

# Placements Information for Prospective Students

**2026 entry**

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# Why are there placements for Oak Hill students?

The church is Jesus' frontline, and the focus of all our training. Placements are therefore a key part of the learning experience for students, and we're very grateful for the many churches and ministries receiving our students on placement. In the light of the intended direction of your ministry (church leadership, youth work, crossing cultures and so on) and your individual goals for growth that are identified using the Graduate Profile, placements give you a ministry context in which to set specific goals and gauge growth.

Placements aim to:

- acquaint you better with local church life and ministry patterns in a given context
- develop your own Christian character and some ministry competencies
- provide an opportunity for you to develop self-awareness and theological reflection in relation to the dynamics of church life.

# What makes London a fabulous city to train in?

London is one of the most remarkable cities in the world. There is greater diversity in London than in almost any other city anywhere. More than half the people who are now living in London were born in another country. This astonishing mixture of cultures brings plenty of challenges, but God has been at work in bringing Christian brothers and sisters to London from the nations of the world. There are ethnic churches near College and across London, as well as churches with greater diversity than in most other parts of the country.

The College placements can provide a wonderful opportunity to experience this richness first hand. At some point in their College experience, we are eager to see every student and student family step beyond the familiar, with a taste for adventure, to make a deliberate decision to discover more of God's grace with help from Christians from other cultures. This can be done either in the weekly placements which last for an academic year or in the optional, shorter placements explained below.

# What placements are there?

## 1. Compulsory weekly church placements

All undergraduate students and postgraduate ordinands take part in a Weekly Church Placement during their programme, with the nature of the placement tailored to your training needs: for example, whether you are an Independent or Anglican student or whether you are training for ordination in the Church of England. Assessment of each placement will be by means of a portfolio of reports and reflections written during the placement.

Placements are completed within two modules which provide resources and structure for learning from them: TMM1437 Introducing Theological Reflection (10 credits), and TMM2321 Developing Ministry and Worship in Context (20 credits).

So in summary students take the following placement modules:

### Full time undergraduate students:

- CertHE: TMM1437 Introducing Theological Reflection in year 1
- DipHE: TMM1437 Introducing Theological Reflection in year 1 and TMM2321 Developing Ministry and Worship in Context in year 2
- BA (Hons): TMM1437 Introducing Theological Reflection in year 1 and TMM2321 Developing Ministry and Worship in Context in year 2

### Part time undergraduate students

- CertHE: TMM1437 Introducing Theological Reflection in one year of the CertHE
- DipHE: TMM1437 Introducing Theological Reflection in one year of the CertHE; TMM2321 Developing Ministry and Worship in Context in one year of the DipHE
- BA (Hons): TMM1437 Introducing Theological Reflection in one CertHE year; TMM2321 Developing Ministry and Worship in Context in one DipHE year
- Students starting the part time CertHE, DipHE or BA (Hons) in September 2026 will take TMM1437 Introducing Theological Reflection in the 2027/28 academic year.

### Postgraduate ordinands

- TMM1437 Introducing Theological Reflection in year 1 and TMM2321 Developing Ministry and Worship in Context in year 2

## 2. Optional ministry experience placements

You may also participate in an optional and very flexible placement as part of which you may observe, evaluate and/or participate in ministry activities under the supervision of a minister or other mission leader. This gives you the opportunity to have a more immersive look at a particular type of ministry setting, e.g. in a prison or immigration detention centre, in a hospice among the dying and their families, or something of your choice overseas. Students also use this placement to widen, over

an intensive week or two, their experience of church, sampling for example the breadth of the Anglican traditions or the glorious kaleidoscope of world Christianity gathered in London and described above.

There is also the opportunity of including placement experience in the compulsory Extended Learning Project (20 credits) in the BA (Hons) year of study.

## How do the weekly church placements work?

- **Church of England ordinands** do a different weekly church placement in each of your first two years. If you are staying for a third year, you are free to choose which Anglican church you go to, in consultation with your personal tutor and/or the Director of Placements, and you may decide to stay at one of the churches you were placed at in your first two years. Ordinands are sometimes required to gain a breadth of experience with a placement 'out of tradition'. We have agreed that such placements can be short-term and more intensive in character, perhaps 10-14 days outside of semester time. Thus all ordinands can expect both weekly placements to be both extending your experience and spiritually enriching.
- **Full time independent students** have a weekly church placement for both years of the DipHE and you are encouraged to be in the same church for that time (and longer if you are at College for more than two years). You may have the option of changing churches for one of your years in order to gain more experience, which would need to be agreed with College. In the light of your identified goal for ministry, your placement may be tailored accordingly. For example if cross-cultural ministry is your goal, then you can have a first year placement that gives you a taste of multi-cultural Christian worship, followed by a second year placement intended to expose you to Christian worship in an unfamiliar setting, where the culture is significantly different from your own.
- **Part time independent students** normally undertake your placements in churches with whom you are already connected. In the summer prior to taking TMM1437 Introducing Theological Reflection, you will be asked to provide contact details for the person at your church who you expect to be your placement supervisor. Again, in the light of your identified goal for ministry, we may discuss with you how best to shape the placements with you. Where appropriate, there is the option for you to request a College-arranged placement.

# Can I stay in my home church for my church placement?

For full time students, staying in your home church as your placement would only be in exceptional circumstances, and this would need to be discussed and agreed with College. Placements in a fresh setting are an invaluable and unrepeatable opportunity to 'breathe new air' and significantly deepen your understanding of different churchmanships and cultures. It is a significant loss from the curriculum if this opportunity is not taken. If you flag this as a question when you apply to Oak Hill, we can ensure you have a conversation at the most appropriate time.

# How far away could my placement church be?

There are many churches that are part of our placement scheme and they vary in distance from College/where you are living. Some students gladly travel up to an hour but most placements are much closer and you will not be asked to undertake a placement which is impossible for your circumstances.

# Are my family meant to come to my placement church?

We encourage you and your family, wherever possible, to make your placement church your home church together. Attending as a family changes your experience and participation in the church, enriches your learning and provides your family with their own opportunity to reflect on different ways of 'doing church' which may be invaluable for the future. This is not, however, a requirement and some students separate their placement from their family church very successfully. We are always willing to discuss this further at the appropriate time.

# How are the weekly church placements allocated for new students?

- In the summer prior to taking TMM1437 Introducing Theological Reflection you will be asked to complete a Placement Form, which is an opportunity for you to specify your experience, your goals for ministry and anything in particular you

want to gain from your placement, particularly in discussion with your sending church minister.

- It is then College's responsibility to allocate the placements. Andrew Nicholls (Director of Pastoral Care) has overall responsibility for placement arrangements within the College.
  - **Full time students:** Allocation is done by taking into account what you have submitted on your placement form, information from your sending church minister, and any other particular requirements e.g. from a Stage 2 Discernment Panel report for Church of England ordinands, and in consultation with any placement church. Your sending church minister may be contacted, and if you are a Church of England ordinand, your DDO may also be contacted. Andrew may also contact you as well.
  - **Part time students:** Part time students will be in a variety of situations, but you will normally be in a church with which you are already connected. College will make arrangements for your church to be your placement church, or allocate a different church placement if requested on the placement form
- Potential placement supervisors are provided with a copy of the Placement Supervisors handbook, asked to sign a Placement Agreement and provide Oak Hill with a copy of their Church Safeguarding Policy (for part time students placed at their home church, we ask for this from your nominated supervisor in your home church). This takes place later in the summer before TMM1437 starts.

## When do I find out where I have been placed?

We will normally inform you of your placement later in the summer just before or just after the start of the academic year, and give you the relevant contact details. The formal start of your placement will not be confirmed, however, until:

- the paperwork has been received from the placement supervisor (as above)
- you have completed your online safeguarding training
- your DBS clearance has come through (details about these last two items are provided over the summer in the new student welcome information).

For the purposes of placements, the College takes responsibility for your safeguarding clearance and confirms this to your placement church as soon as it is complete.