



THE COMMON AWARDS

IN THEOLOGY, MINISTRY AND MISSION

MA in Contemporary Christian Leadership

Programme Specification

1. Programme Title	Master of Arts (MA) Contemporary Christian Leadership [CCL]
2. Awarding Institution	Durham University
3. Teaching Institution	Oak Hill College
4. Final Qualification	Master of Arts (MA) Contemporary Christian Leadership
5. Year of Validation	Academic Year 2025-26
Year of Amendment	N/A
6. Language of Study	English
7. Mode of Study	Part time
8. Duration	Three Years [6 Semesters] or Four Years [8 Semesters] (Part Time)

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1. Name of Programme

MA in Contemporary Christian Leadership

AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

2. Educational and Formational Aims

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 offer postgraduate education in contemporary Christian leadership

1. for candidates for public ministry who have already studied theology to degree level
2. as continuing professional development at an advanced level for individuals engaged in ministry and mission
3. for individuals wishing to pursue further study in Christian leadership at postgraduate level

The programme aims to offer education that is accessible to students with a wide range of 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 offer learning and teaching that

- enable students to pursue academic study and/or professional development in Christian leadership at postgraduate level
- offer academically rigorous and research-facing engagement with a range of disciplines within the study of leadership from a Christian perspective, oriented towards the realities of church and society
- 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 personal and professional development 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 contribute to meeting the range of professional and vocational criteria for the public ministries for which students are being prepared;
2. satisfy the aspirations of those students who undertake their studies to enhance, broaden and deepen their discipleship, ministry and/or leadership in other contexts; and
3. enable students to become reflective practitioners who are adept at relating the theory and practice of Christian leadership to their own contexts;
4. provide a firm basis from which to pursue postgraduate research in theology, ministry, and leadership studies.

From personal perspective, the aim of this programme is to develop dispositions that are congruent with and necessary for Christian discipleship, ministry, leadership, and mission in the church and the world. The aims of the programme are that learners completing the programme will have become

1. open to the questions, insights and ongoing formation generated by engagement with research and thinking at the forefront of specialised areas of study or professional practice in Christian leadership, and willing to go on being transformed by them;
2. aware of the critical skills and disposition needed to go on reading themselves, the church and the world in the light of the theology leadership across the Christian tradition, and to explore Christian leadership more deeply in the light of experience and practice;
3. more passionate, articulate and prayerful advocates for the mission of God;
4. more generous, open and empathetic in engaging and cooperating with others in and beyond the church, while, as appropriate, expressing their own identity with integrity and sensitivity.

3. Programme Learning Outcomes

Subject Specific Knowledge (SSK)

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

1. Demonstrate a systematic understanding and depth of knowledge of areas of study or of professional practice in Christian leadership that is informed by research and original thinking at current boundaries of the subject.
2. Understand, assimilate and evaluate critically methodologies and findings of advanced scholarship and research in relation to both the theory and practice of leadership.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of a range of methods of analysis and inquiry in relation to Christian leadership, and an in-depth engagement with methods applicable to their chosen field of research or enquiry.
4. Give a critical and comprehensive account of a range of methods for relating their chosen field of study to aspects of faith, church and society.

Subject Specific Skills (SSS)

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

1. Apply their knowledge to undertake independent investigation of areas of study or of professional practice, reaching valid conclusions, some of which may be original, and report these findings effectively within the conventions of the relevant academic or professional community.
2. Evaluate and apply methodologies, develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, propose new hypotheses.
3. Reflect theologically in a sophisticated and rigorous manner, exercising sound judgement when engaging systematically and creatively with complex, unpredictable and ambiguous realities in the church and the world today.
4. Contribute to the debate at the forefront of the study of contemporary Christian leadership.

Key Skills (KS)

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

1. Carry out systematic and creative research into complex issues and communicate their findings with clarity, sensitivity, fairness and imagination to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
2. Demonstrate initiative, self-direction and independence in tackling and solving problems, and in planning and implementing tasks.
3. Exercise their independent learning skills to pursue further professional development or academic study.

DELIVERY OF THE PROGRAMME

4. Learning and Teaching Methods

The following learning and teaching methods will be employed throughout the programme:

- Lectures
- Guided Reading
- Practical Classes
- Seminars
- Tutorials
- Online Learning
- Case Studies

5. Summative and Formative Assessment Methods

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

- Essays
- Written Reflections
- Research Reviews
- Data Analysis Papers
- Research Proposals
- Case Study Analysis
- Oral Presentation
- Dissertations

Students' knowledge and understanding is formatively assessed by:

- Written Reflections

6. Formative Assessment Policy

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

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

	Guidelines	Criteria
Assessed Conversation	Assessed Conversations	Assessed Conversation - All Levels
Assessed Discussions	Assessed Discussions	Assessed Discussions - All Levels
Book Reviews	Book Reviews	See Essays and Other Written Assignments
Dissertation	* (see also Dissertation Marking Guidance)	See Essays and Other Written Assignments
Essays and Other Written Assignments	Essays and Other Written Assignments	Essays and Other Written Assignments - All Levels
Group Projects	Group Projects	See Group Projects
Literature Reviews	Literature Reviews	See Essays and Other Written Assignments
Oral Presentations	Oral Presentations	Oral Presentations - All Levels
Oral Presentations and Commentary	See Oral Presentations guidelines above.	Oral Presentations and Commentary - All Levels
Placement and Visit Reports	Placement and Visit Reports	Placement and Visit Reports - All Levels
Portfolios	Portfolios	Portfolios - All Levels
Practical Skills	Practical Skills	Practical Skills - All Levels
Projects	Projects	Projects and Group Projects - All Levels
Reflective Learning Journals	Reflective Learning Journals	Reflective Journals and Written Theological Reflection - All Levels
Resources for Others	Resources for Others	Resources for Others - All Levels
Short Tests	Short Tests	'Most short tests generate a straightforward numerical score'.
Written Examinations	Written Examinations	See Essays and Other Written Assignments
Written Theological Reflections	Written Theological Reflections	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 7:	Maximum credits at Level 6, or biblical language modules at levels 4 and 5:
180 credits	150 credits	30 credits

The programme may be studied part time over 3 or 4 years.

Compulsory Modules

All students will study the following modules (80 credits):

TMM42220 - Research and Reflection: Resources and Methods

TMM47060 - Dissertation in Christian Leadership

List A

All students will study 3 modules (60 credits) from List A:

TMM47320 - Leadership and the future church

TMM47120 - Ecclesiology and conflict

TMM43320 - Reflective Practice: Leadership and Collaboration

TMM46120 - Advanced Church Planting in Perspective

TMM3191 - Leadership and Theology for Ministry and Mission

Other Modules

All students will study a further 40 credits:

Either 1 further module from list A and 20 credits of other Common Awards modules from Level 6 or Level 7, or biblical languages modules at levels 4 and 5.

Or

40 credits of other Common Awards modules from Level 6 or Level 7, or biblical languages modules at levels 4 and 5.

9. Overall Structure of the Programme

Award of Master of Arts (MA) Mode and Duration of Study

The programme leads to the award of a Master of Arts (MA) a postgraduate qualification comprising 180 credits. The Masters in Contemporary Christian Leadership (CCL) may only be taken on a part-time basis.

- When studied part time, it will run over three or four academic years (depending on the student's preferred option).

The maximum registration period for this programme is four academic years. Students are therefore expected to complete all programme requirements within this timeframe. Those experiencing extenuating circumstances that may impact their ability to complete on time are advised to consult the Academic Registrar at the earliest opportunity.

Classification

The MA may be awarded as Fail, Pass, Merit, or Distinction, based on the overall average mark across all assessed modules:

- **Pass:** Overall average of 50–59%
- **Merit:** Overall average of 60–69%
- **Distinction:** Overall average of 70–100%
- **Fail:** Overall average of below 50%

In addition to the overall classification, a minimum pass mark of 50% must be achieved in each individual taught module.

Compensation Regulations

For the MA in Theology, Ministry and Mission, up to 40 credits may be awarded by compensation, subject to the following conditions:

- A student has achieved a minimum mark of 40% in the module(s) to be compensated;
- A student has maintained an overall average of at least 50% across all modules (including those to be compensated);
- The achievement of the learning outcomes is not compromised by failure in the module(s) concerned. The regulations for each programme indicate which module(s) may not be passed by compensation because failure in those modules would compromise the achievement of the learning outcomes of the programme (e.g. the dissertation module).

10. Oak Hill College Programme Requirements

Module Category Key

Biblical Studies	Christian Tradition	Ministry and Mission	Theological Reflection and Reflective Practice
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Year 1

Semester 1

TMM3191 *Leadership and Theology for Ministry and Mission* (20 credits)

Semester 2

TMM43320 *Reflective Practice: Leadership and Collaboration* (20 credits)

Year 2

Semester 1

TMM44320 *Christian Doctrine and Contemporary Culture* (20 credits)

Semester 2

TMM47320 *Leadership and the Future Church* (20 credits)

Year 3

Semester 1

TMM42220* *Research and Reflection: Resources and Methods* (20 credits)

Semester 2

TMM47120 *Ecclesiology and Conflict* (20 credits)

Year 4**

Semester 1

Semester 2

TMM47060* *Dissertation in Christian Leadership* (60 credits)

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

** Year 4: TMM47060 can be taken in Year 4 OR can be completed in Year 3 across Semester 1 & 2.

11. Curriculum Map

Category	Module Title	Code	Programme Learning Outcomes										
			SSK1	SSK2	SSK3	SSK4	SSS1	SSS2	SSS3	SSS4	KS1	KS2	KS3
Compulsory	Research & Reflection: Resources and Methods	TMM42220		x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
	Reflective Practice: Leadership and Collaboration	TMM43320	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x
	Dissertation in Christian Leadership	TMM47060	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Ecclesiology and Conflict	TMM47120	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	
	Leadership and the Future Church	TMM47320	x	x		x		x	x		x	x	x
	Christian Doctrine and Contemporary Culture	TMM44320	x			x	x		x		x		
	Leadership & Theology for Ministry and Mission	TMM3191			x			x	x				x

12. Research Training Element of the Programme

All students will undertake the core Research and Reflection: Resources and Methods, Dissertation in Christian Leadership modules that will have a focus on appropriate methodologies for the field of study that the student wishes to pursue. In addition, the module will equip students to understand and observe appropriate professional and academic codes of conduct and enable them to recognise and act on ethical issues related to their research.

Students may choose from discipline-based research or a research project with a professional development focus. The Assessment Board (or Board of Examiners) will have responsibility for approving dissertation proposals and students will be allocated supervisors with the appropriate expertise for the students' chosen fields of research. In some cases, where a student is sponsored for postgraduate study by their church, the appropriate scrutiny body will have responsibility for approving the student's research proposal.

13. Pre/Co-requisites of the Programme

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

14. Admissions Criteria

a. Academic requirement

- Normally an upper second class honours degree in a subject relevant to the proposed course of study.
- Normally students will need a good degree (or other Level 6 qualification), such as Graduate Diploma) in Theology.
- Graduates in other disciplines (classified as first-class or 2:1 honours) with experience of Theology or Religious Studies to at least FHEQ Level 4 (undergraduate Certificate level, awarded with credit or distinction, or with an overall mark of at least 60%) may also be admitted to the programme.

b. Non-standard admission

Applicants not meeting the standard academic entry requirements (e.g. not a 2:1 degree/GDip in Theology or a 2:1 degree in another discipline and experience of Theology/Religious Studies to at least FHEQ Level 4) will need to demonstrate their potential to benefit from the chosen programme. This will be assessed in 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 MA: **7.0 overall** with no less than 6.5 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 60 credits of accredited prior learning may be granted to students who have evidence of, or can demonstrate learning that fulfills the relevant learning outcomes of the MA programme (by completing a portfolio of work, for example).

For programmes primarily designed to run at a single level (e.g. the MA at Level 7), any APL granted should normally be at that level, e.g. only Level 7 APL can be used toward an MA, PG Certificate or PG Diploma. Any possible exceptions to this may only be approved by Durham University. For more information about APL, please refer to the College *Admissions Policy*.

15. Field Trips, Placements and Future Careers

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](#)).

Students will engage in various residential learning opportunities and field trips where possible. More information about these will be made available throughout the duration of study.

Appendix A

List of Validated Modules

Listed below are all of the Level 7 modules validated for the Masters in Christian Contemporary Leadership and the four 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.

Compulsory Module Codes	Compulsory Module Titles	Subject Area
TMM3191	<i>Leadership & Theology for Ministry and Mission</i>	Ministry and Mission
TMM42220	<i>Research and Reflection: Resources and Methods</i>	Any
TMM43320	<i>Reflective Practice: Leadership and Collaboration</i>	Ministry and Mission; Theological Reflection and Reflective Practice
TMM44320	<i>Christian Doctrine and Contemporary Culture</i>	Christian Tradition
TMM47060	<i>Dissertation in Christian Leadership</i>	Any
TMM47120	<i>Ecclesiology and Conflict</i>	Ministry and Mission
TMM47320	<i>Leadership and the Future Church</i>	Ministry and Mission
Other Validated Module Codes	Other Validated Module Titles	Subject Area
TMM46120	Advanced Church Planting in Perspective	Ministry and Mission