

## Ministry Development Board: Periodic External Review Report

### South Central Theological Education Institution

#### Guildford Local Ministry Programme

#### Oxford Local Ministry Training

#### Winchester School of Mission

**Conducted onsite, March 2025**

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## Glossary

ASE	Annual Self Evaluation
BCP	Book of Common Prayer
CAMC	Common Awards Management Committee
CME	Continuing Ministerial Education
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
DDO	Diocesan Director of Ordinands
DELTA	Durham Excellence in Learning and Teaching Award
IME1/2	Initial Ministerial Education stages 1 & 2
LLM	Licensed Lay Minister
LMP	Local Ministry Programme
LMT	Local Ministry Training
OAMS	Ordained Assistant Ministry Scheme
PER	Periodic External Review
SCTEI	South Central TEI
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TEI	Theological Education Institution
UKME/GMH	UK Minority Ethnicity / Global Majority Heritage
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment (online learning platform e.g. Moodle)

## Reviewers

**Ven Dr Brian Russell**, lead reviewer, formerly Senior Chaplain in Norway, Diocese of Europe

**Revd Canon Sonia Barron**, Director of Ordinands and Vocations, Diocese of Lincoln

**Revd Canon Dr Georgina Byrne**, church historian and Anglican tutor, Queen's Foundation, Birmingham

**Revd Canon Dr Elizabeth Jordan**, leadership development specialist in the training team, Diocese of Chelmsford

## 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 Council.

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.

## Review of South Central Theological Education Institution

### Introduction

The South Central TEI comprises the Guildford Diocesan Local Ministry Programme, Oxford Diocesan Local Ministry Training and the Winchester Diocesan School of Mission, all of which offer non-residential training for ordained and licensed lay ministries (LLM).

At the current time, the South Central TEI reports 53 students training for licensed ministry. 6 are viewed as potential for incumbency, 6 for ordained “assistant” ministry, 13 for ordained local ministry, and 28 for “Reader” or Licensed Lay Ministry. In addition, “interested learners” and “in-service” students enhance this number. 16 of the students for licensed ministry are non-graduates with no professional qualifications, which is likely to increase as the dioceses seek to positively widen access amongst under-represented candidates through new initiatives and opportunities to be “interested learners” (see below). The great majority of “pathway” students are aged over 50, though 12 are aged between 40 and 49.

*With regard to the Guildford Local Ministry Programme (LMP),* there are currently 13 students listed for “Ordained Local Ministry/Local Ministry” and 5 for “Reader” Ministry. There are in addition 14 interested learners attending courses, and also older candidates taking part in a “Caleb” initiative which is not part of the Durham Common Awards (see below). It is of positive note that 5 students are non-graduates with no professional qualifications, given the wide range of social contexts and educational experience across the diocese.

*With regard to Oxford Local Ministry Training (LMT),* there are currently three listed for “assistant ordained ministry” and 11 for “Reader” ministry. Three students for licensed ministry are non-graduates with no professional qualifications. With those currently in discernment and 68 “interested learners”, there is a robust student body of 99.

*With regard to Winchester diocese,* 6 are listed as potential incumbents, 3 for “assistant” ministry and 9 for “Reader” or Licensed Lay Ministry. In addition, four students are undertaking “in-service” courses and 5 are “independent learners”. It is of positive note that 8 students are non-graduates with no professional qualifications and also 8 are aged between 40 and 49, which suggests that access is being widened.

### PER Process and evidence

The Periodic External Review of the South Central TEI took place in March 2025, with the visit to the centres in Guildford on March 10th, Winchester on March 11<sup>th</sup> and Oxford on March 20-22<sup>nd</sup>. In the course of these visits the reviewers attended teaching sessions, worship and meals. They met students, management, tutorial and support staff and those with a role in students’ formation in local contexts; and they received written evidence from stakeholders including DDOs, receiving incumbents, placement supervisors and former ordinands. In advance of this and by way of preparation, the Lead Reviewer had attended the Common Awards Management Committee in November 2024 and had also met the Dean of

the Guildford Local Ministry Programme in January 2025. A member of the Review Team attended the meeting of the Durham Common Awards team and the SCTEI on March 20<sup>th</sup> 2025.

SCTEI and its centres also made a comprehensive body of documentation available to the Reviewers in advance, including:

1. Self-evaluation: formational overview and educational SWOT commentary
2. Formational mapping document
3. Publicity material and a range of college handbooks
4. Staff policies / staff handbook
5. Teaching, management and support staff details
6. Overview of taught programmes including update on progress since the last PER
7. Teaching policies including APL policy, admissions policy, student handbooks
8. Governance structures, terms of reference, membership and minutes; audited report and accounts, risk register
9. Description of accommodation and development plans
10. Student statistics

The Review Team are immensely grateful for the hospitality, care and openness shown to them by staff, students and stakeholders before and during their visits.

## General observations

The review team is greatly encouraged by the current operation of the South Central TEI. There has been substantial progress since the last Review held in 2019. The Common Awards Management Committee provides an effective and collaborative way in which the senior staff of each diocesan programme engage with each other, sharing insights, good practice and enthusiastic vision. This is exactly what had been hoped for in the 2019 Review and we **commend** this below. The SCTEI itself expresses this: “There is an openness and sharing of experience and good practice (and lessons learned when things do not go well)”. There is now a clearer arrangement for oversight of SCTEI, though not all the hopes for oversight in the 2019 review have been realised and the 2025 Review Team make some recommendations to assist in achieving those hopes.

All this has happened whilst the SCTEI has undergone considerable change in membership. The Sarum College Trustees gave notice of their intention to become a separate TEI under the Durham Common Awards and this departure took place formally in September 2024. Sarum College accordingly received a separate PER late in 2024 and is not part of this Review. In addition, the Winchester Diocese gave notice that the diocesan training would no longer be part of SCTEI. The existing Winchester students will complete Durham Common Awards over the next eighteen months. However, all students entering training from September 2024 are trained separately from the SCTEI. All Winchester students for Local Lay Ministry take courses through Sarum College and all students for ordained ministry train at TEIs outside of

Winchester diocese. The cooperation with Sarum College has good potential and we encourage this below.

The future for South Central TEI will inevitably rest on the committed cooperation of the two continuing partners, namely the dioceses of Oxford and Guildford. The Review Team learned of the enthusiastic good will of the staffs of both diocesan schemes to ensure that this cooperation flourishes and serves well the needs for training in both dioceses. Episcopal encouragement will also be key, as is mentioned below. *The Review Team consider that this cooperation can enable South Central TEI to continue to be a viable and effective arrangement for training in the two dioceses.*

In these changing arrangements, the Review Team wish to encourage continuing cooperation between all four previous members of SCTEI. The high-level of trust and goodwill between the staffs permits this. Cooperation in matters like the training of training incumbents, courses for first-time incumbents, which are not part of Durham common awards, can be fruitful and mutually supportive in promoting IME2.

In addition, the Review Team found that Oxford, Guildford and Winchester are all investing considerable energy and enthusiasm in an extensive development of foundation courses or discipleship courses as a seed bed for lay discipleship (in its own right), and, providing through this, in appropriate ways, stepping stones for the development of those who might in future be considered for Licensed Lay or for Ordained Ministries. This brings considerable numbers of “interested learners” into the training at the stage when other candidates are training for authorised lay or ordained ministries. Whilst these “grass root” or parish and deanery-based initiatives are specific in each case to the particular diocesan mission strategy, in ways which are not likely to render *inter-diocesan* courses appropriate, nonetheless there would be great benefit in the staff leading these exciting ventures in each diocese meeting to share insights and good practice on a regular basis. This can enhance these vital mission endeavours. We therefore **recommend** this below.

## Strengths and areas for attention

*The strengths of the SCTEI and its member dioceses are found in:*

**SCTEI as an umbrella body:** the cohesion, mutual responsibility and drive of the Common Awards Management Committee. The effectiveness of its interface with the Durham University Common Awards.

**The Guildford Licensed Ministry Programme:** the energy of the staff seen in new initiatives and the fully engaging training provided for responsive students. The effectiveness of the provision in fulfilling the Guildford diocesan mission and training vision. The care, encouragement and spiritual awareness of the staff. Students being well prepared to engage effectively in local contexts to build their churches in mission.

**Oxford Local Ministry Training:** the high quality of its provision of training for Licensed Lay Ministry and the high calibre and commitment of the student body. The effectiveness of the provision in fulfilling the Oxford diocesan mission and training vision. The world-engaging culture of the training which matches

the formational aims. The leadership of the Dean of Oxford LMT; and the care, insight and enthusiasm of the core staff, group facilitators and associate tutors. Students are well versed in theological reflection and ready to engage in a fruitful, outgoing ministry.

**The Winchester Mission and Ministry Team:** the pastoral care and imaginative support given by the staff leadership team and the enthusiasm and commitment of the students. The adaptability to changes in the ways of operating and the overall vision of ministerial formation for all the Winchester part-time students. Good potential for a developing future for training in mission and ministry in Winchester diocese.

*The areas for attention for the SCTEI and its member dioceses are:*

**South Central TEI as an umbrella body:** the strengthening of the Overview Board to be more proactive and to be a greater point of interaction between the member dioceses.

**The Guildford Licensed Ministry Programme:** the need for a period of consolidation and taking stock of the Programme, bearing in mind the existing commitment to bedding down current arrangements and carrying through already agreed and planned developments, for which the Review Team make a number of important recommendations. This is to benefit the Programme and the staff after a period of intense pioneering and new initiatives. A greater focus on the distinctive nature of *lay* ministry and discipleship and of *ordained* ministry, together with a greater focus on being “world-engaging” as part of mission and discipleship. Consideration in future of the form of training for older candidates for Ordained Assistant Ministry.

**Oxford Local Ministry Training:** the diocesan promotion of ordained ministry so that Oxford LMT can continue to fulfil its aim of training lay and ordained alongside each other as a valuable preparation for partnership in future ministry. The thorough review of the two-year pilot begun for older candidates training for Ordained Assistant Ministry. More intentional arrangements for supervision from placement supervisors and training incumbents. More tutors or facilitators who are lay people.

**The Winchester Mission and Ministry Team:** keeping under review the developing and promising partnership for Licensed Lay Ministry with Sarum College.

## Summary of Outcomes

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.

Overall the Reviewers have Confidence in the South Central TEI and the training offered by its diocesan centres and regard them as fit for purpose in preparing candidates for ordained and licensed lay ministry. The review team's outcome judgements are set out by criterion in the following table.

CENTRE AND CRITERION	OUTCOME	
<b>South Central TEI</b>	Confidence Confidence with Qualifications <b>Confidence</b>	
<b>Guildford Local Ministry Programme</b>	Confidence Confidence with Qualifications Confidence Confidence with Qualifications Confidence with Qualifications <b>Confidence with Qualifications</b>	
<b>Oxford Local Ministry Training</b>	<b>Ordinands' training</b> Confidence Confidence w Quals Confidence Confidence w Quals Confidence w Quals <b>Confidence w Quals</b>	<b>LLM training</b> Confidence Confidence w Quals Confidence Confidence Confidence w Quals <b>Confidence</b>
<b>Winchester Diocesan School of Mission</b>	Confidence Confidence Confidence Confidence Confidence with Qualifications <b>Confidence</b>	

## Full report on South Central Theological Education Institution

1. The 2019 Review made important recommendations regarding staff development and regarding the operating basis the excellent work of the SCTEI Academic Registrar in facilitating networking within the SCTEI and in liaison with Durham Common Awards. The Review team make recommendations on these two matters under the relevant criteria below.

### Commendation 1

**We commend the SCTEI Common Awards Management Committee for its effective operation in being collaborative, sharing insights, good practice and enthusiastic vision.**

### Recommendation 1

**We recommend that the SCTEI arranges continuing regular meetings of staff leaders of courses in discipleship and foundation training in the dioceses of Guildford, Oxford and Winchester, together with Sarum College, to share insights and good practice at a time of creativity in mission (to reinforce the meetings of the current Regional Learning Partnership).**

2. *With regard to the Guildford Local Ministry Programme*, the diocese of Guildford has been undertaking a major revision in how to promote discipleship and ministry across the whole range of social settings and educational experience across the diocese. This is impressive. Indeed, stakeholder feedback given to the Review Team refers to the major positive impact which this scheme has had and which it continues to contribute to mission and ministry in the diocese, both through training for authorised ministries and through the development of foundational opportunities as mentioned above.
3. The diocese of Guildford launched in the Summer of 2024 its own variant of a “Caleb” approach to training older candidates, who had some educational and lay ministerial experience, for ordained ministry in an Assistant role to serve in the diocese of Guildford. This one-year scheme combines discernment and training, under the direction of a retired bishop and the Dean of the Guildford Local Ministry Programme. Candidates are due to be attending Bishop’s Advisory Panels in the time period after Easter 2025, after which, those selected would join the CME2 programme of the diocese.
4. At the Lead Reviewer’s preparatory meeting with the Dean in January 2025, possible membership after the Summer of 2025 of the national two-year “Elizabeth” scheme had been indicated. However, on arrival, the Review Team learned that the diocese of Guildford would continue with its own one-year variant of “Caleb” for a further year, without at this stage, commitment to joining the two year “Elizabeth” scheme. The retired bishop and Dean provided for the review Team helpful reflections on the students’ development during the process for discernment and training provided for “Caleb”. They also facilitated contact between three current “Caleb” students and the

Review Team. Participation in the “Elizabeth” scheme, once it is established, could be a natural step for Guildford diocese to take in eighteen months’ time.

5. There is strong evidence given to the Review Team from stakeholder feedback that the highly commendable energetic and imaginative work of the core staff over the last eighteen months, in implementing new provisions and arrangements, has meant that the core staff have been stretched to the limit. References are made to the need now for a time of “consolidation”, “a breathing space” and “time to take stock”. The Review Team are aware that a number of recent initiatives are handled by specific groups, rather than the Guildford LMP core staff, though they do make some claim on the time of the Dean of Guildford LMP, and these include for example the Foundations in Ministry programme. This collaboration reflects good practice. However, the stakeholder feedback concerns the specific courses of ministry training. The Review Team fully appreciates that it will be essential for Guildford LMT to bear in mind the existing commitment to bedding down current arrangements and carrying through developments which have already been planned or in hand. Indeed, the need for this bedding down is evidenced by a good number of important recommendations made by the Review Team in what follows. This forms a major **recommendation** made by the Review Team.

#### **Recommendation 2**

**We commend the energetic and imaginative work of the core staff of Guildford LMP in implementing new provisions and arrangements for training over the last eighteen months.**

#### **Recommendation 2**

**We recommend that the Guildford LMP engages in a time for consolidation in taking stock of recent new initiatives and arrangements for training over the last eighteen months, bearing in mind the need to carry through already planned developments and the recommendations made in this Review.**

6. *With regard to Oxford LMT*, the Diocese of Oxford has made a far-reaching change to its approach to vocational development and ministerial training over the last eighteen months. In the language of the Oxford diocese, this has involved an “inverted” approach, namely that a major focus of energy and educational provision has been devoted to *parish and deanery-based initiatives* to foster lay discipleship in its own right, whilst also providing developmental opportunities for those who might be considered in future for a variety of ministerial roles. This has entailed re-envisioning the training for formal Licensed Lay Ministry, which remains open to “independent learners” who are “testing the water” to assess their future contributions as disciples. The former pathway for LLM was changed into a two-year pre-licensing training and a one-year post-licensing programme. This provision has been launched and the well-presented study day observed by the Review Team was part of this new initiative. The Review Team were impressed by the students and found the candidates for Local Lay Ministry to be well-equipped, highly motivated and appreciative of their training. We **commend** this.

7. Candidates to serve locally for *ordained* ministry can also participate in this course, though in fact at present these are few in number (see above). This reflects the Oxford decision to handle ordained ministry training differently. The Oxford ASE for 2023 reported the planned "winding up of LMP ordinand training", which had been carried through prior to the 2025 Review. The Review Team note that the new LMT provision is "wide open" to those exploring ordained ministry and there are currently some potential ordinands amongst those who are "interested learners". In addition, those in the first year of the two year "Caleb" course for older potential ordinands also participate fully in the new LMT provision. This is encouraging. However, the Review Team noted a sense of loss reported in some feedback over this change to ordained ministry training. At the same time, the Diocese of Oxford made the decision (at fairly short notice) to mount an equivalent to the "Caleb" concept which is intended to identify and equip older candidates with existing significant educational and lay ministerial experience, for Assistant Ordained Ministry within the diocese. The decision was to create a two-year course of training, with the second year providing training courses at Ripon College Cuddesdon, a TEI with extensive experience in equipping those training part-time for lay and ordained ministries in their dioceses. None of those training for this Assistant Ordained Ministry will complete training until the Summer of 2026. The Diocese of Oxford is open to becoming part of the national "Elizabeth" pilot scheme for such ordinands, when the scheme is formally launched.
8. All these developments in Oxford have been enthusiastic and well-aimed, which is commendable. However, it is inevitable that the shorter lead-in time for preparing the training specifically for those to be ordained has meant that the arrangements made have not in all instances matched the good aspirations held by the staff. There has been a time of "catching up" as the training was implemented. The Review Team is very sympathetic to the considerable pressures that this has entailed for the highly committed and imaginative staff team. These matters are addressed by recommendations made under the criteria which follow below.

### Commendation 3

**We commend Oxford LMT for its impressive candidates for LLM who are well-equipped, highly motivated and appreciative of their training.**

### Commendation 4

**We commend the imaginative and energetic way in which the Oxford staff team have implemented new provisions and courses for discipleship and licensed lay ministry.**

9. *With regard to Winchester diocese*, the staff we met were open and responded fully to all the points which we raised. They were naturally disappointed to learn of the closure of the Winchester School of Mission, following a substantial diocesan review. This decision also entailed the planned withdrawal from Durham Awards and the SCTEI. The staff have adapted to new circumstances and were positive about the new opportunities now open for them to serve under the title of the Ministry and Mission Team of the Diocese of Winchester. This is a significant transition for the staff

and for the current students. The Review Team learned of the practical measures and support immediately put in place to guide the students through this transition once the formal decision was announced. There is an impressive awareness of the needs of the students amongst the staff. We **commend** the staff of the Ministry and Mission Team for their care and support for students during these times of recent transition.

10. For the next eighteen months, the Ministry and Mission team will continue to have a formal relationship to SCTEI and so with the Durham Awards. This is because they have nine current students who are completing their qualifications for the Summer of 2025 and six students who are due to complete in 2026. In addition, some students may also wish to continue to study further modules to enhance their initial Durham qualifications. The opportunity for this is being kept open until Summer 2026, in the best interests of the students. The tutorials, placements and pastoral support for these continuing students is provided entirely through the Ministry and Mission Team of the diocese (as successor of the Winchester School of Mission), who are giving these students high priority.
11. New arrangements have been agreed and are in place for four new students for Licensed Lay Ministry, who commenced last September 2024. Sharing formative modules with eight LLM students completing their Winchester programmes, these lay students participate in the training given by Sarum College, with whom the Ministry and Mission Team of Winchester Diocese clearly enjoy a good relationship. Sarum College provides the educational support for the modules taken, arrange placements and academic tutorials. Sarum College will include the training of placement supervisors and training incumbents in their existing provision for this. These students remain formally under the auspices of the Winchester diocese, and the staff of the Winchester Ministry and Mission Team remain in contact pastorally with their students. There has been a long-standing working relationship between Winchester Diocese and Sarum College, due in part to common membership of the Common Awards Management Committee and Overview Board of the SCTEI. The established trust provides a rich basis for the future.
12. However, this is a new relationship with Sarum College, and it will be highly important that the good start is backed up by an active framework for engagement between Sarum College staff and the Ministry and Mission Team so that their home diocese of Winchester is fully aware of progress, student issues and ministerial formation. The Winchester Ministry and Mission Team have been given ready access for training occasions and relevant study days to facilitate this vital coordination.
13. Nonetheless, given that this is a new arrangement in the early stages of formation, we **recommend** that the good intentions and adopted plans for collaboration and communication between the Winchester Ministry and Mission Team and Sarum College are reviewed in the late summer of 2025, ready for the entry of the next cohort into training. This is to ensure that the needs of the students for ministerial formation are being fully and consistently addressed in practice through the evolving framework for tutorial contact between different tutors of the two

institutions in their specific roles. This is intended to underpin good ministerial formation in fulfilment of the Formational Aims set by Winchester (see below, Criterion A). We understand the staff of the Winchester Ministry and Mission Team would be supportive of carrying through this recommendation, which has been fully discussed with them.

#### **Commendation 5**

**We commend the staff of the Winchester Team for their care and support for students during the times of recent transition in training arrangements.**

#### **Recommendation 3**

**We recommend that the Winchester Team review in the late summer of 2025, the evolving plans for cooperation and communication with Sarum College regarding the Winchester students for Licensed Lay Ministry.**

## Section A: Formational Aims

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

14. *With regard to South Central TEI as an umbrella body*, the Review Team were impressed by a statement that expresses the common aspirations of the partners at the time of writing and offered currently as an appendix to the Student Handbook, namely:
 

“The mission of the Church is to witness to, and embody, God’s mission to the whole world, as definitively revealed and realized in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The mission of the Church follows from this mission of God...in and for the whole world...to signify the identity and purposes of this Christ-like God in both the present and future of the world...Church life and order will need to be dynamic, flexible and engaged with particular, changing, contexts of the wider world”...with students “being formed in a commitment to collaborative ministry founded on a clear perception of roles, order and oversight within that collaboration”.
15. This world-facing approach is affirmed in stakeholder feedback given to the Review Team, with SCTEI seen as having “a strong capability in delivering formational training under Common Awards”, which is “truly contextual training” preparing students for “collaborative ministry” which meets the “the needs for mission and ministry in different contexts”. The SCTEI External Examiner confirmed that SCTEI “are enabling their students to be theologically informed, missionally orientated, reflective, engaged, pastorally sensitive and appropriate for what their several callings might mean”. This report affirms that the TEI provides “an education that combines rigorous academic engagement with the development of faithful Christian discipleship, holding together a questioning disposition with a desire to grow closer to God, which is exactly what is required of those ready and able to participate in the *Missio Dei*.” Indeed, the report concludes by encouraging the TEI to express a “growing confidence in its new identity and potential”.
16. The SCTEI overview and scene setting, speaks powerfully, saying: “Our vision is for godly leaders (priests, LLMs and other lay leaders) who have sufficient spiritual depth, married to a missional sensitivity and adaptability to continue to lead their churches into an uncertain future with fruitfulness, confidence, humility and hope.”
17. The Review Team note, in what follows, that in some cases more attention to the world-facing approach would be beneficial, as well as to the formation for specific roles in ministry, with regard to confident *lay* representation and a confident ordained identity.
18. *With regard to Guildford Local Ministry Programme*, the LMP has a clear and concise statement of foundational aims, in terms of a vision for students “to know God”, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, “to be humble and confident in faith, to have spiritual lives of sufficient resilience to flourish in turbulent times, to have a prophetic daring in leading churches into new patterns and ways of being church suited to our times, to develop emotional intelligence in relating well to those inside

and outside our churches, to model what it means to follow Jesus today, to be able to multiply leadership, and to have necessary skills to lead churches in mission in their local contexts”. These aims involve a powerful drive to build churches and grow congregations, and there is a realism about the challenges which this entails. In reflecting on the qualities required, reference is made to “attractively engaging with God’s world”. There is an emphasis on growing disciples who can be creative and adaptive, so as to “to build churches at the heart of their communities”. This statement of foundation aims fits with the emphasis in the training on evangelism and mission.

20. The Guildford Handbook for students (2024) expands on this vision of foundational aims, calling for church leaders who are “deeply rooted in our faith”, flexible and able to adapt leadership to meet change, with “a passion and expertise in reaching out to those who do not currently come to church, especially children and young people.” This also entails “the equipping of our community for leadership” in parish and local churches, an “equipping which is spiritual, social, intellectual and emotional, through worship, learning, encounter with God and each other”, taking the opportunities “to learn from experience”.
21. This Handbook is more specific on formation for “Reader” ministry, giving as an aim “the intention is to inhabit the role of minister and representative Christian”, which links being with doing. This is seen as “holistic”, so as to enable ministers to “operate in a public role”. With regard to ordained ministry, the statement outlines that “complementing this practical similarity is recognition of differences (in some duties and responsibilities) but also “ontologically, referring to “sacramental ministry”, though this is not developed. We refer to this below.
22. Stakeholder feedback, and feedback from current and recent students, appreciates these aims but also makes reference to some possible imbalance. For example, some feedback notes the wish for more pastoral training to support this engagement in the community and the world, as well as more preparatory attention to the specific roles of lay and ordained ministry. These points are considered further below. There could be greater emphasis on the love of God *for the world*, as a starting point for the Missio Dei, as expressed in other documents from SCTEI concerning foundational aims. For example, the SCTEI common statement outlined in paragraphs 15 and 16 above would provide a useful reference point for Guildford LMP in considering ways to give greater emphasis to a “world-facing” or “world-engaging” approach. Further discussion of these points within the SCTEI management committee could be helpful for Guildford LMT. We make a **recommendation** in this regard for Guildford LMP in section D below.
23. *With regard to Oxford*, the vision outlined above from SCTEI is amply fulfilled in the approach defined by Oxford LMT. When mapping their foundational aims in relation to the Church of England documents, the chart includes a column dedicated to a world-facing approach, referring to how God’s mission in the world may be served by those prepared with this focus in mind. The Oxford Student Handbook outlines the foundational aims, which are “to educate, train and form

God's people for discipleship, mission and ministry in the contexts to which God has called us". This involves developing theologically due to being "rooted in God and God's praises", and therefore "missiological" in being "directed towards God's world" and therefore "contextual" by being focussed on particular contexts, as well as "ecumenical and collaborative" by being "committed to an ever-widening shared participation" in God's mission and ministry.

24. This matches their declared vision: "Our aim is to form a confident community of Christ-centred, theologically informed and reflective learners who love God and are...devoted to becoming more Christ-like", "formed for a ministry shaped by contemplation, courage and compassion, who are "confident in their vocation, equipped for nurturing God's people, and enabling others in everyday faith and ministry in response to the call and mission of God." This vision neatly brings together being and doing, prayer and action. Stakeholder feedback confirms that the training "earths ministerial training in the reality of working with other kinds of ministry".
25. In regard to training in enabling others in ministry, the winding up of the former pathway for non-stipendiary ordained ministry has meant a loss in the numbers of potential ordinands training alongside those for authorised lay ministries. The Oxford vision is commendable in seeking to provide training for both together, to deepen preparation for collaborative ministry, but at present this is less evident in practice, though the Review Team are encouraged to learn that Oxford diocese will continue to train *potential* ordinands on year one of the LMT programme alongside students for LLM and older students (OAMS) who are potential ordinands.
26. *With regard to the Winchester Team*, the documents provided for the Review Team set the foundational aims in the context of a vision expressed in the diocesan priority for "Walking the Wessex Way", with a diocesan commitment to growing, learning, seeing and service, which in turn reflects the mission of Jesus "to grow authentic disciples". This results from a "passionate personal and communal spirituality". It means being "grounded in a theological perspective of hope, having the courage to be agents of change". The Winchester Handbook for students understands this in terms of a focus on *God's world*: everyone is "called by God to serve the church for the sake of the world" and to "flourish in prayerfulness, compassion, resilience and being effective as part of a "team approach to leadership and ministry".
27. Winchester Candidates for ordained ministry will not train directly in the current year or in future with the Mission and Ministry Team of Winchester diocese. Individual decisions will be made as to which theological institution can best provide the training required, and so a range of institutions will be serving ordination candidates from the diocese. Given that the vocation of these candidates have arisen in Winchester diocese, to which the ordinands continue to belong for their initial ordination training, and that a good many will in all likelihood return to serve after ordination in Winchester Diocese, the Winchester Team has an impressive aim of providing a continuing opportunity for involvement with these part-time diocesan students through termly fellowship and worship gatherings in the hope that this continuity can continue to prepare the

ordinands to be equipped to serve securely in future within the culture and ethos of Winchester diocese outlined above.

28. This provision includes an opportunity each term involving fellowship, formation and worship. This is partly about conveying a sense of belonging to Winchester diocese as part of identity, as well as ensuring coherent formation as well as integration with the diocesan “ethos” and preparation for a future contextual ministry which those ordained will need to work collaboratively within the approach to overseeing engagement with lay ministers in each location. This will be enhanced subsequently through IME2 for these clergy by the IME2 Officer being a member of the Mission and Ministry Team, reporting to the Head of the Team. We **commend** this overall vision for ministerial formation.

#### **Commendation 6**

**We commend the Winchester Team for its overall vision for ministerial formation for all its part-time students, envisaged both for lay and ordained ministry.**

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

29. None of the partners in South Central TEI are formally training students from denominations other than the Church of England.
30. *With regard to the Guildford Local Ministry Programme*, the LMP has a clear emphasis on growing disciples who can be creative and adaptive “to build churches at the heart of their communities”. There is a thorough mapping of the programme as a match to the Church of England’s formation criteria. The Review Team have noted that the formation of those to be ordained is less specific with regard to their future ministry than that for lay candidates. The Guildford LMP certainly keeps the foundational aims under review, hence the new approach to training opportunities referred to above. The diocese is varied in terms of educational background and cultural setting, more so than might appear, and efforts have been made since the last PER to increase the welcome for diversity and access to higher education. In this regard, the Review Team noted the Guildford LMP’s commitment to developing ministers who are missionary, creative, adaptive, with a diversity “that includes, but is not limited to, ethnic, socio-economic, and educational backgrounds”.
31. *With regard to Oxford LMT*, there are clear documents which map the foundational aims to match the Church of England’s formation criteria, both for distinctive lay and distinctive ordained ministries. The new LLM formation and training is intentionally designed to be aligned with the national framework for LLM, as reported in the Oxford Annual Self-Evaluation. There is also a close match with the framework for training ordinands, with the exception for example of sacraments (which is covered later in training through another TEI). The Review Team have already noted that the low numbers of ordination candidates in training, compared to two years ago, is less conducive to training for future collaboration between ministries after licensing. The ASE for

Oxford makes clear that the formational aims are kept under regular review and the extracts from Oxford documents quoted above confirm that the Oxford LMT is seeking to develop ministers who are missional, collaborative, flexible, adaptive, with the mission priorities described in the national criteria. It is evident to the Review Team that Oxford LMT has made concerted efforts to engage with diversity and to widen access to training since the last PER in 2019. Advice is sought from UKME consultants. Attention is given to Black History month, to Racial Justice, and to the choice of placements to increase the encounter with diversity. Two UKME tutors have been appointed to lead tutorial groups. The new approach to grass roots courses had been deliberately designed based on the “driver” to wider access beyond those confident in the formal methods of higher education.

32. *With regard to the Winchester Team*, the Team has clear statements that align their formational aims with the Church of England’s formation criteria. This is seen as contributing to living out “the five marks of mission” and “promoting engagement with theological difference”. Their approach asks for “missionary disciples, in a mixed ecology of models of church, growing a church which is younger and more diverse”. The creation of grass roots courses, referred to above, is consciously intended to widen future participation and access, though this initiative is at an early stage.

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

33. *With regard to the Guildford LMP*, the feedback from current and recent students for the most part affirmed their aims and priorities, as noted above. One stakeholder notes the concern to establish a helpful balance between re-branding traditional ministerial training and the newer courses to support missional ministry in the parishes, without losing sight of the need for *local* adaptability. There is emphasis on widening participation and the statistics, referred to above, indicate some progress in this regard.

34. *With regard to Oxford*, the feedback from current and recent students affirmed the aims and priorities of the Oxford hub. The Review Team noted the concern of the Oxford diocese to promote the opportunity to train non-stipendiary or assistant ordained ministry, currently fulfilled by potential ordinands training through the Oxford hub for a "foundation" year. The commitment to widening the range and take-up has already been evidenced.

35. *With regard to the Winchester Team*, the current students met by the Review Team were strongly supportive of the aims and priorities of the course. There is a strong commitment to wider access and participation as the new training arrangements come fully into place.

36. The SCTEI and its constituent members are all energetic and creative in mounting training which fully supports the intelligent mission strategies of their dioceses. This integration is more marked than was the case at the time of the last PER in 2019.

**The review team has Confidence in**

- **the South Central TEI**
- **Guildford LMP**
- **Oxford LLM and Ordained Assistant Ministry Training**
- **the Winchester Ministry and Mission Team**

**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.**

37. *With regard to South Central TEI*, the recent SCTEI SWOT analysis identifies as a key strength the ability to deliver contextual, diocesan-based training, which is versatile and flexible, training lay and ordained together drawing on locally based well-qualified practitioners. Sharing across the centres is seen to result in enhanced IT provision, admin expertise, and shared moderation. Excellent links with training and placement contexts are claimed, with highly supportive DBFs that handle employment, buildings, insurance and risk assessment. This analysis asserts that local delivery enhances the possibility of response to local needs and inter-connectedness with the rest of diocesan programmes, e.g. IME2 and missional aims.

38. The Review Team found this confidence to be well placed. Though the new training programmes in Oxford and Guildford are in their infancy, and Winchester will be leaving the TEI, the aim and purpose of the TEI, as stated above, is largely achieved.

39. *With respect to Guildford LMP*, the re-branding and re-launching of the LMP has enabled fresh expression of the purposes and goals of the Diocesan leadership and DBF. The aspiration is to engage younger people, and those from different ethnicities and from working-class backgrounds.

40. At present, there are 18 students on the LMP; one is taking a break. There are 10 students on the “Caleb” pilot. These are a mixture of lay and ordained candidates. The Review Team found that, within the papers for the review, there was reference to LLM, to Reader/LLM and to LLM (Reader) without a sufficiently developed or clear articulation of the role and calling of lay ministers holding the bishop’s licence. The Review Team learned that working on the identity of LLM is on-going and would be around being Ministers of the Word. Lay vocations fall within the remit of the LLM Board. However, there is a different team to oversee lay training. The DDO’s perception is that the period of discernment for licensed lay ministry is far too short; this may go some way to explaining the transfer of those on this pathway to that of ordination. Stakeholder feedback from students, noted above, refers to little differentiation between training for licensed lay ministry and for ordination.

41. The Guildford LMP is said to reflect the ethos of the diocese. Through outstanding pastoral care and its developing community life, LMP acts as a community which is “all things to all people”, that is, not with any particular theological tradition in view. The recent shift to a more thorough promotion of mission through local churches and to take a “bottom-up” approach to discernment of that mission reflects the episcopal leadership. The Review Team learned that the bishops are enthusiastic about the creation of the Foundations in Ministry hub which offers a theological resource to all who are interested. This has opened up access to theology for around 150 people and has made a significant difference to vocation and ministry applications, with indications already that there is likely to be increase in the number of ordinands.

- 42. There are no universities with a theological faculty in Guildford diocese, though contact with the growing Keralan Christian community at Surrey University might be fruitful. The material used by Guildford LMP for teaching and resources is well prepared, using the expertise in the team and external scholars, both in person and in the online resources. One bishop has contributed to the programme. There has been a shared residential with Winchester diocese but because of the divergence in programmes between the dioceses it would not be possible for an ordinand to continue training seamlessly if they moved between dioceses.
- 43. With regard to links with local churches, the “Mission Partners” who are linked with each parish in the diocese, are both advocates of the programme and identify people who may be approached about training on it. They have gleaned from the ground the need of parishes and clergy; and the scope for “interested learners” to participate is a direct result of this. It was found that 80% of parish clergy felt overwhelmed by the demands for ministry and this became a way of providing well-equipped assistance.
- 44. Students are expected to have a support group, which also acts as pool of interested people who may themselves later offer for ministry.
- 45. The Review Team met some incumbents and found that they experience a close relationship with the LMP. One had trained in this way and had changed to “incumbent status”. Another was well versed in supervision skills but had attended the available LMP training and found it of good quality. However, it was apparent to the Review Team that not all incumbents participate in this training.
- 46. The links with local churches were valued by students. The hospital chaplaincy provides a multi-faith experience in the programme, and a weekend on this topic happens regularly. The Guildford LMP Self-evaluation explains that multi-faith and multi-cultural placements are mandatory.
- 47. All ordinands undertake non-parish ministry placements in the second year and, for all students, a placement in a church other than the student’s own happens in the final year. There are opportunities to engage with prisons, hospitals, the military, the town centre and the waterways. Placements are highly valued by students as a practical expression of learning. Indeed, by comparison, there seemed to be some denigration amongst the students of the theoretical and academic work. The recent Guildford LMP Self-Evaluation identifies the need to work with the Common Awards team to achieve greater integration of academic and practical study. Accordingly, we **recommend** that the Guildford LMP articulates more clearly the value of “academic study”, together with information about the availability (and desirability) of ongoing opportunities for practical learning and experience in the future.
- 48. Student feedback indicates that the experience of placement supervisors varies considerably; and the core staff admitted that there is no way of ensuring that supervisors or training incumbents (see above) attend the briefings and make the kind of assessments that are requested by Guildford LMP. In the light of student perception, we **recommend** that the Guildford LMP identifies those

students whose training incumbent or placement supervisor is not offering adequate supervision and, if necessary, provide an alternative supervisor within the parish or move the student to another parish. The Review Team is aware that the staff are determined to address this robustly but consider that the recommendation provides a benchmark to monitor this important point in ministerial formation.

#### **Recommendation 4**

**We recommend that Guildford LMP articulates more clearly the value of academic study alongside the opportunities for practical learning and experience in the future provision of IME2 for lay and ordained candidates.**

#### **Recommendation 5**

**We recommend that Guildford LMP identifies situations where the training incumbent or placement supervisor is not offering adequate provision and takes appropriate actions for the sake of the student's ministerial formation.**

49. *With regard to Oxford*, there is an impressive level of agreement, between all those that the Review Team met, about the purposes and aims of the LMT. The Director of Ministry and Mission described this as aiming to develop accessible learning pathways to suit a variety of learning styles, that encourages life-long learning. The development of the Learning Hub, offering high quality material for “interested learners”, is at the heart of this, while the training of candidates for licensed and authorised ministry has developed from this foundation. In a large and complex diocese, the adoption of the principle of subsidiarity has given permission to local churches and deaneries to develop ministry appropriate to their particular situations. This has resulted in the need for a diversity of choices in the options offered, while aiming for simplicity of access.
50. Oxford LMT does not aim to train those of future incumbent status as this would be in competition with valued partners in other TEIs.
51. With seven universities and three theological colleges in the diocese, there is ample opportunity for partnerships with educational experts. There are close links in particular with Ripon College, Cuddesdon, which matches their link with CMS in pioneer, youth and children’s training. The insights and expertise of the Open University has contributed to the LMP, especially through the advice of an OU Professor who is an Authorised Preacher in the diocese (Professor Helen King), as well as through digital pedagogy.
52. Placements are organised with hospitals, prisons and other local faith and community organisations, as well as with local churches of a different churchmanship and style to that known by the ministerial candidate. The visits to mosques and the crematorium were especially valued by students, which was confirmed both by past and present students.

53. Links with and resources for training incumbents are provided, though “take up” is still dependent on the incumbent’s willingness to engage. Accordingly, we **recommend** that, when and if there is evidence that a training incumbent is not offering sufficient levels of supervision, the candidate is provided with an alternative local supervisor or, in some circumstances, moved to another church.
54. We **commend** the modules which are developed by the module Lead with the assistance of a course writer and guest writers, group tutors, formation tutors, and an online learning curator. This results in a rich bank of resources which draws from a range of Christian traditions, including insights from Black and feminist theology.

#### Commendation 7

**We commend Oxford LMT’s creation of a rich resource and well-balanced modules for training.**

#### Recommendation 6

**We recommend that, in cases where a training incumbent is not offering sufficient levels of supervision, the Oxford LMT takes appropriate action for the sake of the students’ ministerial formation.**

55. *With regard to the Winchester Team*, the training for licensed lay ministry takes place through a partnership with Sarum College. The Review Team have made a recommendation above to heighten the effectiveness of this important partnership.

#### **B2 There are well understood and embedded practises of corporate life, so as to enhance the process of students’ formation.**

56. *With regard to South Central TEI*, most policies and practices relating to community life are those of the participating dioceses. The SCTEI Overview Board has reviewed and adopted these. It has responsibility for ensuring the compliance of each centre with the agreed policies and commitments. The Review Team has expressed some concerns about the effectiveness of the Overview Board’s operation, and have made a recommendation under criteria C.
57. *With respect to Guildford LMP*, the sense of community between the students was evident as they greatly valued the fellowship and support which they enjoyed with each other. Ordinands and LLMs train alongside each other. This has clearly helped them to understand each other’s ministry at an informal level, but there is a lack of intentional exploration of this distinctiveness and calling in their fellowship groups or in the exploration of traditional ministry. Accordingly, we **recommend** that the Guildford LMP gives further attention to assisting ordinands and candidates for licensed lay ministry to articulate their distinctive calling. This is also referred to at section E.
58. Policies on corporate life (e.g. complaints, bullying) and academic policies (plagiarism, assessment) are well formulated and available on the Moodle site. Few students, however, found Moodle easy to navigate. Students reported that it was cumbersome because they had met

difficulty in finding forms, unlocking modules and gaining access to the Theology Hub. Moodle has the capacity to enhance “flipped” learning and to be more accessible for neuro-diverse students and those with caring responsibilities or working with non-standard hours. Consequently, we **recommend** that Guildford LMP gives attention to the improvement of induction to the Moodle site and to ongoing support regarding Moodle with the students. This is also noted under Criterion D.

59. Community life for Guildford LMP is built largely through face-to-face encounters. There has been strong resistance amongst the student body to a return to the kind of online learning necessitated during and immediately after lockdown. This may be connected with student unease over Moodle. The depth in relationships that allows vulnerability and develops emotional maturity, is actively promoted. The Guildford LMP Self-Evaluation shows that careful attention has been paid to issues of mental health, self-care and the consideration of the stress of undertaking the learning programme. Safeguarding is addressed through regular input and the most recent report was sent to the diocesan Bishop with no further action required.
60. Activities for spouses and families are very much appreciated and demonstrate care for the whole person of the trainees.
61. The information at induction states clearly that diversity is at the heart of learning since it is from the differences between people that each learns new perspectives.
62. The worship attended by the Review Team was warm and enthusiastic, perhaps overly upbeat as it was from the BCP and during Lent. Worship is at the heart of the community, much more than being simply the preamble to learning. A recommendation concerning worship is made below.
63. There are appropriate structures for student feedback. Unfortunately (and perhaps understandably) the feedback from each year corrects the changes of the previous year, so that, for example, attempts to put some modules after ordination had been reversed the following year.

### **Recommendation 7**

**We recommend that Guildford LMP gives further attention to assisting ordinands and candidates for LLM to articulate their distinctive lay or ordained calling.**

### **Recommendation 8**

**We recommend that Guildford LMP gives attention to the improvement of induction to the Moodle site and to ongoing student support with regard to Moodle.**

64. *With respect to Oxford*, the use of tutors as facilitators for online learning has enabled a greater diversity of representation of age, gender and ethnicity. This could be developed further and foregrounded in study days and residential efforts, including efforts to include more non-ordained tutors, which is in view. Some potential lay tutors are being developed for the future. The Review Team encourage this strongly.

65. The safeguarding report to the Oxford Overview board is detailed and practical. DBS requirements for volunteer tutors are carried out. Ongoing review and monitoring of all aspects of safeguarding is time-tabled, with regular reports to the Overview Board, as planned.
66. Online learning groups demonstrated a clear sense of collaborative learning. These groups were composed of “interested learners” as well as ordinands and candidates for licensed lay ministry. This meant that there was a variety of levels of preparation for the evening’s work, which in principle could decrease the effectiveness of these sessions. This did not seem to impair training for ministry. Some students said they had chosen modules in order to stay together and so were forming their own communities.
67. The purpose of formation groups has now been explained more clearly to students, though there remains evidence from current and past students, that vocational conversations, and assistance in articulating their own sense of calling, has not been well facilitated. One ordinand commented that it was only when they entered the process of discernment for ordained ministry that they were asked to engage in an examination of their calling. **Whilst this student concern is primarily a matter for the vocations team of the diocese of Oxford, there is an issue for Oxford LMT for those students who commence training before the formal discernment process is well advanced.**
68. This is especially true for candidates for licensed *lay* ministry. The purpose of the diocese to be outward facing in mission, as noted in section A above, and the ministry of lay people in this can be fundamental. The LLMs are well placed to be leaders in outward facing mission and this was evidenced by those in training who spoke of their ministry at work and in the community, which is considerably enhanced by the knowledge and confidence they had gained on the LMT. Accordingly, we **recommend** that Oxford LMT provides greater opportunity for a clearer articulation of the potential contribution of licensed *lay* ministry in mission. This specific contribution to mission is part of being called to serve a world-facing church for which emphasis the Oxford LMT is otherwise commended (see **Commendation 25**, below).
69. The students felt that their voice was heard and attributed this in large measure to personal contact with the Dean and Lead for Oxford LMT, rather than structurally through a planning council or committee. Having one focal person, however effective, to handle all difficulties can place undue stress and reliance on that individual and risks inadvertently modelling a form of ministry that resists collaboration. In this regard, we **recommend** that more effective use is made of wider channels of communication through governance arrangements, to relieve pressure and over-reliance on the Dean.

### **Recommendation 9**

**We recommend that Oxford LMT provides opportunities for a clearer articulation of the place of licensed *lay* ministry in the mission of the diocese.**

## Recommendation 10

**We recommend that Oxford LMT makes more effective use of wider channels of communication for students to relieve pressure and over-reliance on the Dean.**

**B3 The provision of public social and private living accommodation is satisfactory (see also E3 for teaching accommodation).**

70. *With regard to Guildford LMP*, the move of site for the diocesan office has meant that all teaching evenings are held at Millmead Baptist church. Its premises are well equipped and fully accessible, though the chapel is only just adequate in size and could not take any more participants. There is a large space on the ground floor, used by the Baptist congregation, which might be available if the plans for LMP expansion advance. It was noted that there was a difficulty with acoustics in the building; carpets and soft furnishings would aid this. There were however a number of smaller rooms suited for the delivery of teaching sessions. We comment further in section D.
71. The LMP administrator confirmed that the new diocesan offices would not be suitable for accommodating a training programme. Arrangements have already been made for the 2025/2026 programme to take place at Millmead Baptist church.
72. It is possible that the current arrangements would not be suitable for some neuro-diverse students who would benefit from the quiet location of online learning through an improved Moodle platform. Such might also benefit those of restricted mobility or who have caring responsibilities at home. Whilst the Moodle systems of Guildford LMP and Oxford LMT are not aligned, there would be benefit in exploring how Guildford students might benefit from some access to Oxford's online learning resources.
73. Residential weekends are held at De Vere Hotel, Horsley Park. The Review Team were not able to visit this venue.
74. *With regard to Oxford*, online platforms are used for much of the delivery of training. This use of online learning considerably reduces mileage costs across a large diocese and has enabled access to learning for those prevented by restricted mobility or other responsibilities to engage in study. There is some evidence of reduced use of online resources amongst students: not all access Moodle for feedback and personal contributions, though greater effort has been made this year to instruct new students in the use of this platform.
75. Oxford LMT ensures that careful choice of material takes place, so that "controversial" or more challenging material was covered face-to-face on study days.
76. Most formation groups meet either in Church House (Kidlington, Oxford) or at Ripon College, Cuddesdon. Milton House Hotel and St Mary Wantage are also used for residencies and the Jubilee Centre in Oxford and Christ Church Abingdon for study days. The Review Team were not able to

visit these venues but noted the comments in Oxford's ASE that the venues were chosen for accessibility and covid-safety.

77. *With regard to the Winchester Team*, the course has re-located from the bishop's house to the diocesan offices which provide good seminar and worship facilities.
- B4 The TEI's corporate worship and liturgy are balanced in range and tradition, including authorised and innovative rites.**
78. *With regard to Guildford LMP*, the Worship Policy states that the LMP's aspiration is to develop confidence, resilience and creativity in leading authorised forms of worship. The students said that they were given quite brief instruction about putting together acts of worship in their first year but valued feedback which they received on those occasions which they delivered. The difficulty of access to resources on Moodle, which gives ideas about varieties of forms of worship, may be an issue here.
79. Sometimes the first meeting of each session is led by the tutor as a way of providing a model. The Guildford LMP Self Evaluation identifies a changing ethos in worship, with a move towards more creativity, the inclusion of charismatic as well as contemplative worship, and input from the Global Majority. Student reps commented on a perceived bias amongst the staff towards informality and also the use of many songs in worship which were not always known by all. The Review Team are aware that the staff of Guildford LMP consider that this comment under-appreciates the degree to which the staff model formal worship, especially in relation to Eucharistic acts of worship. This may well be true. However, the student perception needs to be taken seriously with regard to the range and diversity of approaches to worship. There is an absence of student representation and a student "voice" in the Guildford LMP governance (see paragraph 99 in section C). In addition, in the context that students are in most respects highly positive about their experience of training, the reservations raised about worship (and also marking deadlines, as seen in paragraph 139 in section D) need to be given due weight.
80. The worship on Guildford LMP is intended to express the breadth of spirituality amongst the current students and also to provide ministerial formation for the students leading of worship in a range of current and future diverse situations. This includes opening students to a greater range of music and informality as well as formality, however unfamiliar some elements of this might be for particular students. This is accepted. The evening service attended by the Review Team was a BCP Evening Prayer during Lent. This was led with sincerity and conviction by the students and expressed their genuine spirituality. The music offered and the closing prayers did not very fully reflect the liturgical language or season. Accordingly, the Review Team consider that students would gain from fuller preparation by the Guildford LMP in leading worship that presents the specific ethos of the rite used and emphasis of the liturgical season or occasion. This would strengthen the provision of ministerial formation for the students.

81. The Review Team are also aware that the high number of students attending evening worship means that worship space used on Mondays feels overcrowded. In the light of all these observations, the Review Team **recommends** that Guildford LMP gives further consideration to how best to fulfil the stated worship policy recorded in para 78 above and reviews the worship space used for evening worship.

#### **Recommendation 11**

**We recommend that Guildford LMP gives further consideration to how best to fulfil its stated worship policy and reviews the space used for evening worship.**

82. *With regard to Oxford*, the Worship Policy states that learning takes place academically, through placements and through participation in corporate worship. Worship is therefore at the heart of the LMT. Feedback and learning from experience are expected.

83. There is an impressive bank of resources on Moodle to facilitate greater diversity of worship, though the use of this is at the choice of individual students. The Worship Policy, which is explicitly designed for Ordained Assistant Ministers and Licensed Lay Ministers, states that ordinands are to be given feedback after reading acts of worship at residencies and study days. There was some evidence, from observation and student feedback, that this could be improved. Accordingly, we **recommend** that Oxford LMT give attention to ensuring that all ministerial candidates receive due preparation and feedback when leading worship.

#### **Recommendation 12**

**We recommend that Oxford LMT gives attention to ensuring that all ministerial students receive due preparation and feedback when leading worship.**

84. The Review Team did not have the opportunity to participate in worship at Winchester.

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

85. *With regard to South Central TEI*, the TEI is to be **commended** for the extent to which staff modelling is taken very seriously, in prayer, worship, establishing boundaries to ministry and work, and involvement in churches. Reactions to adversity, and relations with each other and with students, receive careful attention.

86. It is acknowledged that in each diocesan centre, the staff size results in reduced capacity to provide study leave, sabbaticals and to attend conferences. Illness, absence and appointment to another post creates challenges. This is considered further in section D.

87. The SCTEI Self-Evaluation, Overview and Scene Setting documents identify the need for an increase in teaching staff and more expertise in technology and online/mixed mode learning. The effect of such an increase in operations and changes required are addressed in Section C.

## Commendation 8

### We commend the South Central TEI for the extent to which staff modelling is taken very seriously.

88. *With regard to Guildford LMP*, the students said that the tutors were excellent role models in their academic expertise and pastoral care. This was apparent in all the Reviewers' interactions with academic and administrative staff and with students. The Review Team had some concern that core staff are working extremely hard and, though there is great appreciation of what they do, their capacity to sustain this level of energy and commitment is questionable. This may present a model of excessive work. The introduction to this Review, taking up stakeholder feedback, has specially made a **recommendation** with regard to Guildford LMP (**Recommendation 2**).
89. Alongside this, we **commend** the core staff for their excellent provision of academic, pastoral and spiritual care and support, which is all much appreciated by the students. We also **recommend** that Guildford LMP undertakes a review of workload, and especially in anticipation of any increase in future student numbers. This is also raised in section D.
90. The Guildford LMP documents prepared for this Review show an awareness of the need for greater diversity amongst the core staff and some work is being done to address this with the Common Awards Management Committee. One bishop commented that, though 17% of the population in the diocese were non white, this presence is concentrated in a few urban areas and the proportion of parishes diverse in ethnic background was correspondingly smaller. It is, however, essential that the student body and staff are more representative of the population in the diocese, and we encourage initiatives to address this.

## Commendation 9

### We commend the Guildford LMP staff for their excellent provision of academic, pastoral and spiritual care and support.

## Recommendation 13

### We recommend that Guildford LMP undertakes a review of staff workloads.

91. *With regard to Oxford*, current and past students report that the staff model good listening, guidance and acceptance of a variety of views. The staff are seen to be living out their faith, placing prayer at the heart of theological study, and are relatable with a good sense of humour. Accordingly, we **commend** the core staff highly for their excellent provision of academic, pastoral and spiritual provision and support, which is all much appreciated by the students.
92. Core staff have either completed or are completing DELTA in regard to professional expertise. The last PER strongly recommended provision in employment contracts for study leave, book grants, etc. Whilst the SCTEI has a long-standing and robust policy for staff development, it was not clear that this was being followed fully until recently. We noted the Dean had received a sabbatical last year. The policy seems now to be followed more fully, though staff are still exhibiting considerable

signs of stress through the demands of the innovative programmes, not least the speed by which new programmes have lately been introduced. This reinforces **Recommendation 10** made above in Criterion B2 regarding channels for communication and feedback.

#### **Commendation 10**

**We commend Oxford LMT staff for their excellent provision of academic, pastoral and spiritual care and support.**

93. *With regard to the Winchester Team*, the core staff provided excellent role models of intellectual grasp, spiritual awareness and pastoral depth. This was strongly affirmed by the students we met.

**The review team has Confidence in**

- the South Central TEI
- the Winchester Ministry and Mission team

**with regard to Criterion B: Formational Context.**

**The review team has Confidence with Qualifications in**

- Guildford LMP
- Oxford LMT

**with regard to Criterion B: Formational Context.**

## Section C: Leadership and Management

### C1 The TEI has clear and effective governance structures.

94. *With regard to South Central TEI*, a clear arrangement for an Overview Board has been agreed, which was a major recommendation of the last PER in 2019. The terms of reference include oversight of the delivery of Common Awards, and other aspects of licensed ministry. This includes preparation for authorised ministries and for “interested learners”. The Board has membership drawn from each supporting diocese, and reports to the respective Bishop’s Councils, communicating with each diocesan Management Committee. In practice, the Common Awards management Committee, a closely cohesive meeting of the leading staff of each diocesan scheme, carries out the essential management and arrangements, supported by an excellent Academic Registrar. This is understandable, though a SCTEI Overview Board is important as having some independence of the Management Committee, an opportunity to draw on expert voices from outside SCTEI, and to promote the SCTEI in each diocese. It is not clear to the Review Team that the Overview Board is as effective in these matters as had been hoped by the last PER. There is only limited evidence, in the minutes of the annual meeting, that the Overview Board makes an impact in these areas.

95. Stakeholder feedback suggests that one reason for this low profile is the infrequency of meeting and the relative lack of interaction between members outside of the annual meeting. There are suggestions that the Overview Board should meet two or more times a year, with opportunities for engaging more closely in the effective operations of the SCTEI. A further suggestion is that the valued appointment of the TEI “Critical Friend” or “Independent Quality Adviser”, who has good recent knowledge of South Central TEI, be enhanced with a clearer role given to the postholder. The Review Team did not have evidence of the degree to which the Overview Board draws together the strategic thinking of the bishops in each diocese, who are themselves not directly involved in the Overview Board. At a time of energetic initiatives in mission and foundation or discipleship courses in each of the supporting dioceses, and with developments for older candidates to be trained for Assistant Ordained Ministry, shared thinking and direct encouragement to the South Central TEI could be significantly beneficial. It would prepare for the likelihood that in eighteen months the formal TEI will constitute the two dioceses of Oxford and Guildford. This would enhance the recommendations made in this review concerning greater staff liaison and the sharing of good practice. This cooperation can continue between dioceses which are no longer formally part of the South Central TEI.

96. A new Deed of Collaboration and Partnership between the three dioceses has recently been signed and so it is timely to recommend a strengthening of the operation of the Overview Board, to ensure that the signatories are active in carrying through good intentions in the deed, to be more closely engaged in the developments and more proactive in confidently promoting the South central TEI. In this regard, **we recommend** the strengthening of inter-diocesan cooperation

through the Overview Board and that these measures for communication and inter-relatedness be reviewed by the Overview Board in twelve months' time.

#### **Recommendation 14**

**We recommend that the SCTEI Overview Board initiates ways of strengthening the inter-diocesan cooperation through the Overview Board so that its oversight become more evident and effective, and that changes are reviewed in twelve months' time.**

97. *With regard to Guildford LMP*, the Review Team found good evidence that the purpose and governance of the LMP was well integrated with the structures of the diocese. There is an excellent relationship between the diocesan senior leadership and the Dean and staff of the LMP. The bishops are fully supportive and enthusiastic about LMP; the Dean is grateful for ready and honest access to them. The development of the Theology Hub and the recruitment of “interested learners” has been a response to the expressed needs of local church and is in line with the diocese’s strategy for discipleship and vocations.
98. The Guildford Diocesan Overview Board for LMP has only recently been established and the governance structures are bedding down. Guildford Diocese is the formal and legal body that relates to the Durham Common Awards on behalf of the SCTEI and this responsibility is administered thoroughly and effectively. Guildford diocese ensured that all the dioceses gave close scrutiny to their commitment, aware of the financial and governance risks, and with due attention to insurance issues. As a result, Guildford diocese was able to sign the renewed Deed of Collaboration and Partnership on behalf of SCTEI.
99. With regard to student representation in governance and management, the Guildford LMP has decided not to duplicate the input students have within the Common Awards arrangements. Mindful of the considerable time commitment this involves, Guildford LMP takes student feedback to the university and applies it within the diocese. Where matters require more direct student representation the core team apply direct to the student reps or the wider student body by way of questionnaires, individual feedback and termly meetings.
100. *With regard to Oxford*, the new Oxford diocesan Overview Board reports to the Bishop’s Council, with a remit for initial licensed lay ministry, the Ordained Assistant ministers’ pilot and curates taking common Awards as part of IME2. It is chaired by the Bishop of Dorchester who has a “ministry brief” for the diocese. Conversations with the Bishop of Dorchester, the Director of Finance and the Director for Mission and Ministry demonstrated a clarity and unanimity about the purposes and aims of the LMT. This is **commended**. There is a clear process for budgeting and future planning. Oxford diocese is in a relatively healthy financial position and is willing to confidently underwrite expenditure on the Programme until 2030.

101. The initial papers from Oxford acknowledged that the membership of the Overview Board did not then include anyone who is UKME or GMH. With the formation of a new Board in the spring of 2025, two UKME members have been appointed and make active contributions."

### Commendation 11

**We commend the clarity, unanimity and support of the senior leadership of the diocese for Oxford LMT.**

102. *With regard to the Winchester Team*, arrangements for oversight and accountability are being developed in a new situation. The team report to an Area Bishop, who has a brief for ministry in Winchester diocese, and through this to the Bishop's Council.

### C2 The TEI has effective team leadership

103. *With regard to the South Central TEI*, the review Team were impressed by the collegiality, mutual expertise, enthusiasm, commitment and co-working of the Common Awards Management Committee. This represented a very significant step forward compared to the findings of the last PER and fulfils the recommendations made in 2019. We **commend** this. The SCTEI papers acknowledge that the membership of the core staff team remains uniformly white British, but notes that the team includes a good balance of men and women, age, church traditions and theological positions.

104. The remit of the Common Awards Management Committee also includes monitoring policies, considering external reports, evaluating and summarising student feedback, noting student progression, providing academic support and interfacing with Durham Common Awards. In this, the Committee is greatly helped by the Academic Registrar who facilitates networking across the TEI and provides the effective link with Durham University on behalf of the Committee. The last PER asked for a clearer arrangement of roles and the Review team of 2025 notes that the post-holder does not have a line manager for operating decisions, only for HR and necessary contractual matters. This would be good practice and would provide support and a way of checking back on operating decisions that might exceed the exact scope of responsibility given to the post-holder. This could be provided by a member of the Management Committee. We **recommend** that a structured process for the Academic Registrar's line-management for operational decisions is identified

105. Stakeholder feedback suggests that the TEI is effective at being informed about new opportunities to serve the Church both nationally and locally, being open to embrace new initiatives and to take risks.

106. The Review Team note that a substantial proportion of those students now taking courses across the centres are "independent learners" who may not be studying for Durham Common Awards. Nonetheless, the Review Team found that those studying for Durham Common Awards were well-supported and equipped.

### Commendation 12

**We commend the collegiality, mutual expertise, enthusiasm, commitment and co-working of the Common Awards Management Committee.**

### Recommendation 15

**We recommend that a structured process for the Academic Registrar's line-management for operational decisions is identified.**

107. *With regard to Guildford LMP*, the Dean and Academic Dean provide impressive leadership and direction. They report that they welcome the partnership and support which they enjoy with their colleagues in other dioceses and wish to continue cross-centre moderation and assessment even after the planned departure of the diocese of Winchester from the TEI in eighteen months.
108. *With regard to Oxford*, personal relationships with the core staff and other participating dioceses are strong and greatly appreciated. The leadership of the Dean is highly regarded, and the administrative staff speak of their wholesome appreciation for the staff working relationships and positive support for students in a welcoming work culture.
109. *With regard to the Winchester Team*, the Review Team were impressed by the leadership of the Head of the team and the enthusiastic and strategic thinking shared across the core staff.

### C3 **Trustees are appropriately recruited, supported and developed**

110. We refer to the SCTEI Overview Board above.
111. *With regard to Guildford LMP*, it is apparent that financial and legal expertise is available and represented on the new Board.
112. *With regard to Oxford*, Oxford Diocese is to be **commended** for the establishment of an Appointments Committee, which is a sub-committee of the Bishop's Council, to have responsibility for all appointments to boards and councils. This is designed to avoid any unconscious bias in such committees appointing their own participants. The Committee searches for members and seeks to ensure much greater diversity in representation, an initiative which already bears fruit. This practice is to be commended across the oversight of the whole SCTEI, if not already in place, as a model of good practice. At present, the Review Team are confident that there is sufficient depth and breadth of skills amongst the trustees to ensure that Oxford LMT operates effectively.

### Commendation 13

**We commend the Diocese of Oxford for the appointment and pro-active work of its Appointments Committee.**

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

- 113. *With regard to South Central TEI*, policies relating to financial budgeting, risk assessment etc are held by each diocese. Nonetheless, it is apparent that the Overview Board of SCTEI has responsibility to review these topics and assess their robustness. The most recent minutes of the Board demonstrate that this is being done, though the Review Team have made a recommendation above for strengthening the Overview Board of SCTEI.
- 114. *With regard to Guildford LMP*, the diocese of Guildford appears well aware of, and prepared for, the risks associated with this training programme. The risks include the potential weakness, when Winchester leaves the TEI, that diocesan staff will be required to assume tasks and responsibilities that hitherto been shared. At the same, there has been a sharp increase in expenses, particularly in operating costs experienced since 2022/3. There may also be a fall in the number of candidates for ministry. However, the current numbers of candidates is equally as high as any year since 2019. The “Caleb” stream, referred to above, has recruited effectively.
- 115. The comprehensive risk register and the presence of able staff will assist the diocese in meeting these challenges. The Guildford LMP is overseen and underwritten by the Diocesan Board of Finance. Both the Bishop and the Director of Ordinands expressed a desire to give positive consideration to the possibility of training more ordinands, including those of incumbent status, on the LMP. Such an expansion would probably require re-consideration of academic and administrative staffing costs and the provision of accommodation for training. At the present time, Guildford LMP is seen as providing valuable training and the new approach to grass-roots training in discipleship means that the LMP has a strongly positive public profile in the minds of parishes and the Bishop’s Council.
- 116. *With regard to Oxford*, cost monitoring is carried out in partnership with the Oxford DBF. Discussion with the Director of Finance indicated the priority in which the LMT is held and the commitment to its future funding. This funding is drawn from investments rather than from the “Parish Share” and so can be more secure. The diocesan budget up to 2030 prioritises the Learning Programme.
- 117. The diocese is aware of the financial and structural risks following the withdrawals of Sarum College and Winchester diocese from SCTEI. It is notable that in recent years, as LMT has developed and LLM training commenced, there has been an increase in operating costs borne by the diocese of Oxford, largely due to the removal of RME funding and partly reflecting the costs of the new web host. The Review Team are, though, confident of the financial security of LMT.
- 118. Oxford LMT’s risk document and processes are carried out by Oxford DBF.
- 119. The Oxford diocesan structures of governance are to be **commended** for their support of Oxford LMT and their future planning. There is no desire to train ordinands on an incumbent’s pathway (being reluctant to compete with neighbouring TEIs) but the training incumbents and others

express interest in expanding the numbers of “interested learners” as well as candidates for authorised and licensed ministries. The Review Team noted above that these innovations have brought renewed energy to local churches and are providing a pool of people who are exploring their vocation. An expansion of numbers would be likely to require an increase in the number of tutors and formation groups, in the availability of good spiritual directors, as well as an enlarged core staff. The Director of Finance was reassuring in explaining that there is financial provision for new projects in the next immediate years. Given that this funding comes from reserves, the funding could be readily available at short notice.

120. In view of the confident financial situation and enthusiasm for Oxford LMT, the Director of Finance and the Director for Mission and Ministry indicated a desire to generously resource new initiatives that could be shared with other dioceses, with a readiness to be a “laboratory” for future ministerial developments in the Church of England.

#### **Commendation 14**

**We commend the Oxford structure of governance for its support of Oxford LMT and its planning for future provision.**

**The review team has**

- **Confidence in SCTEI’s Common Awards Management Committee, and**
- **Confidence with Qualifications in SCTEI’s Oversight Board**

**with regard to Criterion C: Leadership and Management.**

**The review team has Confidence in**

- **Guildford LMP**
- **Oxford LMT**
- **the Winchester Ministry and Mission team**

**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.

121. Covering three dioceses (currently), each centre ensure that the programmes offered align with the aims and expectations of their corresponding dioceses, whilst at the same time, meeting the expectations of the national church.
122. The Review Team is satisfied that the curricula for learning and formation are being followed across the whole TEI. The Durham Common Awards Team confirm this, from Durham's point of view.
123. *With regard to Guildford*, the LMP offers pathways and programmes that relate coherently to the needs of the diocese. This was confidently affirmed by the bishops and the Director of Mission. The "local" element of the LMP is especially valued, and the Review Team saw this local element reflected in the mapping document, and the way the programme clearly builds on the diocesan commitment to nurturing discipleship and vocation among all Christians. Accordingly, **we commend** the Guildford LMP commitment to the local setting of students and the relationship of the LMP with discipleship programmes. The emphasis upon church-based mission would gain from a stronger acknowledgement of a world-facing faith, a point which has been made above in relation to Formational Aims. Both criteria D1 and E1 look for evidence that the TEI's programme is "world-engaging", helping students to draw on their life experience so as to be able to relate their life and their life and also to relate their faith to contemporary issues in the world.

#### Commendation 15

**We commend Guildford LMP for its commitment to the *local* setting of each parish and the relationship of LMP with discipleship programmes.**

#### Recommendation 16

**We recommend that Guildford LMP reviews its practice to give greater focus to the world-facing nature of mission, ministry and discipleship.**

124. *With regard to Oxford Ordained Assistant Ministry*, this two-year pilot project for older candidates, in partnership with Ripon College, Cuddesdon, is a Durham validated 120-credit pathway. The paperwork demonstrates that it has been thought through with care to ensure depth and breadth of learning. Given the small number of participants so far, the review Team **recommend** a robust review of the scheme once the first cohort approaches ordination. The Licensed Lay Ministry pathway is clearly mapped with the national formation framework.

### Commendation 16

**We commend Oxford LMT for the care and thought given to the instigation of its Ordained Assistant Ministry pilot scheme.**

### Recommendation 17

**We recommend a robust review of the OAMS scheme in twelve months' time, when the first cohort are completing the full span of initial training.**

125. *With regard to Winchester*, the Review Team noted the commitment to the support of students completing modules with Durham University and the ongoing teaching relationship with Sarum College begun in September 2024. The Review Team have already recommended above a review of the inter-connectedness with Sarum College in the Summer of 2025 in preparation for the next cohort that enters this training for Licensed Lay Ministry.

### D2 **The TEI's taught programmes are appropriate resourced, developed and quality assured.**

126. *With regard Guildford LMP*, recent staff changes have brought a welcome fresh approach to staff development, including a generous book allowance and two weeks study leave per year for full and part-time staff. All staff are engaged in academic research or writing and are encouraged to join the theological educators' network. The Review Team found a real sense that staff are taken seriously as academics, both amongst students and colleagues. The Review Team observed that the small core staff is overstretched by the demands, and we have made a **recommendation** about this above. **Recommendation 2** asks for a period of consolidation, the bedding down of existing and agreed future plans, to take into account the capacity amongst the staff.

127. Students have access to the Common Awards HUB, although some choose to pay to use Perlego. A physical library is available at the cathedral. The Review Team heard significant complaints about Moodle – although this is not a universal concern – and staff recognise that this is an “on-going conversation”. **Recommendation 8** about this is referred to above. This recommendation is the Guildford LMP initiates a fresh approach to engaging students with the Virtual Learning Environment, perhaps in conversation with SCTEI partners in Oxford.

128. The core staff are aware of students with specific educational needs and are increasing testing for neurodivergence. This comes within the remit and care of the Academic Dean. Some students describe themselves as feeling under pressure to balance study with other commitments, but they also speak warmly of how staff respond positively to this and there is a general sense of support.

129. Students are given feedback via Moodle, but also verbally on each module. There was strong evidence that students are heard, and that staff respond well to feedback. Accordingly, we **commend** Guildford LMP for its care and support for student feedback.

130. The Review Team has noted above that SCTEI has a robust and long-standing policy for staff development. We **recommend** that Guildford LMP formulates its own up-to-date version of this staff development policy as recommended for Guildford in the last PER, to support its new practice.

### **Commendation 17**

**We commend Guildford LMP for its care and support for student feedback.**

### **Recommendation 18**

**We recommend that Guildford LMP formulates a revised staff development policy which supports its current practice.**

131. *With regard to Oxford*, there is a small core staff, with associate tutors brought in to facilitate the LLM teaching (and formerly the LMP). The core team is stretched but staff are to be commended for the careful thinking and engagement with partners during the closing of LMP and the inception of the Ordained Assistant Ministry scheme. Associate tutors are invited to annual training on pedagogy with External facilitators. The Review Team note that there is an espoused commitment to drawing on the experience of ministers across the diocese, which in turn offers them opportunities for educational development.

132. Moodle is well-resourced and maintained, having a clear structure that students understand, with helpful notes for the formational tutors. Students confirmed that they find accessing the HUB straightforward and they are positive about the variety of other resources available to them.

133. There is a strong commitment to inclusion. For example, there is support for students operating beyond their own first language, and support for students with neurodivergence. Students spoke of being supported in their learning more generally. They are encouraged to review modules, reporting that “Tutors listen to feedback, and we see changes as a result”. Students are invested in the learning of those in the next cohorts and the Review Team found a strong sense of collaboration between staff and students. Accordingly, we **commend** the Oxford commitment to the resourcing of associate tutors.

### **Commendation 18**

**We commend Oxford LMT for its commitment to the resourcing of associate tutors.**

134. *With regard to Winchester*, the Review Team note the disappointment of the staff at the decision to step away from SCTEI. Across the TEI, all staff continue to find peer support and they hope to maintain this informally, along with their inter-connections with Sarum College. In addition to the Common Awards HUB, students have access to the diocesan library and the Sarum College library. The Review Team were impressed by the staff commitment to the care and support of students. This was affirmed by the students themselves. The Review Team have already **commended** this care (**Commendation 2**).

135. The programme from all three centres, and SCTEI, have been quality assured by the Durham Common Awards team.

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

136. *With regard to Guildford LMP*, the Review Team found commitment to face-to-face learning, which is possible because the furthest travelling distance within the diocese is 45 minutes. The current location for teaching is the Millmead Baptist church, which is not fully adequate for the purpose: the chapel is too constrained, and some teaching rooms are too small to accommodate everyone comfortably, especially if numbers expand. The Review Team have noted this above, and a **recommendation 11** is made.

137. Students meet for worship on Monday evenings, before separating into year groups for modules. Pre-reading and extra work are accessed via the VLE, and assessment methods are varied. Educational experience amongst the students is broad, and there is a stated commitment to widen participation to be more inclusive of those from working class and GMH backgrounds.

138. Students speak warmly of the “transformational teachers”, who embody their faith as well as their learning. Staff are committed to mutual learning, one recognising that “there is wisdom in the room”. Some students hoped for a greater opportunity for “practical” learning beyond the placement, and this is noted above by the Review Team and **recommendation 4** is made. In addition, we **recommend** that Guildford LMP considers making use of ‘site visits’ to local churches to teach the practicalities of liturgy and pastoral theology.

139. Feedback on assignment is described by students as “fair” and supportive of their overall learning, although the timelines of marking and feedback is variable, which was a source of frustration expressed by students. Given that Guildford LMP is determined to place high priority on turnaround times for marking and giving students feedback on their work, we do not consider a recommendation to do so is required.

#### **Recommendation 19**

**We recommend that Guildford LMP considers making use of site visits to local churches to increase learning about the practicalities of liturgy and pastoral theology.**

140. *With regard to Oxford*, learning takes place on site at the diocesan offices at weekend and online with formation groups. Online material is compiled by one person and there is coherence to the VLE and sufficient technical support. There is an introduction to study skills and the VLE, and students described themselves as feeling comfortable using it. A number of students began their involvement as “interested learners”, so were already familiar with the style.

141. Staff were described by students as embodying both breadth of knowledge and a “lived-out” faith.

142. The Review Team found evidence that students are supported and know what is expected of them regarding module requirements. There is sufficient variety and challenge in the modes of assessment. Feedback was considered fair and constructive. The pathways (OAMS and LLM) have been designed with more mature candidates in mind, and students noted that their life experiences, as well as their faith, are considered important and significant to learning. OAMS students appreciate that there is an ongoing conversation with the national ministry team regarding the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) during their first (discernment) year. The issue is that OAMS students can only access funding and support (e.g. software to assist those with dyslexia) when they are formally "in training". Formally, the first year is "discernment", prior to selection, even though the year also includes "training". The possibility of funding only comes in their second year. The students appreciate that their staff are engaging in this issue on their behalf. This is a structural issue for "Caleb" or "Elizabeth" type schemes.

#### **Commendation 19**

**We commend the clarity of the VLE offered by Oxford LMT for the help it gives to students.**

143. *With regard to Winchester*, the students are offered a mixture of study weekends, study days, and online tutorials. Students spoke positively about the clear communication of expectations from the staff, the variety of assessments – from essays to 'role-playing' exercises – as well as the constructive, timely and helpful feedback which they received. The students were able to give their feedback on modules, which "brought a real sense of collaboration" to the learning experience.

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

144. *With regard to Guildford LMP*, modules are designed to allow students to engage with the local context, and the modules are appropriate for assistant ministry or LLM.

145. Students spoke warmly of their sense of personal, academic and faith development over the course of training. The bishops, the Diocesan Director of Ordinands, and the Director of Ministry, emphasized the significance of the LMP for the diocese and valued the combination of high-quality teaching and pastoral care. From observation and conversation, the Review Team found evidence of staff commitment to the nurture and development of all students.

146. The Review Team noted above that the diocese of Guildford had introduced a one-year "Caleb" scheme for older candidates with relevant knowledge and experience who may offer for assistant ordained ministry. The training takes place alongside "discernment", with the inside of a weekday once a week being devoted to this. The Dean and diocese seem enthusiastic about the positive impact of this scheme and the development of the students during their time of discernment and training. This scheme will be repeated, on a similar basis, from September 2025. The Review Team received some feedback from the current "Caleb" students. Many positive points are made, for

example the value of being part of a group of students and the quality of teaching. Reference is also made to the rather rushed and compressed nature of the training and the stress of undertaking this alongside “discernment”. A humorous comment is reported that: “if you sneeze, you miss one of the gospels being taught”. But the serious point is raised that personal formation for ministry is difficult to achieve in one year, especially if candidates lack an existing firm foundation of theological knowledge and lack a sufficient depth of formation for discipleship.

- 147. *With regard to Oxford*, the Review Team found that students were aware of module expectations, understood academic malpractice, and had ‘clear scaffolding’ given to the about assignments. Ethical Research policy is an SCTEI matter, dealt with centrally by the Common Awards Management Committee, although not many students are engaged in research.
- 148. Students spoke of a sense of ‘nurture’ from staff, as well as a confidence that they could discuss and understand areas for improvement in their work. They ‘grew’ in their critical thinking by their engagement with study.
- 149. *With regard to Winchester*, the Review Team found the Student Handbook both clear and helpful. Students were confident that they understood learning outcomes and spoke of the support they received. The Review Team notes that during the transitional period, the Mission and Ministry Team of the diocese are prioritising students who are undertaking the Durham qualifications.

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

- 150. *With regard to Guildford LMP*, former students spoke positively about the level of integration of learning and ministry they received during their training, and how they were helped to become reflective practitioners. Theological reflection was described by students as “extremely important in the LMP – almost foundational”, and “it has become ingrained in me”.
- 151. Amongst current students, placements are understood to be opportunities to engage in practical ministry in contexts that challenge and develop their learning. There was some concern voiced about the relationship between the centre and the supervisors – not all of whom take up the opportunity and offer from the centre for conversation and training in supervision. Further to the **recommendation 5** made above about training in supervision, we also **recommend** that Guildford LMP gives greater consideration to the setting up of placements – perhaps involving diocesan officers (DDO/DofM) in order make the placements a more significant priority in the minds of receiving parishes.

#### **Recommendation 20**

**We recommend that Guildford LMP gives greater consideration to the setting up of placements in order to make the placements a more significant priority.**

152. *With regard to Oxford*, students learn together within formation groups which help them to think through with peers how faith and practice are integrated with learning.
153. A real strength of LMT, according to stakeholders and students, was Theological Reflection. This was widely praised and described by training incumbents as “grounded” in experience. A further strength was the commitment to train lay and ordained candidates together which reflects the collaboration required in parish ministry.
154. Placements are valued by those who undertake them but created in a rather *ad hoc* fashion, it seemed, and not sufficiently formally structured. The written paperwork describes the role of the placement supervisor, but due to small numbers participating, the setting up and monitoring of placements is more bespoke. Students valued being able to respond to placements with an assessed presentation as well as an assignment.
155. One area of potential development is the relationship between LMT and the training incumbents, both during and beyond initial training. Although there is a Handbook for Training Incumbents, the relationship between LMT and the TEI was described as ‘informal’, and some support and training would be beneficial. Accordingly, we **recommend** that Oxford LMT makes the setting up and monitoring of placements more rigorous. In addition to a recommendation already made under Criterion B, we also **recommend** that there is more structure to the relationship between Oxford LMT and the parishes where students are based.

#### **Commendation 20**

**We commend Oxford LMT for its teaching and practice of Theological Reflection.**

#### **Recommendation 21**

**We recommend that Oxford LMT makes the setting up and monitoring of placements more rigorous.**

#### **Recommendation 22**

**We recommend that Oxford LMT provides more structure to the relationship between Oxford LMT and the parishes where the students are based.**

156. *With regard to Winchester*, students were affirming of the support they received from staff about the centre’s structures for learning. Not only was there ‘great’ communication before they began studying, but a sense of understanding about the psychological adjustments required for the integration of learning and life. Tutors made themselves available to explain and support. Placements were fully explained and with appropriate paperwork. There are regular training ministers’ meetings.

**The review team has Confidence in**

- SCTEI
- Oxford LMT's training for Licensed Lay Ministry
- Winchester Ministry and Mission team

**with regard to Criterion D: Teaching and Learning.**

**The review team has Confidence with Qualifications in**

- Guildford LMP
- Oxford LMT's training for Ordained Ministry

**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.

157. *With regard to Guildford LMP*, the programme offered is outlined in various handbooks. In conversation with tutors and students, the Review Team were able to understand how the programme contributes to the formation, spiritual development and transformative experiences of the students.

158. The Review Team observed tutors and students worshipping together before Monday evening studies. They heard how all engage in student-led worship at residential weekends and on study days. The Review Team participated in BCP evening worship, which was led by students who showed great integrity. The worship was well communicated and facilitated community worship. It was apparent to the Review Team that the students would have benefitted from greater assistance from Guildford LMP in preparing worship. For example, the set psalm gave a potential focus on biblical lament, an opportunity suited to Lent, and the choice of music could have been more Lenten. Student feedback suggested that there are different church traditions within the student body and LMP worship could more authentically reflect this. This is discussed in paragraph 79 and **recommendation 11** made above refers to this. Students are given informal feedback when they lead worship both from students and tutors, but there is no formal feedback.

159. On the Monday evening session, “interested” learners of various church traditions are in attendance so that the student body have an experience of breadth by virtue of this presence. For example, six students due to begin the BA in Mission and Ministry youthwork qualification were auditing the Bible module as a preparation.

160. Students undertake a short-term block placement, and feedback indicates that this is for them a highlight of the training. They are encouraged to undertake this in a different church tradition or area of ministry to fill gaps in their experience, e.g. community work or chaplaincy, and this also provides some opportunities to be more world-engaging, outward focussed and relating scripture to contemporary issues, as well as to reflect theologically on leadership in the context of collaborative working. One student’s feedback remarked that “my chaplaincy placement was an opportunity to see and learn how others minister to those on the fringes of society. This was a very exciting experience”. This is commendable but, overall, the Review Team consider that more attention needs to be given by Guildford LMP to being “world-engaging” through the training, and **this is expressed above in recommendation 16 and section D**.

161. For arranging placements, students indicate their preference to their year tutor who approaches the supervisor to set this up. Supervisors are invited to a lunch where the Academic Dean talks through the expectations given to supervisors, including the theological reflection intended, with separate provision being made for supervisors unable to attend. The core staff are exploring

having a designated staff member for placements. Stakeholder feedback indicated that the Guildford LMP needs to be more intentional about the aim of placements. This can ensure that students and supervisors have a point of contact with this specific brief, and awareness of a broad range of possible placements from which a student may choose. The expectation of supervisors also needs to be emphasized to ensure consistency of experience. For example, one student rep reported that one student simply attended the placement and was not given the opportunity to be actively involved. **Accordingly, we make a further recommendation to amplify**

**Recommendation 20 already made above:**

**Recommendation 23**

**We recommend that Guildford LMP designates a member of staff to manage placements and to ensure consistency in the student experience.**

**Commendation 21**

**We commend Guildford LMP for the opportunities provided for students' learning, growth and formation through the placements, which the students clearly appreciate.**

162. *With regard to Oxford LMT*, the Review Team met students from a variety of contexts – rural town, multi-parish benefice, etc., and those training both for LLM and for ordination. One student spoke of the training as “a life-changing experience”, particularly their experience of the silent retreat which has led to their becoming a Benedictine oblate. The teaching around this helped their understanding of being a contemplative and reflective.
163. Diversity is integral to all training, with LLMs and ordinands training together. One student felt studying with ordinands “gave credibility” to training for LLM. Another appreciated how learning together transformed as well as formed them, and appreciated listening and hearing other voices which helped them question their own perspective and articulate it better. Students spoke of studying modules on liturgy – the tutor did this in a visual way which led to a better understanding, so, when leading services afterwards, students did this with more conviction, implementing their learning. The Leading Worship module on Moodle gave students the chance to experience services from around the world and to reflect on their impact and meaning. The day course explored different kinds of services – the structure and how services work was explained.
164. The Review Team have noted above that the number of ordinands is significantly lower because other TEIs are being given priority.
165. *With regard to the Winchester Team*, the Review Team met two second year ordinands – one for stipendiary and one for self-supporting ministry. It was clear that they have an infectious and life-transforming faith, and they shared with us how prayer is foundational to their lives.

- 166. Students take responsibility for leading worship at the in-person sessions on Saturdays and see it as a safe space to try different forms of worship whilst being mindful of the need to respect all church traditions.
- 167. Students spoke of their engagement with the Spirituality and Discipleship module which introduced them to Ignatian spirituality. This module led one student to engage with the Lectio 365 app which prays the bible by meditating on scripture based on the Ignatian model.
- 168. The staff in the Winchester team have, by their own admission, had a highly demanding journey over the last eighteen months due to the diocesan review and re-organisation of the training. The Review Team feel the staff have been traumatised by the speed and intensity of these experiences and we commend their laudable and loyal efforts.

#### **Commendation 22**

**We commend the Winchester Team for their resilience, tenacity and resourcefulness, which has brought them closer as a team.**

#### **Commendation 23**

**We commend the commitment of all the Winchester staff in ensuring that the remaining students complete training well and that structures are in place to make this a positive experience for the students.**

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

- 169. *With regard to Guildford LMP*, the Review Team noted that the students' feedback described the reflective Practice in Context (long) module as "the highlight of the course". Through this module, students reflect on their placement experience, coupled with a strong emphasis on theological reflection, which all enables students to reflect on their calling as a Christian disciple and also on their understanding of their ministerial calling.
- 170. Candidates for ordained and lay ministry train alongside each other and stakeholders see this as a particular strength of the LMP because this gives insight into different ministries and more importantly lays the foundation for collaborative ministry in different contexts in the increasingly mixed ecology of the Church of England. This has additional impact because the "interested learners" add a further dimension of difference to this mix. This is readily appreciated by the students. Accordingly:

#### **Commendation 24**

**We commend the strengths of lay and ordination candidates training together on Guildford LMP and the enrichment which "interested learners" bring.**

- 171. However, when asked, students were not able to articulate the distinctiveness of lay and ordained ministry and stakeholders commented that there should be more work done on LLM

distinctiveness. Former students, now in ministry, felt that this distinctiveness was not emphasised in training and only their first placement alerted them to formation being different. This point **underlines the significance of Recommendation 7 made above**, regarding strengthening the formational aspects of training for specifically LLM and for Ordained ministry, which is also amplified in Criterion E4 below.

172. Students could reflect on their growth in vocation. One student reflected, “The course has influenced my formation with every lecture and assignment we have. It is thoroughly practical, and I am using the new knowledge I am gaining every week in the parish”. Another wrote, “As a person called to ministry, I am aware that theological reflection needs to become part of daily living, building it into a regular rhythm and the fabric of daily life and work”. This demonstrated a recognition of the requirements of those called to public ministry and the need for spiritual robustness. It also indicated the **need to hold in balance preparation for practical aspects of ministry alongside the value of academic study, a point highlighted above in Recommendation 4**.
173. *With regard to Oxford LMT*, ordinands and LLMs training together provides an ideal opportunity for understanding the distinctive nature of ordained and lay ministry. The distinctiveness of LLM ministry is the subject of one study day and this enables better understanding of their role as lay ministers and why it is different from ordained ministry. The public facing role of both lay and ordained is recognised and understood, albeit the distinctive lay contribution to mission can be given greater emphasis (see Recommendation 9, above). Joint learning with LLM and ordained engaging with diversity and promoting collaboration is also a good outcome of training together. Students are from different church traditions and also from a variety of social backgrounds; they begin to understand how ministry differs depending on demographics.
174. The Ordained Assistant Ministry scheme, which runs as a pilot in partnership with Ripon College Cuddesdon (in response to the “Caleb” initiative) has very small student numbers and is in the early stages. Nevertheless, students have found this “good, challenging and stretching” and fit for the purpose of preparing them for public ministry in their local context. In the first year of this Scheme students are discerning their call to ordained ministry,
175. The Review Team heard that students value the integrated nature of training and the way that tutors demonstrate the practical application of their teaching to public and representative ministry. This aids students to apply similar integration in their training context.
176. One student spoke of their prison placement and hearing stories and testimonies from prisoners which encouraged the student in their willingness to share their own testimony. Learning on the courses translates into action by students in their work or church setting. One student shared how their experience of a multi-faith prayer space led them to replicate something similar in their school which was much appreciated by the students and which has borne fruit. The Foundations

for Reflective Practice in Context module has been instrumental in highlighting the role and call to ministry for some of the students.

177. The students appreciate the value of having “interested learners” studying alongside those in training and this provides a broad range of experiences of different church traditions, from large city churches to multi-parish benefices. This provides deeper understanding of the wider church, as well as challenging stereotypes and preconceptions. Accordingly, we **commend** this.

### **Commendation 25**

**We commend the integrated training offered by Oxford LMT which extends and deepens the students’ sense of vocation and understanding.**

178. *With regard to the Winchester Team*, the Review Team found evidence, in the paperwork provided and in interviews with staff and with students, of the growth in personal discipleship and in enabling discipleship in others. One student spoke of being given responsibility to lead a team in setting up a café style fresh expression evening service at their church and another of a lunch missional project for people in the community. These demonstrated opportunities for discipling others, coupled with an understanding and appreciation of the varieties of ministry – lay and ordained – as well as learning about being a public representative and leader who could identify gifts and take others with them in their leadership.

179. The “long placement” provides opportunities to preach and lead services but also to experience the breadth of the Church of England. Students report that the placement supervisors are supportive of students and offer them opportunities to grow and develop in ministry.

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

180. *With regard to Guildford LMP*, the Bishops and the senior staff made clear the diocesan commitment to diversity and providing diverse experiences for all students. This includes focussing on under-represented groups. The recent funding received from the Archbishops’ Council’s Racial Justice Unit to fund the diocesan appointment of a Racial Diversity Officer can support this aim. This post helpfully supplements the interfaith encounter in Southall which is part of the taught programme.

181. In addition, the Review Team heard that students have engaged with racial justice and unconscious bias at a study day delivered by a national church officer which enhanced the students’ awareness of racism and other prejudices. One student observed, when “coming alongside some vulnerable members of the wider community I have been privileged to help practically, but for some, my ministry has just been to sit with them in their hard place and offer prayer.”

182. First year students are buddied with students in later year cohorts which is valuable in providing support as they negotiate the new reality of juggling family, work and study and build new

friendships and networks to help sustain this. Students highlighted that the community feel amongst the students and tutors is a blessing of LMP training. This was confirmed in our meeting with the bishops who pointed to the high quality of the training and “the outstanding pastoral care of the students which is more linked together than in the past”.

### Commendation 26

#### **We commend Guildford LMP’s intentional work done in diversity and the efforts to embed this in future through assistance from the new diocesan appointment of a Racial Diversity Officer.**

183. *With regard to Oxford LMT*, the Review Team heard from both current and recent students about the transformational nature of listening to and working alongside others and sharing their faith in Christ. Some spoke about their learning particularly in areas of engaging in mission in the world and equipping others to do so. However, others, whilst agreeing that they were well prepared by the course for mission and evangelism, they were unable to put this into practice in the ways they would like, finding those LLMs who trained 20 or more years ago seeing their role as simply covering services and pastoral care. They added of themselves, “we do not see ourselves as simply ‘rota fodder’ – our training has taught us to engage and join in the ‘missio Dei’”. This positive outlook was very encouraging.
184. The Review Team heard how students on the course had opportunities for putting their learning into practice. For example, after the training on bereavement, death and funerals, one student was asked to support staff at school following the death of a pupil. The headteacher recognised there needed to be a designated person to whom staff and students could go for support and this student (a member of staff) was asked to fill this role as their training had equipped them. They did so readily. In contrast, others find it is not always possible to put learning into practice because their incumbent may feel threatened by the students’ new learning.
185. Practical experience for students engaging with diversity includes visits to mosques in Oxford and multi-faith and ecumenical experiences. For example, one student was given the opportunity to sit in on a Quaker and Muslim service and valued learning from this. Students recognise, from the pressure of training, that planning is needed to meet assignment deadlines. One student explained that they had discussed this with their family before commencing the training and so the family understood and knew how to provide support. Several students told reviewers how the Jesus and Salvation module delivered on a study day with Professor Anthony Reddie was most valuable in introducing them to different images of Jesus. The study of Julian of Norwich gave students a perspective of Jesus as mother; and the disabilities study day highlighted many issues for them to consider. The Review Team heard that these were not standalone experiences, but that diversity runs through the whole course.
186. Oxford LMT gives real priority to accessibility, with transcripts regularly reviewed for accessibility, to provision for a wide range of worship resources, and to a dedicated space on Moodle. This was impressive.

### Commendation 27

**We commend how Oxford LMT addresses issues of unconscious bias, racism and other prejudices in the Jesus and Salvation module, and how, in addition to specific study days, the thread of diversity runs through the whole course.**

### Commendation 28

**We commend the emphasis placed on diversity by Oxford LMT and the establishment of termly meetings with both disability and UKME advisers to gradually review and refine the programme in a more systematic way.**

187. *With regard to the Winchester Team*, the Introduction to Pastoral Care module addresses the major issues in regard to Criterion E3, highlighting how pastoral care happens within a church context and within the wider community, as well as reflecting on best safeguarding practice.
188. Students highlighted for the reviewers some points of formation, including racial justice and interfaith, where they felt they were given space to reflect and ask questions. Students shared with the reviewers the value of the informal support they provide for each other outside of the fellowship groups, particularly at “pinch points such as Christmas and Easter, when workload is increased”. They pray for and support each other, knowing they “are all in the same boat”.
189. Fellowship groups, introduced in response to the last PER of 2019, comprise people of different church traditions and social backgrounds. However, some fellowship groups are reported to be more effective and work better together than others, as not all members of some fellowship groups engage with it. This is a mixed picture. Some fellowship groups function well with all students engaging with the group and some, who live close to each other, also meeting for meals etc. However, some student’s engagement and involvement seemed minimal. Accordingly, the reviewers **recommend** a system of monitoring of the fellowship groups be put in place to address this disparity.

### Recommendation 24

**We recommend that the Winchester Team put in place a system of monitoring and support for fellowship groups to maximise their benefit for ministerial formation.**

#### **E4 Students are helped to grow in wisdom.**

190. *With regard to Guildford LMP*, we have already referred to the students’ awareness of seeking for a work/life balance so that they can cope with the stress and anxiety of training, balancing all this with home life and placements. The students emphasized that the staff were very helpful and supportive and that mutual student support in prayer partnerships was also significant for them, especially when they are together at the residential. Students commented that staff were good at adjusting workloads when necessary. For example, not having a Monday evening session directly

after a residential was seen as a constructive change. The personal tutor is the first port of call for students and this works well. Staff are seen as good role models of pastoral care.

191. Students appreciated how the staff team takes on board feedback and makes adjustments, for example in extending deadline dates for year 2 students after feedback from the previous cohort. One student highlighted commitment: “If this had been a secular course, we would all have left by now. We know what we are doing this for.”
192. The taught module on Leadership and Theology for Ministry and Mission covers varied aspects of leadership, including self-care, conflict, trust, diversity and safeguarding. Feedback from their home placements enables students to grow as collaborative leaders.
193. The joint learning together of LLM and Ordinands had been affirmed above. Nevertheless, the Review Team found in conversation with different groups of past and present students, that the distinctiveness of the LLM roles and that of ordained ministers were not understood by students. We note that, while the ordinands have some provision for looking at sacramental ministry, there is nothing comparable for licensed *lay* ministry. Each need to understand their own distinctiveness and the different nature of the other ministries. **Our Recommendation 7 addresses this.**
194. When the Review Team met curates and those LLMs recently licensed, the former students endorsed that theological reflection was foundational and underpinned all their training. This has been foundational for their ministry and is ingrained in all that they do, including planning worship.

#### Commendation 29

**We commend the high-quality staff support given by Guildford LMP to students formally and informally, particularly through personal tutors and the residential weekends.**

#### Commendation 30

**We commend Guildford LMP for the embeddedness of theological reflection and reflective practice within the curriculum and the experience of the students.**

195. *With regard to Oxford LMT*, students are strongly encouraged to focus and work through who they are, and to let go of negative thoughts about not being academic enough, recognising that all have gifts. Students reflected that their first year helped to build their confidence and was foundational for the remainder of their training.
196. All students met by the Review Team spoke of how theological reflection has changed the way they think and reflect on different situations – preaching, leading services, events that happen in the parish, etc. From the outset the Study Skills day supported them and prepared them for learning. Some students spoke of the importance of their training in leadership which has pushed them beyond their comfort zone to develop and grow. One student gave an example of how their preaching had gained confidence and self-belief and been affirmed by their incumbent. The

Oxford Self-Evaluation document quotes an incumbent who commented, “You guys have done a great job... (the students) have grown immensely through your work.”

197. Collaborative working with their training ministers, together with LLMs and ordinands co-studying, models good practice for the future as the church seeks to operate a mixed ecology.
198. Students find tutorials on zoom help prepare them for each assignment as their tutors works through the expectations. Students can reflect on their experience and learning, and its impact on them. Students also report that their courses give them a “platform”, with an authority for leadership roles which builds on that was there already, e.g. as a previous church warden. They told reviewers how tutors model servant leadership and humility in how they deliver training.

### **Commendation 31**

**We commend the high-quality pastoral support provided by Oxford LMT for all students, especially through their formation groups.**

199. *With regard to the Winchester Team*, students are consistently encouraged to reflect on their experience and learning through theological reflection. This happens as they prepare for and reflect on leading worship and preaching. The compulsory Reflective Practice module ensures that there is evidence of student engagement and reflective practice in context. The students expressed how hugely beneficial they found this module, as well as their self-assessment at various stages. Through their placements, students find they engage with missional and evangelistic opportunities, which we reference elsewhere.
200. The Winchester centre has made improvements following student feedback to give greater support in their placement with their training ministers. The reviewers were told by staff that personal tutors also provide feedback, encouraging students in areas of strength and supporting them in areas of development, so increasing their self-awareness, as well as acknowledging their vulnerabilities as they prepare for ministry. Every opportunity is taken to learn and to grow.
201. Following the preaching module, students have three terms of ongoing development and feedback from their training ministers, from congregation members and others, on their developing gifts of leadership. One student told the reviewers how the training has increased their desire for learning in an empowering way.

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

202. *With regard to Guildford LMP*, the Student Handbook sets out four inter-related aims concerning the equipping of the whole people of God, lay and ordained, in leadership, especially for mission through creative and innovative methods. The opening of training to “interested learners” provides a springboard for future vocations.
203. Students are encouraged to grow in personal prayer, developing their own regular pattern and having a spiritual director and a rule of life that is sustaining and realistic.

204. In the Introduction to the Bible module, students are encouraged to work in groups to discuss passages relating to discipleship and to reflect on how to facilitate God's call and invitation in others.
205. Students affirmed strongly the learning and preparation for ministry with adults but considered that only two hours of the overall programme being devoted to ministry amongst children, youth and families was not adequate. Students felt that some of their peers picked this up through placements, but not all do. This priority is central to the diocesan mission and drive for church growth. This could be addressed without adding significantly to the staff workload or pressure on student time.
206. Students articulated a calling and a desire to help others mature in their Christian journey and to equip them for growth in their varied vocations. They are being equipped for public ministry, though, as recommended above, this could be strengthened further with more emphasis on being "world-engaging" (**Recommendation 16**).

#### **Recommendation 25**

**We recommend that Guildford LMP explores ways to provide further training and experience in ministry with children, youth and families, through taught courses and placements, in fulfilment of the diocesan mission priorities.**

207. *With regard to Oxford LMT*, many students enter training as already mature Christians and LMT works hard to help them cope with the rigours of balancing work, family and study. Some find areas of study such as biblical criticism a challenge, because their mature years as a Christian means that they need to unlearn some things and be open to exploring others, and because – according to students' feedback to LMT - few encounter some of the challenges of the subject in the teaching ministries of their churches. LMT have addressed this issue in creating the new biblical criticism course, on which students report positively. They value the support given, especially as "the process pulls people to pieces and puts them back together again", and is very much a journey of the heart, not just the head.
208. Some of those who have extensive experience as leaders find the process of transferring this to a church culture a much more profound shift than they had expected. One student commented, "my biggest challenge was realising that I was not a big name anymore or a known leader in the organisation, and through this process I have been learning humility".
209. Formation tutors, whilst finding online meetings restrictive in assessing formation, nonetheless attest to how they do see students develop and grow in the place where God wants them to be, as they prepare for ministry. Another student comments, "The Reflective Practice level 4 module helped me understand who I am as an LLM", and they felt the course provides clarity between their lay role and that of an ordained minister.

- 210. *With regard to the Winchester Team*, the reviewers found that modules of study, and experience that engage students with difference, including differing theological views, is enriching for all students. They speak of safe places for reflecting, for asking questions which lead to better understanding and appreciation of the breadth that is the Church of England. Self-evaluations by students point to how students are stretched and challenged in their journey of faith and discipleship.
- 211. One student highlighted their complex family situation which includes a child with complex needs and explained to reviewers how they had been able to manage the situation because “a high level of care and understanding is given without me feeling patronised. It allows me the confidence to know that I’m okay.” They also spoke of how their own time management skills have been honed because of the need to manage this complexity.
- 212. In the process of training, students work closely with their training minister, and in their one-to-one meetings work through the formational qualities as an aid to reflect on their own formation. For some, it is a work in progress, developing and maintaining a rhythm of life and space for rest and recreation, but they are encouraged and supported in that throughout their training, and this emboldens them to persist, with personal tutors holding them to account.

#### **E6 Students are equipped to continue to develop their potential.**

- 213. *With regard to Guildford LMP*, the student reps recognise that the demand to negotiate the balance in their lives during training was difficult to negotiate but also a good preparation for the rigours of future ministry. They felt supported in this by staff. One stakeholder commented, “I have absolute confidence that the various members deliver a good experience to their ordinands”. Students reported that, at the onset, the challenges of training alongside other commitments were highlighted for them as costly. This challenge seemed especially true for those who struggle academically, but students affirmed that support was available.
- 214. The Guildford LMP has taken a range of initiatives and courses over the last two years to enhance ministry in parishes, not all of which are the direct responsibility of the Guildford LMP core staff. The Review Team were conscious that many of those interviewed, whilst encouraged and excited by these innovations, felt strongly that there now needs not be a period of consolidation in the central offerings of the Guildford LMP. Comments included, “too much has been coming at us”, and “we need to let things settle into the right shape”, and “we need to settle down and establish a rhythm”. This concerned the Review Team, especially in regard to potentially unsustainable pressures on the core staff, and this concern helps to explain the major **recommendation 2** above.
- 215. *With regard to Oxford LMT*, the IME2 officer highlighted for the Review Team how the Mission and Ministry project in the third year of curacy helped curates to test out what they have learnt. He spoke off the importance of having the right leadership skills and the value of placements. It is

clear from conversations that the more students have processed who they are and who they are under Christ, the better equipped they are for ministry.

- 216. Formation tutors reported that students are well prepared for their placements, talking through expectations with course tutors, such that placements are enriching experiences. Reviewers were made aware that this has been mainly informal and done verbally because of the small number of candidates, though a Handbook has now been produced.
- 217. At one of the residential weekends, students produce a theological reflection on their placement experience and tutors find that this often demonstrates how a student has grown in confidence and in their ability as a minister.
- 218. Students share together and support each other, as well as having support from their personal tutors in helping them discover strengths they had not realised they had.
- 219. Some students expressed a desire to have more practical placements, e.g. students were asked to prepare to preach and just provide an outline. This could become more practical if they recorded the sermon and submit this or deliver it in person.
- 220. In conversation with formation tutors and the Dean, the Review Team found that the understanding of placements and what was required of the supervisor was patchy, with some pointing to the fact that groups were small enough to manage without having formal arrangements. The Handbook is now available, after a delay in completing this due to the pressure of work on the Dean in implementing new course provisions.

#### **Recommendation 26**

**We recommend that the Oxford LMT Handbook for placements, now currently circulated to all supervisors, is placed on the website for ease of reference, and that the Dean ensures that all supervisors use it.**

#### **Commendation 32**

**We commend the way Oxford students are positive about the importance and embeddedness of theological reflection, and its impact on current and future ministry.**

- 221. The Review Team **recommend** that formal communication between Oxford LMT and the sending church is more strongly established. This would be valuable in helping the training minister know how best to support student learning and provide a written report based on set criteria. **This adds further substance to Recommendation 22 above.**
- 222. *With regard to the Winchester Team*, students are immersed in theological reflection, which is built into all assignments, with some specific modules that focus on this. Students told of one tutor who modelled theological reflection through a particular theme which they found very helpful.

- 223. Throughout the course – by means of engaging with modules, through the embeddedness of theological reflection, through meetings with their personal tutor and spiritual director, the Review Team can see how students learn self-care and self-discipline and are encouraged to notice the presence and activity of God.
- 224. There is flexibility built into the programme of study; and the attentiveness of staff to the needs of students facilitates the development of students and how they make use of opportunities for change.
- 225. Looking to the future, the Winchester staff team plan to provide further events that develop a sense of community for both full and part-time students, so as to bring coherence and broaden the richness of the space and experience. Although Sarum College will be responsible for the academic course for LLM and will oversee the students' contextual placement, the Winchester centre maintain overall responsibility for formation, pastoral care, and enabling the integration of their discipleship and ministry, work and personal life. **This is commended above (Commendation 6).**
- 226. In their Self-Evaluation Document, the Winchester centre speaks of “opportunities to welcome interested learners for the purpose of discipleship and not just for a known vocational purpose, which is an important need being addressed in current developments”.
- 227. Whilst Winchester is withdrawing from SCTEI, the staff colleagues in the Winchester centre are fully committed to each other and to prioritising their last students in the SCTEI pathway over the next eighteen months. The Review Team are content that the provision for existing students at SCTEI are good, allowing ordinands to complete their three-year Diploma in the Durham awards in the Summer of 2025 and 2026. Provisions are in pace for LLMs finishing ministry training ready for licensing, with two of the five continuing to study for a further 60 credits in 2026.

#### **E7 Students are able to demonstrate trustworthiness.**

- 228. *With regard to Guildford LMP*, the Review Team noted that students are encouraged to be accountable through regular patterns of prayer and worship and through work with a spiritual director. Some students testified to how supported they are by spiritual directors: “Meetings with my spiritual director have been a blessing, allowing a reset, if you like, and some calm amid the noise of training. My sense of calling has been affirmed as training has continued”. Mechanisms for accountability are in place, as indicated above, and all students are alert to the importance of best safeguarding practice in all areas of ministry.
- 229. The Review Team found that students are developing a pattern of life grounded in prayer, scripture and reflection. There is a breadth of views expressed across the student body. Whilst each has knowledge of their own beliefs and prejudices, this is not at the expense of being able to listen or to empathize with those of different perspectives.

230. *With regard to Oxford LMT*, the worship which happens at the start of each Saturday session provides a spiritual focus for the ensuing formal study time. Students are expected to develop and maintain their own regular patterns of prayer, scripture reading and reflection. The reviewers heard evidence that this happens and that students lead worship at residential weekends. The Handbook makes clear the expectations that students will engage with safeguarding training from the start and the training programme for every level is set out on the diocesan website.

231. Students understand and work with the discipline of the church and the vision and values of the Oxford diocese, beginning with their placement in context and through taught modules. Some students have already been involved in church leadership in various ways so have a grasp of this.

232. *With regard to the Winchester Team*, they are confident that their partnership with Sarum College will be fruitful, and the Review Team are impressed by their joint commitment which builds on an established pattern of working together. **Recommendation 3 above is intended to support this co-working.**

233. As previously explained, the Winchester team plan a wrap-around of Winchester support for all their new and continuing part-time students across different TEIs, in an invitation to participate in a learning community to foster a greater sense of identity and a sense of belonging as part of Winchester diocese, to inspire and undergird their potential future ministry in Winchester diocese after initial training. **This is affirmed in our Commendation 6.**

234. The SWOT document from SCTEI as a whole affirms that “a close relationship with training incumbents and pastoral supervisors in varied contexts in our dioceses” is seen as one of the strengths and hallmarks of SCTEI. Winchester students have largely affirmed that. This depth of knowledge of students’ capacity for trustworthiness gives the Review Team confidence that Criterion E7 is met. Some student feedback has expressed a desire for a more local connection and some days of formation are planned to address this. The personal tutor relationship is being formalised and specific Winchester values and ideas expressed for the students.

**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.**

235. *With regard to Guildford LMP*, the documentation shows that students are given the opportunity to reflect on their formation in various ways, including end-of-year review with their personal tutors, self-assessment, and the penultimate and final year assessment. Students use these opportunities to reflect on their development and how they might continue to develop, particularly reflecting on their strengths in relation to the formation qualities chart of the Church of England. In addition, the student’s training supervisor is asked to comment on the student’s reflections, affirming this or pointing to areas for further consideration.

236. One student's review reflected on words from the Ordinal, "You cannot bear the weight of this calling in your own strength, but only by the grace and power of God". They felt this summed up the whole vocational discernment and training process.
237. Following their performance review, students receive notes, but this does not happen after tutorials. Students feel they would benefit from written feedback as a point of reference for follow-up, action and as a yardstick for future development and action.
238. The Review Team welcome plans for giving greater attention to those from more diverse educational backgrounds whose first language is not English, so as to provide access to fulfil potential wherever possible.
239. *With regard to Oxford LMT*, the Review Team noted from the Annual Self-Evaluation document that student feedback has been positive, particularly the biblical studies module. The Student Handbook set out the ongoing self-assessment and the | reviewers are satisfied with the system in place for reporting the progress of students' academic learning and formation.
240. Input from personal tutors, formation tutors, external reports and home placements all help inform the interim and final year reports.
241. Throughout their training, students give feedback on all modules, and it is good to see that Oxford LMT proactively responds to feedback and makes changes to the training programme and to module delivery to enhance study opportunities for students.
242. *With regard to the Winchester Team*, the paperwork provided for the Review Team show that the centre meets these requirements and student feedback confirms this. Students are made aware of the role of ongoing self-assessment and the reviewers are satisfied that there are systems in place for reporting the progress of the students' academic learning and formation.
243. There is evidence that the Winchester centre ensures that recommendation made in "Stage 2 reports" are actioned, and the Review Team heard one example of a student having a bespoke pathway and placement being designed to address one such recommendation.

**The review team has Confidence with Qualifications in**

- **Guildford LMP**
- **Oxford LMT**
- **The Winchester Ministry and Mission team**

**with regard to Criterion E: Ministerial Formation.**

## Conclusion

**The review team has Confidence in**

- SCTEI
- The Winchester Mission and Ministry team

**in preparing students for Ordained and Licensed Lay Ministries in the Church of England;  
and in**

- Oxford LMT

**in preparing students for Licensed Lay Ministry**

**The review team has Confidence with Qualifications in**

- Guildford LMP

**in preparing students for Ordained and Licensed Lay Ministries in the Church of England;  
and in**

- Oxford LMT

**in preparing students for Ordained Ministry**

## Summary of Commendations

### **Commendation 1**

We commend the SCTEI Common Awards Management Committee for its effective operation in being collaborative, sharing insights, good practice and enthusiastic vision.

### **Commendation 2**

We commend the energetic and imaginative work of the core staff of Guildford LMP in implementing new provisions and arrangements for training over the last eighteen months.

### **Commendation 3**

We commend Oxford LMT for its impressive candidates for LLM who are well-equipped, highly motivated and appreciative of their training.

### **Commendation 4**

We commend the imaginative and energetic way in which the Oxford staff team have implemented new provisions and courses for discipleship and licensed lay ministry.

### **Commendation 5**

We commend the staff of the Winchester Team for their care and support for students during the times of recent transition in training arrangements.

### **Commendation 6**

We commend the Winchester Team for its overall vision for ministerial formation for all its part-time students, envisaged both for lay and ordained ministry.

### **Commendation 7**

We commend Oxford LMT's creation of a rich resource and well-balanced modules for training.

### **Commendation 8**

We commend the South Central TEI for the extent to which staff modelling is taken very seriously.

### **Commendation 9**

We commend the Guildford LMP staff for their excellent provision of academic, pastoral and spiritual care and support.

### **Commendation 10**

We commend the Oxford LMT staff for their excellent provision of academic, pastoral and spiritual care and support.

**Commendation 11**

We commend the clarity, unanimity and support of the senior leadership of the diocese for Oxford LMT.

**Commendation 12**

We commend the collegiality, mutual expertise, enthusiasm, commitment and co-working of the Common Awards Management Committee.

**Commendation 13**

We commend the Diocese of Oxford for the appointment and pro-active work of its Appointments Committee.

**Commendation 14**

We commend the Oxford structure of governance for its support of Oxford LMT and its planning for future provision.

**Commendation 15**

We commend Guildford LMP for its commitment to the *local* setting of each parish and the relationship of LMP with discipleship programmes.

**Commendation 16**

We commend Oxford LMT for the care and thought given to the instigation of its Ordained Assistant Ministry pilot scheme.

**Commendation 17**

We commend Guildford LMP for its care and support for student feedback.

**Commendation 18**

We commend Oxford LMT for its commitment to the resourcing of associate tutors.

**Commendation 19**

We commend the clarity of the VLE offered by Oxford LMT for the help it gives to students.

**Commendation 20**

We commend Oxford LMT for its teaching and practice of Theological Reflection.

**Commendation 21**

We commend Guildford LMP for the opportunities provided for students' learning, growth and formation through the placements, which the students clearly appreciate.

**Commendation 22**

We commend the Winchester Team for their resilience, tenacity and resourcefulness, which has brought them closer as a team.

**Commendation 23**

We commend the commitment of all the Winchester staff in ensuring that the remaining students complete training well and that structures are in place to make this a positive experience for the students.

**Commendation 24**

We commend the strengths of lay and ordination candidates training together on Guildford LMP and the enrichment which “interested learners” bring.

**Commendation 25**

We commend the integrated training offered by Oxford LMT which extends and deepens the students’ sense of vocation and understanding.

**Commendation 26**

We commend Guildford LMP’s intentional work done in diversity and the efforts to embed this in future through assistance from the new diocesan appointment of a Racial Diversity Officer.

**Commendation 27**

We commend how Oxford LMT addresses issues of unconscious bias, racism and other prejudices in the Jesus and Salvation module, and how, in addition to specific study days, the thread of diversity runs through the whole course.

**Commendation 28**

We commend the emphasis placed on diversity by Oxford LMT and the establishment of termly meetings with both disability and UKME advisers to gradually review and refine the programme in a more systematic way.

**Commendation 29**

We commend the high-quality staff support given by Guildford LMP to students formally and informally, particularly through personal tutors and the residential weekends.

**Commendation 30**

We commend Guildford LMP for the embeddedness of theological reflection and reflective practice within the curriculum and the experience of the students.

**Commendation 31**

We commend the high-quality pastoral support provided by Oxford LMT for all students, especially through their formation groups.

**Commendation 32**

We commend the way Oxford students are positive about the importance and embeddedness of theological reflection, and its impact on current and future ministry.

## Summary of Recommendations

### **Recommendation 1**

We recommend that the SCTEI arranges continuing regular meetings of staff leaders of courses in discipleship and foundation training in the dioceses of Guildford, Oxford and Winchester, together with Sarum College, to share insights and good practice at a time of creativity in mission (to reinforce the meetings of the current Regional Learning Partnership).

### **Recommendation 2**

We recommend that the Guildford LMP engages in a time for consolidation in taking stock of recent new initiatives and arrangements for training over the last eighteen months, bearing in mind the need to carry through already planned developments and the recommendations made in this Review.

### **Recommendation 3**

We recommend that the Winchester Team review in the late summer of 2025, the evolving plans for cooperation and communication with Sarum College regarding the Winchester students for Licensed Lay Ministry.

### **Recommendation 4**

We recommend that Guildford LMP articulates more clearly the value of academic study alongside the opportunities for practical learning and experience in the future provision of IME2 for lay and ordained candidates.

### **Recommendation 5**

We recommend that Guildford LMP identifies situations where the training incumbent or placement supervisor is not offering adequate provision and takes appropriate actions for the sake of the student's ministerial formation.

### **Recommendation 6**

We recommend that, in cases where a training incumbent is not offering sufficient levels of supervision, Oxford LMT takes appropriate action for the sake of the students' ministerial formation.

### **Recommendation 7**

We recommend that Guildford LMP gives further attention to assisting ordinands and candidates for LLM to articulate their distinctive lay or ordained calling.

### **Recommendation 8**

We recommend that Guildford LMP gives attention to the improvement of induction to the Moodle site and to ongoing student support with regard to Moodle.

**Recommendation 9**

We recommend that Oxford LMT provides opportunities for a clearer articulation of the place of licensed *lay* ministry in the mission of the diocese.

**Recommendation 10**

We recommend that Oxford LMT makes more effective use of wider channels of communication for students to relieve pressure and over-reliance on the Dean.

**Recommendation 11**

We recommend that Guildford LMP gives further consideration to how best to fulfil its stated worship policy and reviews the space used for evening worship.

**Recommendation 12**

We recommend that Oxford LMT gives attention to ensuring that all ministerial students receive due preparation and feedback when leading worship.

**Recommendation 13**

We recommend that Guildford LMP undertakes a review of staff workloads.

**Recommendation 14**

We recommend that the SCTEI Overview Board initiates ways of strengthening the inter-diocesan cooperation through the Overview Board so that its oversight become more evident and effective, and that changes are reviewed in twelve months' time.

**Recommendation 15**

We recommend that a structured process for the Academic Registrar's line-management for operational decisions is identified

**Recommendation 16**

We recommend that Guildford LMP reviews its practice to give greater focus to the world-facing nature of mission, ministry and discipleship.

**Recommendation 17**

We recommend a robust review of the OAMS scheme in twelve months' time, when the first cohort are completing the full span of initial training.

**Recommendation 18**

We recommend that Guildford LMP formulates a revised staff development policy which supports its current practice.

**Recommendation 19**

We recommend that Guildford LMP considers making use of site visits to local churches to increase learning about the practicalities of liturgy and pastoral theology.

**Recommendation 20**

We recommend that Guildford LMP gives greater consideration to the setting up of placements in order to make the placements a more significant priority.

**Recommendation 21**

We recommend that Oxford LMT makes the setting up and monitoring of placements more rigorous.

**Recommendation 22**

We recommend that Oxford LMT provides more structure to the relationship between Oxford LMT and the parishes where the students are based.

**Recommendation 23**

We recommend that Guildford LMP designates a member of staff to manage placements and to ensure consistency in the student experience.

**Recommendation 24**

We recommend that the Winchester Team put in place a system of monitoring and support for fellowship groups to maximise their benefit for ministerial formation.

**Recommendation 25**

We recommend that Guildford LMP explores ways to provide further training and experience in ministry with children, youth and families, through taught courses and placements, in fulfilment of the diocesan mission priorities.

**Recommendation 26**

We recommend that the Oxford LMT Handbook for placements, now currently circulated to all supervisors, is placed on the website for ease of reference, and that the Dean ensures that all supervisors use it.