised by the Church of Ireland, leading to the current partnership.

Commendation 22

We commend Church Army's excellent structure for students' formational development and spiritual growth.

Commendation 23

We commend the promotion of diversity in all its forms at YSoM, as well as an increasing development of resources for those who are neuro-diverse.

Commendation 24

We commend the enthusiasm for learning and theological study shown by staff at YSoM.

Commendation 25

We commend the strong collaborative team leadership at YSoM.

Commendation 26

We commend the high quality of the tutors and core staff at YSoM, and their links to diocesan, YTEP and national bodies.

Commendation 27

We commend the close attention paid to diversity at LSoM.

Commendation 28

We commend the positive relationships between staff and students at LSoM.

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation 1

We recommend that the Centres liaise more closely over diversification of provision to make strategic decisions about future developments.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that YTEP finds ways of encouraging students to become familiar with Moodle and confident in using Turnitin.

Recommendation 3

We recommend that YTEP increases registry capacity to fully support the bespoke programmes for individual ordinands at St Hild.

Recommendation 4

We recommend that St Hild is clearer in its publicity material and in its communications with DDOs about the relative benefits and potential challenges of the different patterns of study, and the likely impact on students' families and personal lives.

Recommendation 5

We recommend that the dual system of core tutors and personal tutors at St Hild is more fully explained to students and that there is a process to ensure that any gaps in provision are addressed.

Recommendation 6

We recommend better promotion of existing safeguarding provision and information at St Hild, by drawing attention to posters, community notices and handbooks. This could include introducing safeguarding officers to ordinands as they begin training and adding their photographs to the Ordinand Guide.

Recommendation 7

We recommend that St Hild produces a Trustees' Handbook.

Recommendation 8

We recommend that St Hild develops an action plan for managing future developments, in order to mitigate against overstressing its resources.

Recommendation 9

We recommend there is open consultation with dioceses when choosing placements for ordinands.

Recommendation 10

We recommend that St Hild reviews the content of Biblical teaching, particularly the Old Testament, and considers developing this area.

Recommendation 11

We recommend that St Hild continues to liaise closely with the individual dioceses, taking careful consideration of diocesan priorities when advising students on their module choices.

Recommendation 12

We recommend that, wherever applicable, St Hild develops clear structures whereby both affirmation and concerns between home parish and personal tutors may be established so that accountability is interwoven into the processes.

Recommendation 13

We recommend that St Hild emphasises the need to provide feedback on the ordinand's understanding of the importance of safeguarding practice in the care of children and vulnerable adults in the Placement Feedback Forms.

Recommendation 14

We recommend that a copy of the Social Media Policy is published on the St Hild Moodle homepage.

Recommendation 15

We recommend that Church Army gives attention to the distinctive training requirements of the Church of Ireland.

Recommendation 16

We recommend that the Centre remains attentive of the distinctives of Church Army when expanding formational development beyond Church Army EiTs.

Recommendation 17

We recommend that Church Army continues, through all possible channels, to raise the profile of the options and advantages of a Church Army theological education.

Recommendation 18

We recommend that Church Army considers finding two chaplains who will commit regularly to the formation weekends.

Recommendation 19

We recommend that that Church Army considers putting a policy in place covering pastoral care and student welfare.

Recommendation 20

We recommend that Church Army considers taking a more proactive role in encouraging students who are more academically able.

Recommendation 21

We recommend that Church Army puts procedures in place to identify struggling students and make sure that they are using the available support structure.

Recommendation 22

We recommend that Church Army be alert to students who are not attending a local church and do what they can to encourage this aspect of the students' life.

Recommendation 23

We recommend YSoM provides clarification of the particular focus of LLM (Reader) ministry, also considering whether other forms of licensed lay ministry are present or to be developed.

Recommendation 24

We recommend that YSoM presents and publicises the particular ways in which Licensed Lay Ministry is aligned to the diocesan priorities so that this ministry is well embedded in the Senior Leadership discussions, diocesan publicity and deanery plans.

Recommendation 25

We recommend that YSoM pays attention to publicity for LLM, outlining the vision for this ministry and paths to application, including clarification about the use of 'Reader' and 'LLM.'

Recommendation 26

We recommend further contact between YSOM and the Leeds School of Ministry.

Recommendation 27

We recommend that work is done to identify more clearly the distinctive benefits of studying with YSOM.

Recommendation 28

We recommend that staff at LSoM conduct an audit of topics covered on the syllabus and look to address any gaps: specifically, in good practice around Biblical Criticism.

Recommendation 29

We recommend that LSoM is clear about what is expected of trainees and the benefits and potential challenges of the pattern of study, and the likely impact on their work-life balance.

Recommendation 30

We recommend that LSoM provides support and guidance to help students manage the transition from non-accredited study to formal training, including referring students to resources available at St Hild.

Recommendation 31

We recommend that all partners using the College of the Resurrection site continue to review accessibility arrangements and liaise with the Community of the Resurrection over possible improvements.