



# THE COMMON AWARDS

## Programme Specification

### Foundation Award in Theology, Ministry and Mission

<b>1. Programme Title</b>	Foundation Award in Theology, Ministry and Mission
<b>2. Awarding Institution</b>	Durham University
<b>3. Teaching Institution</b>	Oak Hill College
<b>4. Final Qualification</b>	Foundation Award Certificate
<b>5. Year of Validation</b>	Academic Year 2026-27
<b>Year of Amendment</b>	N/A
<b>6. Language of Study</b>	English
<b>7. Mode of Study</b>	Part time
<b>8. Duration</b>	Two years [Six Terms]

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## 1. Name of Programme

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Foundation Award in Theology, Ministry and Mission

### AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

## 2. Educational and Formational Aims

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The educational and formational aims of the programme are described in terms of the people for whom it is designed, the pedagogy it embodies and the purpose it is intended to fulfil.

### People

The aim of this programme is to take initial steps towards ensuring that Christian disciples and ministers are equipped as competent and faithful reflective practitioners. To this end it provides an education in theology, ministry and mission in and for a variety of contexts.

1. Preparing people for professional ministry and mission within churches:  
For some students the Foundation Award represents the first step in exploring preparation for recognised lay and ordained ministries in the Anglican, Methodist, Baptist and United Reformed churches. The programmes serve institutions representing Anglican, Methodist, United Reformed, Baptist, Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, as well as being open to students from other denominations.
2. Preparing people for lay ministry and mission in the world:  
The programme also serves those who wish to be more fully equipped for Christian life and service in the world, or simply more informed about the Christian faith. Within this category, some students will be preparing for ministry and mission among children and young people within and beyond ecclesial structures. Typically, students will be preparing for service in third sector and statutory organisations as well as in churches.

The programme aims to offer education that is accessible to students with a wide range of educational backgrounds and professional and personal circumstances: many will be mature students, many will be employed and therefore studying part time, many will be in active ministry, while still others will be pursuing the programme as full-time residential students. The programme will therefore be available in a variety of modes of learning and teaching, including traditional full time residential learning, part time and part-residential learning, and distance learning supported by online and face to face engagement.

### Pedagogy

The aim of this programme is to provide an education in theology, ministry and mission that encompasses the development of character and the nurturing of virtues and spirituality alongside the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the development of cognitive

and practical skills. The programme aims to enable students to engage more deeply with themselves, others, the church, the world and God by offering learning and teaching that:

1. form students in various disciplines, but bring those disciplines together to inform and enrich one another;
2. are constantly oriented towards the ministry and mission for which students are being prepared; and
3. by their modes of assessment and methods of learning and teaching enable students to develop as lifelong reflective learners.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the programme is to offer the opportunity for initial exploration of areas in theology, ministry and mission, for those considering further personal and professional preparation for a range of Christian ministries as well as to satisfy the aspirations of those students who undertake their studies to enhance, broaden and deepen their discipleship and ministry in other contexts.

From a professional point of view, the aim of the programme is to

1. offer pathways of study that allow exploration of areas within the range of professional and vocational criteria for the public ministries which the students are considering;
2. satisfy the aspirations of those students who undertake their studies to enhance, broaden and deepen their discipleship and ministry in other contexts; and
3. provide a firm basis from which to pursue further study in theology, ministry and mission at undergraduate level.

From a personal perspective, the aim of this programme is to develop dispositions that are congruent with, and necessary for, Christian ministry and mission in the church and the world. The aims of the programme are that it will equip learners towards being:

1. open to the questions, insights and ongoing formation generated by attentive study of Scripture, and be willing to go on being transformed by them;
2. aware of the skills and disposition needed to go on reading themselves, the church and the world in the light of Christian doctrine, and to explore Christian doctrine more deeply in the light of experience and practice;
3. deeply aware that they are heirs to a long and complex history, aware of their place in that history alongside many others, and attuned to the work of the Holy Spirit in the church and the world through history and in the present;
4. passionate and prayerful advocates for the mission of God;
5. clearer about their vocation in the church and the world and therefore more determined to pursue personal and corporate lifelong learning as disciples of Christ;
6. open to the insights and challenges that emerge from serious engagement and cooperation with others, in and beyond the church.

### 3. Programme Learning Outcomes

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#### **Subject Specific Knowledge (SSK)**

*On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to*

1. investigate, describe appropriately and discuss intelligently some aspects from Christian tradition, theology, ministry and mission and the questions to which they give rise.

#### **Subject Specific Skills (SSS)**

*On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:*

1. communicate their foci of study accurately and reliably in a range of contexts;
2. draw on appropriate methodologies and various relevant disciplines to relate theory and practice in the context of discipleship, mission and ministry.

#### **Key Skills (KS)**

*On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:*

1. identify, gather and evaluate source materials for a specific purpose;
2. evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches, communicating their findings sensitively and respectfully, showing self-awareness about their own beliefs, commitments and prejudices;
3. carry out a guided task that involves independent inquiry, management of time and resources, using IT, meeting deadlines evaluating the task and learning from it.

## DELIVERY OF THE PROGRAMME

### 4. Learning and Teaching Methods

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- Online/asynchronous delivery
- Engagement with pre-recorded videos
- Structured readings
- Guided reflective tasks
- Interactive exercises

### 5. Summative and Formative Assessment Methods

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Students' knowledge and understanding is summatively assessed by a variety of methods including:

- Short Oral Presentations
- Reflective Journals
- Essays
- Reflective Learning Journals
- Written Exams/Tests

Students' knowledge and understanding is formatively assessed by a variety of methods including:

- Short Oral Presentations
- Written Assignments

### 6. Formative Assessment Policy

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The College employs both formative and summative assessment methods to support student learning and measure achievement of programme learning outcomes.

- **Formative assessment** is developmental and provides students with an opportunity to practice skills needed for the summative assessments and to receive feedback on their progress. While indicative grades may be given, these assessments do not contribute to final module marks.
- **Summative assessment** formally evaluates students' attainment of learning outcomes through graded assignments, which contribute to the final module and qualification outcome.

Formative assessment methods vary by subject area and learning objectives and may include:

- Written work (exegetical papers, article evaluations etc.)
- Practical and reflective tasks (reflective portfolios, self-counselling projects, presentations etc.)
- Examinations and tests (language tests, regular language homework etc.).

Formative assessment plays a vital role in supporting student learning and development by providing opportunities to practise key skills required for summative assessments. This is particularly important in modules where summative assessment is limited to a single opportunity. Where a summative assessment is the sole measure of a module's learning outcomes, students must pass that component to successfully complete the module.

The use of formative assessment is guided by the following principles:

- To provide students with timely and continuous feedback that informs their preparation for final submissions.
- To foster student engagement and encourage active participation in the learning process.
- To help students consolidate their understanding and identify specific areas for improvement.
- To enable module tutors to gauge student progress early in the semester and adapt teaching strategies accordingly.

All assessments, whether formative or summative, are designed to uphold the principles of equity, ensuring fair opportunities for all students. This includes consideration of diverse educational backgrounds, individual learning needs, and prospective vocational pathways.

While it may not always be feasible to incorporate a dedicated formative assignment in every module, formative feedback from one module may positively impact performance in another, thereby contributing to students' overall academic development. As a general guideline, a maximum of one formative assignment is recommended for 10-credit modules, and up to two for 20-credit modules.

Formative assignments will not be awarded formal grades; however, students will receive written feedback within 3 weeks of submission to inform further learning.

In line with the recent development of new programmes under the Common Awards framework, a broader variety of formative and summative assessment formats has been introduced. This enhancement aims to improve undergraduate learning outcomes and better accommodate a range of learning styles.

## 7. Assessment Criteria

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Common Awards have developed and published Assessment Criteria for each possible assessment component for all Common Awards programmes (in line with Durham University's generic assessment criteria and Level Descriptors). For assessment guidelines and marking

criteria for Level 4 assessments, please refer to the table below (from the Common Awards [Assessment Types – Guidance and Marking Criteria](#) webpage).

	<b>Guidelines</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
Assessed Conversation	<a href="#">Assessed Conversations</a>	<a href="#">Assessed Conversation - All Levels</a>
Assessed Discussions	<a href="#">Assessed Discussions</a>	<a href="#">Assessed Discussions - All Levels</a>
Book Reviews	<a href="#">Book Reviews</a>	See Essays and Other Written Assignments
Dissertation	* (see also <a href="#">Dissertation Marking Guidance</a> )	See Essays and Other Written Assignments
Essays and Other Written Assignments	<a href="#">Essays and Other Written Assignments</a>	<a href="#">Essays and Other Written Assignments - All Levels</a>
Group Projects	<a href="#">Group Projects</a>	See Group Projects
Literature Reviews	<a href="#">Literature Reviews</a>	See Essays and Other Written Assignments
Oral Presentations	<a href="#">Oral Presentations</a>	<a href="#">Oral Presentations - All Levels</a>
Oral Presentations and Commentary	See Oral Presentations guidelines above.	<a href="#">Oral Presentations and Commentary - All Levels</a>
Placement and Visit Reports	<a href="#">Placement and Visit Reports</a>	<a href="#">Placement and Visit Reports - All Levels</a>
Portfolios	<a href="#">Portfolios</a>	<a href="#">Portfolios - All Levels</a>
Practical Skills	<a href="#">Practical Skills</a>	<a href="#">Practical Skills - All Levels</a>
Projects	<a href="#">Projects</a>	<a href="#">Projects and Group Projects - All Levels</a>
Reflective Learning Journals	<a href="#">Reflective Learning Journals</a>	<a href="#">Reflective Journals and Written Theological Reflection - All Levels</a>
Resources for Others	<a href="#">Resources for Others</a>	<a href="#">Resources for Others - All Levels</a>
Short Tests	<a href="#">Short Tests</a>	'Most short tests generate a straightforward numerical score'.
Written Examinations	<a href="#">Written Examinations</a>	See Essays and Other Written Assignments
Written Theological Reflections	<a href="#">Written Theological Reflections</a>	See Reflective Learning Journals

For more information about Assessment Regulations, please refer to the Student Handbook.



## STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAMME

### 8. Common Awards Programme Requirements

Total credits overall:	Minimum credits at Level 4:	Maximum credits at Level 4:
60 credits	60 credits	60 credits

This programme may only be studied part time over two years.

In the Foundation Award students are introduced to some areas of subject specific knowledge within biblical studies, the Christian tradition and ministerial theology. The modules at this level offer initial surveys of subject specific knowledge to enable students to gain a good foundation in areas in theology, ministry and mission. The Foundation Award also enables students who wish to progress to further study to do so with confidence, building on the knowledge and skills they have acquired.

Students are also introduced to the subject specific skill of relating their knowledge to experience and practice in the context of discipleship, mission and ministry. This may take place in direct relation to the student's practical formation, or in interdisciplinary modules with a professional and/or denominational focus, or in other ways.

Students must also have the opportunity to progress to a Certificate of Higher Education in Theology, Ministry and Mission at the Oak Hill (or another theological institution within the Common Awards framework).

### 9. Overall Structure of the Programme

#### Foundation Award

This programme leads to the Foundation Award in Theology, Ministry and Mission. To be eligible for the award, students must successfully complete **60 credits at Level 4**.

Students who wish to progress to the Certificate, Diploma, or Bachelor of Arts programmes may transfer **up to 30 credits** from the Foundation Award through **Accreditation of Prior Certified Learning (APCL)**. The precise number of transferable credits will depend on the module choices available (and options selected) within each programme. Credits achieved as part of the Foundation Award may therefore contribute towards subsequent study where appropriate.

The Foundation Award is normally completed over **two academic years of part-time study**. Each academic year comprises **three terms**, with **10 credits** normally undertaken in each term.

The standard registration period for this programme is two years, which aligns with the maximum permitted registration period. Students are expected to complete all academic

requirements within this timeframe. Any student experiencing extenuating circumstances that may affect their ability to do so should consult the Academic Registrar at the earliest opportunity.

### **Classification**

The Foundation Award is awarded on a Pass/Fail basis and is not classified.

### **Compensation Regulations**

Compensation is not permitted for the Foundation Award.

### **Exit Points and Extension of Study**

Students who withdraw from the programme before completing all the requirements for the Foundation Award will not be eligible for any alternative award and will not be permitted to return to study with a view to transferring any credits already achieved.

Students may also elect to extend their studies beyond the Foundation Award, where applicable, to pursue a higher award such as a Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE), Diploma (DipHE) or a Bachelor's degree (BA), subject to approval and programme requirements.

## 10. Oak Hill College Programme Requirements

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### Module Category Key

Biblical Studies

Christian Tradition

Ministry and Mission

### Year 1

#### Term 1

**TMM1517** *Introduction to Spirituality and Discipleship* (10 credits)

#### Term 2

**TMM1107** *Brief Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (10 credits)

#### Term 3

**TMM1047** *Methods of Reading the Bible* (10 credits)

### Year 2

#### Term 1

**TMM1607** *Introduction to an Old Testament Book* (10 credits)

#### Term 2

**TMM1697** *Elements of Mission and Evangelism* (10 credits)

#### Term 3

**TMM1717** *Introduction to Growing Faith* (10 credits)

## 11. Curriculum Map

Category	Module Title	Code	Programme Learning Outcomes									
			SSK1	SSK2	SSK3	SSS1	SSS2	SSS3	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4
Compulsory	Introduction to Spirituality and Discipleship	TMM1517	x			x	x		x	x	x	
	Brief Introduction to Christian Doctrine	TMM1107	x			x	x		x	x	x	
	Methods of Reading the Bible	TMM1047	x			x			x	x	x	
	Introduction to an Old Testament Book	TMM1607	x			x		x	x	x	x	
	Elements of Mission and Evangelism	TMM1697					x		x	x	x	
	Introduction to Growing Faith	TMM1717			x			x	x	x	x	

## 12. Pre/Co-requisites within the Programme

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**Pre-requisite definition:** A module that a student must complete (normally in the preceding year) before being enabled to enrol onto a subsequent module.

**Co-requisite definition:** A module that a student must take simultaneously with another module. This means that the two modules were designed to be taken together, with the intent of reinforcing the content of one of the modules, and expanding on it further.

There are no pre- or co-requisites for modules in this programme.

## 13. Admissions Criteria

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All applicants are required to meet both the academic and English language requirements but entry to this programme is flexible.

### a. Academic requirement

- Normally a minimum of one A-Level (grade E or above) or equivalent.
- However for mature students (those aged 21 or over) relevant work experience may be considered as an alternative to formal academic qualifications.

### b. Non-standard admission

Applicants not meeting the standard academic entry requirements (e.g. not having an A-Level or equivalent qualification) will need to demonstrate their potential to benefit from the chosen programme. This will be assessed in one of the following ways:

- Assessment of how work and life experience and academic performance to date, may help with the programme.
- Submission of recently completed assessed work or completion of a piece of work set by Oak Hill during the selection process.
- Approval from the University of Durham (if Oak Hill wishes to offer a place to an applicant).

### c. English language requirement

Applicants whose first language is not English must satisfy the College that they have a sufficient command of spoken and written English to meet the demands of their chosen programme.

IELTS Academic or equivalent is required for the CertHE: **6.5 overall** with no less than 6.0 in any component. More information about equivalent English Language qualifications can be found on the College website (see [‘Study with us’](#) on the website).

An applicant will be considered to have satisfied the English language requirement if they have successfully completed a UK Bachelor's degree or higher, or an equivalent qualification, taught and assessed in English in a majority English-speaking country.

#### **d. Accreditation of Prior Learning (APCL)**

In general, up to a maximum of 40 credits of accredited prior learning may be granted to students who have evidence of, or can demonstrate learning that fulfils the relevant learning outcomes of the Certificate programme (by completing a portfolio of work, for example).

Students who have successfully completed the Certificate are eligible to apply to continue to the Diploma (HE) in Theology, Ministry and Mission programme. For more information about APL, please refer to the College *Admissions Policy*.

### **14. Field trips, Placements and Future Careers**

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All of the College's programmes are vocational and are intended to equip students with the necessary knowledge, skills, experience, attitudes and characteristics for Christian ministry of various types (for example church leadership, pastoral ministry, women's ministry, cross-cultural work, youth work, etc.: these, alongside our beliefs and values, are set out in detail on the [College's website](#).

Personal tuition throughout the Foundation year provides support in all areas of the student learning experience. This includes ongoing guidance on the academic programme and on future career possibilities, as well as regular Personal Development Planning activity.

There will be no placements involved in this programme.

## Appendix A

### List of Validated Modules

Listed below are all of the Level 4 modules validated for the Foundation Award, and the three main subject areas that they belong to.

***Please note that the availability of optional modules will vary each year, and students should check the above programme structure and/or the programme regulations for definitive information about available options in their year of study.***

<b>Compulsory Module Codes</b>	<b>Compulsory Module Titles</b>	<b>Subject Area</b>
TMM1517	<i>Introduction to Spirituality and</i>	Ministry and Mission
TMM1107	<i>Discipleship</i>	Christian Tradition
	<i>Brief Introduction to Christian</i>	
	<i>Doctrine</i>	
TMM1047	<i>Methods of Reading the Bible</i>	Biblical Studies
TMM1607	<i>Introduction to an Old Testament</i>	Biblical Studies
TMM1697	<i>Book</i>	Ministry and Mission
TMM1717	<i>Elements of Mission and Evangelism</i>	Ministry and Mission
	<i>Introduction to Growing Faith</i>	
<b>Other Validated Module Codes</b>	<b>Other Validated Module Titles</b>	<b>Subject Area</b>
TMM1207	<i>Preparing to Learn: Scripture, Prayer</i>	*
	<i>and Theology</i>	
TMM1147	<i>Brief Introduction to Church History</i>	Christian Tradition
TMM1577	<i>Introduction to Studying the Bible in</i>	Biblical Studies
	<i>its Original Languages</i>	
TMM1597	<i>Introduction to a New Testament</i>	Biblical Studies
TMM1627	<i>Book</i>	Ministry and Mission
	<i>Introduction to Missionary</i>	
	<i>Movements and the Gospel in a</i>	
	<i>Global Context</i>	
	<i>Continuing New Testament Greek:</i>	Biblical Studies
	<i>Texts Study</i>	

\*These modules fit into different categories depending on the subject matter chosen.