




Information about Education for Ministry Phase 1 (EM1)



Ministries of Word
and Sacraments
and Church Related
Community Work

March 2023

Throughout this document the word 'minister' is used to identify those in the ministry of the Word and Sacraments and ministry of Church Related Community Work.

EM1 covers the period between acceptance for ministerial training following an assessment conference, training at a Resource Centre for Learning (RCL), and the satisfactory conclusion of that training for ministry, as agreed by the Assessment Board, leading to ordination/commissioning.

This booklet describes Education for Ministry Phase 1 (EM1) for stipendiary service and models 1-3 of non-stipendiary service.

Some of the specifics of EM1 for those training for the ministry of non-stipendiary service Model 4 (the Word and Sacraments or Church Related Community Work) differ from the routes through EM1 described in this booklet, although candidates accepted for NSM4 EM1 will still relate to one of the three RCLs. For more detail contact ministries@urc.org.uk

Contents

	<i>page</i>
Introduction	2
1) The process of allocation of a Resource Centre for Learning	2
2) Preparing for the ministry of Word and Sacraments or Church Related Community Work	4
Resource Centres for Learning	10
1) Westminster College, Cambridge	10
2) Scottish United Reformed and Congregational College, Glasgow	20
3) Northern College, Manchester	30

Introduction

1) The process of allocation of a Resource Centre for Learning

- 1.1 The United Reformed Church uses three Resource Centres for Learning (RCLs): Westminster College based in Cambridge; Northern College, based in Manchester; and the Scottish College (Congregational and United Reformed), based in Glasgow. All three RCLs are used for the initial preparation and formation of candidates for ordination as a minister of the Word and Sacraments. Northern College has responsibility for the initial formation of candidates for commissioning to the ministry of Church Related Community Work.

Becoming a minister is a process of testing God's call, which continues throughout the process of education for ministry. Preparing to inhabit the role of a minister is a careful combination of gaining practical experience, engaging with theological study and being open to spiritual growth and change. It is a time of formation and it is a lifelong process which does not end with the completion of Education for Ministry Phase 1 (EM1).

Any candidate recommended by the Assembly Assessment Board for initial preparation for the ministry of the Word and Sacraments would be able to complete EM1 equally through any one of the RCLs. The decision about which RCL is right for each student is the responsibility of the Assessment Board.

- 1.2 A candidate may contact or visit any of the three RCLs before or after the assessment conference.

- 1.3 The URC will only financially support those candidates who have been accepted for EM1 by the Assembly Assessment Board. For those accepted for stipendiary ministry there will be a financial assessment, post-acceptance, and a grant may be awarded. Academic fees will be met by the URC, not the candidate. Relevant expenses will also be paid, including for those who do not qualify for a grant. A separate booklet is available on the URC website (www.bit.ly/EM1-finance), and in print, from each synod's candidating secretary which explains the financial support system available during EM1.
- 1.4 An adviser is offered through the Secretary for Global and Intercultural Ministries for any candidate or EM1 student who would like to discuss the processes they are undergoing with particular reference to black and minority ethnic concerns. The current advisers are Ms Karen Campbell and the Revd Andrew Mudharara (email: global.intercultural@urc.org.uk).
- 1.5 At the assessment conference, an Education and Learning Board meets each candidate to discuss potential routes through EM1. They make the overall recommendation on the EM1 route for the candidate in the event of being accepted by the Assessment Board. The minimum requirements to complete EM1 are set out below (see section 2.1). For information about the pre-assessment criteria, please refer to the booklet *Candidating for Ministry (EM1)* (www.bit.ly/EM1-candidating).
- 1.6 The Education and Learning Board recommends the particular EM1 route which will best contribute towards providing a well-equipped ministry for the Church whilst also taking the needs of the student into account. To those ends, the board will have in mind the vocational needs and the circumstances of candidates.
- 1.7 Factors in the decision include:
 - a) The RCL setting which will best enable the student to develop personally and spiritually;

- b) Any family or financial restrictions for the type or location of residence during EM1;
- c) The most suitable programme of academic study, practical experience and formation;
- d) The size and balance of the student body of each RCL at any particular time.

1.8 The decision with regard to which RCL a candidate will train at is made by the Assessment Board. Any change of RCL will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. In such cases, the Education and Learning Board will consult with the Assessment Board, the student's synod, and the RCL concerned. If a candidate decides to defer training, there is no guarantee that the college, and, in some circumstances, the course recommended will be the same and the candidate may be asked to return for a further training conversation.

1.9 Once the Assessment Board has accepted a candidate for EM1, the candidate will be invited to a meeting with the recommended RCL to decide on the detailed EM1 programme to be undertaken, to complete admission procedures, to discuss financial and housing matters (if appropriate), and to note any recommendations arising from the prior medical and psychological assessments.

2) Preparing for the ministry of the Word and Sacraments or Church Related Community Work

2.1 To meet the minimum requirement for ordination or commissioning, accepted candidates commit to undertaking:

- a) To attend the course: 'You're Welcome: Exploring the Ethos and History of the URC' online, and any other relevant study associated with it;

- b) The URC's basic safeguarding training provided by the RCL for EM1 and the satisfactory completion of a DBS/PVG, before starting any placements in EM1;
- c) A programme of study through one of the RCLs which could be full-time or part-time but which ensures that students have reached a minimum of a diploma of higher education or a foundation degree in theology.
- d) A minimum of 800 hours in supervised and assessed placement(s);
- e) Participation in at least one online summer school organised by the Education and Learning and Ministries departments, during their period of EM1.

2.2 Every student is encouraged by their RCL to take advantage of opportunities to experience the world Church first-hand, through a placement.

‘Every student is encouraged ... to experience the world Church first-hand, through a placement.’

2.3 The normal duration of EM1 is four years, either part-time or full-time. This may be varied depending on the previous theological education of individuals, or their potential to benefit from further studies. Experience has shown that both candidates for ministry and the United Reformed Church are best served by EM1 programmes of at least two years' duration (and this is the expectation for NSM4).

2.4 The decision about whether someone pursues EM1 full-time or part-time is shaped by the principle that the pattern of EM1 reflects the pattern of eventual ministry. Normally,

people accepted for stipendiary service engage in EM1 full-time and people accepted for non-stipendiary service engage in EM1 part-time.

- 2.5 Personal circumstances sometimes mean that a candidate for stipendiary service is recommended to start EM1 part-time and then move to full-time mode subsequently. There are also instances where someone preparing for non-stipendiary service is supported in EM1 full-time on an expenses-only basis. These are decisions taken by the Education and Learning Board during the assessment conference.
- 2.6 General Assembly requires candidates to attain, as a minimum, an undergraduate diploma in theology (2.1.c above). Many of those undertaking EM1 full-time will complete a theological degree at bachelor's level. Work towards a master's degree may be possible for those with a first degree in theology.
- 2.7 In exceptional circumstances it is possible for a student to carry work forward from EM1 and complete it after starting ministry (EM2), for example topping up diploma level study to achieve a bachelor's degree, or finishing off a dissertation. However, this is not always a good idea. The early years of ministry can be fiercely busy, and the URC has its own learning programmes (EM2) for supporting new ministers. Any work that runs on from EM1 would need to be discussed carefully with the Secretary for Education and Learning and the EM2/3 Officer of the receiving synod. The synod is responsible for setting up new ministers' programmes of learning, alongside the URC's EM2 programme.
- 2.8 After ordination/commissioning, ministers will:
 - a) proceed into Education for Ministry Phase 2 (EM2) for an intentional programme of learning in the context of their first (normally) three years of service; and

- b) undertake appropriate subsequent development as Education for Ministry Phase 3 (EM3) throughout the ministries entrusted to them.

For further information about Education for Ministry Phase 1, please contact the Secretary for Education and Learning using the contact details below.

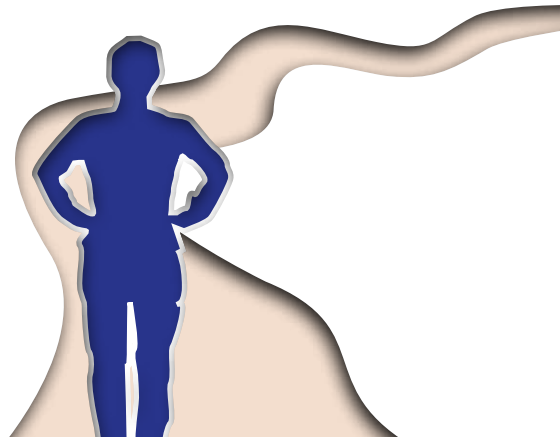
post: The United Reformed Church, 86 Tavistock Place,
London WC1H 9RT.

phone: **020 7520 2720**

email: secretaryEandL@urc.org.uk

‘This whole experience has enriched my theological thinking and has helped me to see how I can serve God in an ecumenical context’

– Maria JY Lee



Education for Ministry Phase 1 in the United Reformed Church: Opportunities at a glance

Resource Centre for Learning	Awards	Duration of EM1 recommended by Assessment Board
Westminster College	Diploma/BA/MA/PhD (Durham Common Awards); BA/BTh/MPhil Cambridge University.	2-4 years minimum (research degrees may involve additional periods of study)
Scottish College	Diploma/BD/MTh/PhD with University of Glasgow. Diploma, BA, MA with Scottish Episcopal Institute (Durham Common Awards). Certificate with University of Aberdeen for NSM4.	2-4 years minimum (research degrees may involve additional periods of study)
Northern College	Diploma/BA/MA (Durham Common Awards). PhD: York St John's	2-4 years minimum (research degrees may involve additional periods of study)

Learning mode	Full-time pattern	Part-time pattern
Classes with Cambridge Federation partners; home-based training with block weeks at Westminster or fully residential at Westminster; contextual reflection; placements throughout; Living Ministry Programme.	6-8 block weeks per year; or weekly commuting during term time; or termly commuting; or residential in Cambridge; year round assignments/ placements.	3-4 block weeks per year; year round assignments/ placements.
Formational programme through seminars, residential events, visits and online teaching; academic programme with partners; contextual reflection; placements throughout.	As set by the learning mode, engaged full-time; year round placements.	As set by the learning mode, engaged part-time; year round placements.
Classes with Luther King Centre partners; distance learning; contextual reflection; placements and assignments throughout.	2 days per week attendance at Luther King Centre in term-time; year-round placements. Some mid-week and weekend study interchangeable.	Although the pattern of teaching is not yet finalised, part-time students will need to be available for 6 academic teaching weekends (online) and 3 or 4 other weekends of attendance at LKC.

Westminster College, Cambridge



Introduction

Westminster College, Cambridge, is home to a vibrant community of learners rooted in prayer and worship. It offers a warm and welcoming environment in which formation for ministry takes place. Our programmes are delivered in partnership with the Cambridge Theological Federation (CTF), which is one of the world's broadest and most diverse providers of theological engagement and encounter, serving more than 300 students from over 25 countries. The CTF consists of twelve institutions including three Anglican colleges representing the full breadth of the Church of England, alongside Orthodox, Methodist, Lutheran and Roman Catholic communities. It includes specialist research centres studying global Christian mission, interfaith dialogue, the interaction between science and religion, and public theology. The Westminster campus is home to four of these Federation members as well as the administrative centre for the CTF. All other member Houses of the CTF are located within easy walking (or cycling) distance of Westminster. EM1 candidates usually follow programmes validated by the University of Durham, but there are also pathways involving study in the University of Cambridge.

Living arrangements

EM1 pathways are shaped in discussion with the denomination and with candidates. We will always work with you to provide a programme that fits your circumstances as you explore your vocation and grow into your future role:

Option 1:

Stay where you live and come to Westminster for 8-9 intensive block weeks/weekends of academic and formational teaching per year, supported by online learning experiences and materials.

We'll provide you with a study bedroom when you're here. All our rooms are en-suite and the College is fully accessible. Throughout your training, placements will be arranged within a reasonable distance from where you live in order for you to gain practical experience which you will reflect on with peers and tutors. Each year the dates of the block weeks are set well in advance and students entering programmes taught in this way will know in good time when they are required to be in Cambridge. During their block weeks, home-based students benefit from the same diverse expertise as residential students. Beyond that, contact is maintained through placement visits and use of electronic media.

Option 2:

Keep your home but be resident at Westminster throughout the three terms (of 8-9 weeks at a time) during each year of the academic programme. We can provide you with either a well-appointed study bedroom or flat depending upon circumstances and availability. Some of our students have regularly returned home at weekends as well. You will undertake a number of short-term placements, outside term time, in order to gain practical experience which you will reflect on with peers and tutors.

Option 3:

Move permanently to Cambridge for the duration of EM1. We have flats on site suitable for single students and couples. Students with children can be accommodated in rented housing and we can help you with introductions to letting agencies as well as the local school system. Short-term placements will be undertaken, outside term time, in order to gain practical experience which you will reflect on with tutors.

At Westminster, you will be part of a Christian community of shared prayer, worship, fellowship and hospitality. We delight in the diversity of the community which gathers daily at Westminster: lay and ordained; preparing for ministry and being refreshed in ministry; UK-based and from the global church. The community is further

enriched by welcoming guests from ecumenical, interfaith, intercultural and international contexts.

During term-time, we gather at 8:30am every weekday to worship in the College chapel and the service is live-streamed to members of the community who are off-site. They in turn are able to lead prayers for those gathering in the chapel. The rhythm of worship includes Morning Prayer, celebrating the Lord's Supper and student-led assessed services. Services vary in style and format, and are led by students and staff. We also spend time together in Bible study, with staff and students meeting as disciples to open God's word and discover what it means for us today.

The Federation gathers for worship several times during the term and this is led by the member institutions in turn. Some of these services are conducted on-line while others are available only to those living in and around Cambridge. These services enable students to experience a broad range of liturgies and practices.

At Westminster, we believe that any kind of Christian service means being prepared for a future as yet unknown in a church and a world that is rapidly changing. As a result, we seek to equip and prepare people to be resilient and faithful, rooted in our heritage while confident enough to face the challenges of today's world and embracing new opportunities for mission and service.

Formation and learning for ministry: focused on today's contexts alongside the wisdom of many traditions

All Westminster students integrate placement-based learning with reflection and academic study across each year of their programme. Placement-based, hands-on learning is a central part of each one of our academic awards. On this foundation, we build the Living Ministry Programme (LMP): nine months placement in a pastorate under the supervision of a local minister. This placement is arranged in full consultation with each student. Alongside tutor visits to the placement, students return to Westminster for four block weeks

during the LMP to reflect with peers and continue their formation with College tutors and invited practitioners. We feel that the LMP is an excellent way to transition from College life into the pastorate.

The academic programme is made up of classes in all the theological disciplines including biblical studies, Christian doctrine, church history, Christian ethics, while there are options to study courses in apologetics, Christian leadership, and inter-faith relations. The content and assessment are geared towards the church's ministry and mission in the twenty-first century. This is augmented by Westminster's formational 'Enrichment Programme', which includes short courses or topics relevant to ministry today. These include Mental Health First Aid, Bridge-Builders Conflict transformation and Diversity awareness. Specialist practitioners are invited to lead and Westminster students join with EM1 students from the other RCLs for these courses whenever possible.

'One of the best things about studying full time at Westminster is the community spirit'
– Abigail Perrow

The ecumenical experience at Westminster is one of learning, prayer, hospitality and socialising, which students and staff find both richly exciting and deeply challenging.

The CTF provides extensive resources for theological education and ministerial formation. Resources are increasingly being made available as e-books or online journals, but our students can borrow books from Westminster's library and the libraries of other Federation Houses. When in Cambridge, students can worship in Federation chapels and eat in their dining rooms. The libraries of the Cambridge Centre for Christianity Worldwide and the Woolf Institute for inter-faith dialogue are located on the Westminster campus. We also have access to Cambridge University and Divinity Faculty resources. Students following courses taught in block weeks can also borrow books from the different Houses which make up the

Federation. Much of the teaching is planned and delivered jointly in the Federation, drawing on the expertise of some 40 theological teachers and most classes are attended by students from around the CTF.

Cambridge-based members of the Federation also meet regularly for worship and to share community life.

Courses on offer

Westminster offers the benefits of a small and intimate community, where individual needs matter, along with a diverse range of academic programmes that can respond to those needs. There are several Federation programmes of study – all designed and taught with ministry in mind. For up-to-date details of our academic awards visit the Westminster www.westminster.cam.ac.uk or Federation www.theofed.cam.ac.uk websites.

Programmes of study

1. The Common Awards in Theology, Ministry and Mission (Durham University)

These comprise a suite of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes taught by the Cambridge Theological Federation in partnership with Durham University and the Ministry Division of the Church of England. These are available on a full or part-time basis and are taught through intensive block-week modules or during academic terms. Assessment is through written work, presentations and creative submissions after each module. While the awards have been designed for the formation of ordination candidates and accredited ministers, they are also suitable for lay people from all denominations who wish to deepen their learning and understanding of Christian discipleship.

For those who have not previously studied theology (or a similar subject), the programmes for Common Awards are typically:

Certificate: one year's study full-time, or two to three years part-time

Diploma: two years' study full-time, or three to four years part-time

BA (Honours): three years' study full-time, or four to six years part-time

For stipendiary Ministers and NSM1-3, the Diploma is the minimum requirement. NSM4 candidates might attend modules with other ministerial candidates, but they usually do not study for a particular academic award.

2. Bachelor of Theology for Ministry (BTh – Cambridge University)

This is a two-year programme of ministerial education, including both classroom and practical work, leading to a Cambridge University degree awarded through the Faculty of Divinity. To gain access to this programme, students need to have at least a high 2.1 in a previous degree (not necessarily in theology or a related subject), and they need also to be accepted by one of the Cambridge Colleges through a process managed by the CTF. Learning a biblical language is a standard part of the programme and unseen examinations form a large part of the assessment.

3. BA in Theology, Religion and Philosophy of Religion (Tripos – Cambridge University)

Where a student has a strong academic record and would benefit from an intensive taught course in the more traditional disciplines of theology, Westminster students can be entered on to the BA programme at Cambridge University. This programme is always supplemented by pastoral studies, organised by Westminster College. As with the BTh, Tripos students have to be accepted by one of the Cambridge Colleges, while assessment includes examinations and some required biblical language classes.

4. Postgraduate Awards

Suitably qualified candidates for EM1, usually those holding a good initial degree in theology or a cognate subject, might be entered for one of a number of postgraduate awards available to Westminster students through the Federation.

MA in Theology, Ministry and Mission (Durham University)

This programme is validated by Durham University. It provides a practical and broad-based approach to the exploration of theology

and ministry in a variety of settings and contexts. Modules range from more traditional areas of study to those exploring the challenges facing churches in the 21st century. It is possible to shape the modules chosen and the assessments undertaken so that the specific interests of a student are given special emphasis.

Graduate Diploma: one year's study full-time, or two to three years part-time

MA: two years' study full-time with various options for part-time study.

MPhil (Cambridge University)

Students who have completed the Cambridge BA or BTh might be eligible to register for the Cambridge MPhil, a taught programme which concentrates on one of the theological disciplines. Entry to the programme is subject to acceptance by the University and to one of the Cambridge Colleges.

Placements

All ministerial students at Westminster are expected to share fully in worshipping communities where they live. Alongside this, major blocks of placement in church and social contexts are undertaken annually and for most students this will lead to a 9-month placement in a congregation through our Living Ministry Programme. Students following a block-week programme will undertake placements in a variety of different contexts according to their location and experience before undertaking their Living Ministry Programme placement. NSM Model 4 students will follow a bespoke placement route discerned between the College and the Synod in which they will serve. Westminster has global connections and support for international placements can be offered through the URC's Belonging to the World Church initiative.

We take seriously the Church's calling to mission, to serve God and make Christ known. Theology involves an understanding of human community and an imaginative vision of God's varied ways of working in the world. Reflection on both is a vital part of formation for ministry

and continuing discipleship. Placements offer contexts within congregations and such settings as prisons, hospitals, hospices and workplaces through which your theology is applied and refined and you are able to reflect on your gifts and learning.

Contact

Westminster College welcomes enquiries and is happy to discuss how our programmes can connect with your particular needs or to discuss any questions or concerns.

post: The Principal, Westminster College, Madingley Road,
Cambridge CB3 0AA

phone: **01223 330 633** (for the main College office)

email: admin@westminster.cam.ac.uk

What our students say

- **Simon Cross** a second year student, home-based, attending block weeks. Studying for the Common Awards PGCert

“One of the great advantages to the flexible pattern of training at Westminster College is that it takes into account the different circumstances of individual students, meaning that our formation is done in the context of training which is specific to our needs.

I am a ‘block week’ student, which means that I attend college for a few days at a time and do much of my work remotely. The flexibility of the system also means that my previous qualifications and experience were taken into account and I’ve been able to train in a way that builds on what I have done and addresses gaps in my knowledge. This year I’m doing a Post Graduate Certificate which allows me to access some teaching on subjects which are interesting and useful to me, this has been delivered by a mixture of block week teaching and remote learning.



A further advantage of training at Westminster is that I've been able to get to meet a range of different people, the college is something of a melting pot really. Sabbatical visitors from overseas mix together with students and staff, as do other people who might be passing through: formation is done in the dining hall and the common room – not 'just' the classrooms.'

● **Maria JY Lee** a first year student, living in Cambridge during the term. Studying for the Common Awards PGCert

‘I am a weekday student, meaning I stay at the college between Monday and Friday and go home at the weekend. This helps me to concentrate on studying while also having some breathing time at home. Living in Westminster College has given me opportunities to meet all kinds of people



who make use of its facilities, while being part of the Cambridge Theological Federation (CTF) has enabled me to make multi-denominational friends in Cambridge. CTF gatherings and services offer a taste of so many different ways of serving the Lord. This whole experience has enriched my theological thinking and has helped me to see how I can serve God in an ecumenical context.

Morning Prayer has become my essential spiritual vessel. We meet Monday to Friday during term for 15 minutes, led by either a student or one of the tutors. It is a time for thanksgiving, asking for wisdom, searching our hearts humbly and praying for each other. Each of us is taking a personal journey, e.g. full-time or part-time study, stipendiary or non-stipendiary ministry, NSM4, two, three or four years of studying. Personal circumstances and experience are taken into account. In my case, I am transferring from the ministry of Church Related Community Work to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments.

I thank God, who led me to start my new journey at Westminster College, and all the people here have been incredibly supportive. Wherever your journey might be, Westminster College

will be able to listen to your calling, pray with you, and guide you on the right path.’

Abigail Perrow a first year student, living in Cambridge during the term. Studying for the Common Awards BA

‘One of the best things about studying full time at Westminster is the community spirit. From the start, the friendliness of everyone really made me feel at home.

The tutors are both knowledgeable and approachable, always willing to offer support as needed. College lunches are

a great time to get to know others, as are community socials. There’s something special about the chance to gather as equals, and learn from all who work in the building! Living in Westminster College has also allowed me to make full use of all that the city has to offer. There are opportunities to attend additional lectures and seminars, as well as to join in with events and services at the many local churches.

I attend a mixture of block and term time modules, allowing opportunities to spend quality time with all the Westminster first year students, as well as the chance to discuss topics with Anglican students from Ridley Hall and Westcott House (two Anglican colleges in Cambridge). So far, lectures have offered input into aspects of biblical studies, as well as church history, doctrine, and practical ministerial skills. I have also very much enjoyed college Bible Studies, which allow the chance to explore specific Bible passages in more detail. From learning ways to interpret the Psalms to having coffee with fellow students or conference attendees, I feel like I’ve learnt so much already – and it’s only just begun.’



The Scottish College (Congregational & United Reformed) Glasgow



in educational partnership with



Introduction

The Scottish College was founded as the Glasgow Theological Academy in 1811. Vera Kenmuir entered the College in 1926, graduating to become the first woman minister in Scotland. The Olympic athlete and missionary, Eric Liddell – of *Chariots of Fire* fame – was one of our students too.

Our College came about through a concern of early Scottish Congregationalists for an educated ministry and the development of the whole people of God in ministry and mission. Our roots lie in radical movements in Scottish political, social and Church life. We seek to continue that ministry, following in – and developing – a spiritual and educational tradition that is rooted in life – and for life.

We follow a pattern of preparing ministers ‘in the world, for service to the world’: This means that our ordinand students study for theological qualifications with educational partners, often local universities. Ordinands take classes alongside students from other denominations, and often with ‘ordinary’ graduate and undergraduate students heading for a multiplicity of careers. Scottish College students bring their calling to ministry to be rooted and matured in the academic marketplace of ideas. Our approach is also ‘with the whole Church, to serve the Church’: many elements

of our formational programme are also made available to members, elders and local church leaders. Ministerial formation is integrated with the education of the whole people of God – learning together with and from one another.

A place of partnership

The College enjoys a close relationship with the National Synod of Scotland, which roots our work in a stimulating local context. Our community, however, comes from all over the United Reformed Church and beyond.

The pandemic has accelerated the movement towards online meeting, complemented now with a full measure of ‘in person time’ together, bringing together the best of our old traditions with what we have learned in recent days. While distance learning technologies and possibilities are new, the challenges of distance are not. From north to south the churches in the Synod of Scotland lie up to 300 miles apart, so we are used to maintaining fellowship and promoting learning across a broad geography.

Partnership, mutual learning and flexibility are characteristic of our programmes. Courses try to draw on history, literature, social sciences and a range of other disciplines and experiences. We integrate traditional perspectives with more radical outlooks.

Academically and professionally, we have a significant interests in such fields as:

- Fresh approaches to biblical study
- Ministry with older people
- Community work, development and grassroots movements
- Story and narrative approaches in worship and education, pastoral care and organisational growth
- Interdisciplinary ways of doing theology
- Systems approaches to congregational life
- Asian theologies
- Political and social theologies
- Engagement with civil society in dialogue, and in mission

- Intercultural theology, and
- Homiletics

Courses on offer

Most ordinands will be required to obtain a theological qualification as part of their Education for Ministry Phase 1 (EM1) programme and we co-operate with partners who help us deliver this. For us, this is not unusual but the way that our ministerial preparation has been delivered for decades.

‘I was especially drawn to the creativity and flexibility of the curriculum.’

– Roberta Ritson

Our most usual partners are Glasgow University and the Scottish Episcopal Institute in Edinburgh. Our NSM4 students study with their Church of Scotland counterparts at Aberdeen University’s distance

programme – and all join together for the College formational curriculum. College staff contribute to teaching at the University of Glasgow and the Scottish Episcopal Institute. We have similarly worked with other universities, from Edinburgh to Cardiff. The aim in every case is to put together an appropriate and stimulating programme of academic and ecclesiastical formation for each of our students. While you study with a partner we remain closely supportive and involved in all aspects of your training.

We are able to offer rigorous and appropriate programmes, both general and specialist, across a range of levels, from diploma to doctoral opportunities. We work with every student, and with our partners, to determine the optimal course of formal study for each one – complementing our thematic in-house formation programme. Our aim is always to identify the best solution for each student.

Some examples of the most common courses for students to follow alongside their programme with us:

- **Bachelor of divinity degree** – Often those who come to us without a prior degree will study for a divinity or theology degree at university.
- **Diploma in theology for ministry** – This course is offered by our Episcopal partners, with input from Scottish College staff.
- **Graduate diploma in theology** – A fast-track qualification for graduates in disciplines other than theology, taking the student to honours degree level in two years, part-time.
- **Master of divinity degree** – this three-year programme, for graduates in disciplines other than divinity is offered by the University of Edinburgh.
- **Master of theology in ministry** – for those who already have a degree in theology.
- **Theology and religion flexible learning programme** – this programme, with the University of Aberdeen offers exit awards from Certificate in Higher Education all the way to Honours degree level.
- There are also **postgraduate research** options in some of the most distinguished universities in these islands.
- In some cases, it may be appropriate for the EM1 student to pursue a **non-university programme** which is more focused on placement and reflective learning.

There are a number of exciting new programmes under development in which the Scottish College is involved. These include an innovative masters programme in ministry being offered in both Glasgow and London.

Patterns of attendance

The College supports ordinand students following courses offered in a number of different modes. In every case, the College resources our students while they study with other partners, with a bespoke College programme for ordinands running alongside. This approach frees us to pursue a unique freshness and flexibility in our EM1 offering.

A theological qualification may be followed on the basis of full-time or part-time attendance, or distance learning.

with the student community trying to ensure that these fit in with students' other commitments. In recent years it has involved modules offered on three consecutive days per month in Edinburgh or Glasgow. Where necessary, non-local students stay in nearby hotel accommodation and have their expenses met by the URC. In addition, the college has worked hard to develop teaching and learning across mixed modes involving technology, social media and learning platforms. We believe that this will help build valuable and up-to-date skills for ministry.

Examples of themes explored in recent College formational programmes:

Café style approaches

- Conversational cafés
- Cafés as outreach and service
- Café style worship
- Death cafés
- Night Church

A novel approach to faith: Discussing faith issues through Literature and Film

- *The Anchoress* by Robyn Cadwallader
- *Behind God's back* by Harri Nykäänen
- *The Banshees of innisheerin*

Communion

- Multi-faceted celebration
- The liturgical framework
- Creative communion

The public square

- Space for faith celebration?
- Dialogue in the public square
- Brexit and the book of Ruth
- Slavery – then and now

‘A source of not only great learning and growth, but also the making of life-long friendships.’

– Louise Sanders

Creation

- Eco-theology
- Myths of creation
- Dinosaur Sunday – science with congregations
- Crafts and composition

Yarns

- Weaving – integrating congregational life
- Tapestries of life and longing
- The Great Tapestry of Scotland

College community

College activities remain at the heart of the EM1 experience for ordinands. We nurture knowledge and understanding, prayer and meditation, skills and imagination through studying and talking together, in shared worship and reflection. Our aim is not only to prepare you for ministry but also to encourage personal and spiritual growth, discovering more and more of that abundant life to which all are called.

Students at the Scottish College are encouraged to participate in the College's public theology programme, as well as Scottish Synod residential conferences for ministers.

Many modules are open courses – so we welcome elders and members of churches, ministers undertaking continuing education and others as full participants. The college is a diverse group, enabling a rich mutual learning experience. Our integrated approach is intended both to capitalise on that range of experience and perspective and to prepare ordinands for being collaborative ministers. We seek to help break down barriers between different roles and responsibilities in the life of the church. We don't teach to a fixed pre-determined curriculum but, as a smaller community of learning, we can respond to individual interests and needs. To the maximum possible extent, we shape the curriculum around the needs, experience, and interest of the student.

In seeking to help future ministers and others nurture their creativity, we draw on many different disciplines, and a wide range of experiences. Our learning is rooted in conversation, and we hope, as Edicio de la Torre says, to help ‘birds learn to swim and fish to fly!’

Residential time together

Each year, we organise additional short residential times together around a theme. Overseas, we have connections with Scandinavia, India and Taiwan, with Ireland and Italy. Closer to home, we have travelled north to Orkney. Students have also been able to join study tours offered by New College, Edinburgh and Trinity College, Glasgow.

International/cross-cultural experience

The college encourages students to participate in exchange programmes and other opportunities that engage with the Church beyond these islands, and with intercultural reflection more locally. We support students who undertake Council for World Mission (CWM) programmes, for example. We are deepening links with international partners, offering further possibilities for exchange.

Placements

Placements are an indispensable element of EM1. These take place in a variety of settings – local churches (including ecumenical settings), hospitals and schools, prisons and workplaces. Placements are structured to promote an experience of supported learning that allows the student to engage deeply with different ministry contexts. These are organised in cooperation with the ordinand’s sending synod. These can be close to or easily accessible from the ordinand’s home. Placements take place throughout a student’s years of study with us.

Living arrangements

What if I am not based in Scotland and I can’t move there? Well, not all of our students are Scottish-based! Some students remain just where they are during training with Scottish College, whether that is on

Scotland or further away. We have experience in making things work well for students wherever they live.

Of course, if it is practical for you, you may choose to move to Scotland for EM1. We believe that for some students from England and Wales a Scottish EM1 promises a real adventure of learning. If you need to move, either in Scotland or from further afield, the College can support you in finding accommodation and making necessary arrangements. We have experience in making things work well for those who live outwith our borders too!

For prospective students based in England or Wales, our pattern allows you both to have a taste of the Scottish context while also exploring further your home environment.

What our students say

- **Roberta Ritson** a fourth-year student with Scottish College (and for years one to three at the Scottish Episcopal Institute), living at home and studying for non-stipendiary ministry
 - “Back in 2018 I read a booklet just like this one and straight away I knew that Scottish College would be a good match. I was especially drawn to the creativity and flexibility of the curriculum. Cultural visits to Scotland’s cities and a New Year stay at The Bield, Perth are memorable, particularly for the depth of worship and developing camaraderie. Among other things, we have practised the art of storytelling for church contexts, read a novel about the brutality of the slave trade and considered how faith is inseparable from political matters today. We marked All Saints Day with a visit to Glasgow’s famous necropolis, paving the way to an in-depth consideration of wholesome remembrance.



Together we have adapted to the restrictive lockdown world. The limitations of gatherings and celebrations on zoom have not stemmed the warmth of Scottish College.

My other learning base, the Scottish Episcopal Institute, also placed great emphasis on working as community with good levels of mutual support.

The continual reflective practice courses are searching, throwing light on tiny details arising from placements. Personally speaking, the practical side of formation is the best. Lockdown itself has provided strong motivation to reach out to people in novel ways, showing that Christian hope, love and wisdom will prevail.’

Louise Sanders a fourth-year student with Scottish College (and for years one to three at the Scottish Episcopal Institute), living at home and) studying for stipendiary ministry

‘For me, living in the north-east of England and studying with the Scottish College has been a perfect fit for me and my family. I undertake my academic studies with the Scottish Episcopal Institute and this has been a source of not only great learning and growth, but also the making of life-long friendships. The formational training undertaken with the College has helped me grow in ways I couldn’t have imagined and again, the friendships made are very much valued with a strong sense of community in both.

My placements have been quite different and have enriched my learning, and I have enjoyed them very much. Scottish College has been a place of great support and learning, and I look forward to being challenged in new ways in the coming years.’



In summary

Yes, Scotland is different. It has its own theological traditions, its own church and ecumenical life, its culture and history, its distinct institutions, political discourse and is experiencing a renaissance in much of its life. We face many of the same challenges as other nations, but we have our own slants on how to address them. It's an exciting and ever-changing place to be.

Ordinands will find a welcome at Scottish College. If they are coming from afar they will be following a well-trodden path – dissenting ministers have come to Scotland for ministerial education for many centuries.

Contact

If you have any questions about the Scottish College, please contact the Principal.

phone: **0141 248 5382**

email: info@scottishcollege.org

Northern College, Manchester



Introduction

Northern College offers a range of full-time and part-time study options and would seek to tailor your course to suit individual learning needs and experience.

Our academic courses are taught alongside the development of denomination-specific and practical skills for future ministry, and include engagement in church and community placements.

‘There is always a door open, with a listening ear, and help is offered’
– Alice Gilbert

Course assessment tasks are designed to explore how your developing theological understanding relates to your practical experiences. Inter-disciplinary work and creativity is encouraged, and all courses have a strong international dimension

– learning from the world Church and other world faiths has a place in the curriculum.

Northern College was formed by the union of several historic, independent Congregational colleges. Today, we continue to serve the learning needs of the United Reformed Church and the Congregational Federation. We also welcome students from the Moravian Church. We are part of Luther King Centre (LKC) in Manchester, a Durham University Common Awards Theological Education Institution with a strong focus on contextual theology and inclusivity. LKC is only a short walk from the fabled ‘curry mile’ restaurant district in the city. Public transport links are excellent and convenient.

Courses on offer

Diploma in Theology Ministry and Mission (TMM)

For Ministry of Word and Sacraments (MWS) students who are either undertaking part-time study, or who wish to take longer over their study, we offer a University of Durham diploma in Theology, Ministry and Mission (TMM). Modules are taught by tutors from Northern College, the partner colleges of LKC, and sometimes external tutors who have a particular specialism. Full-time students attend in a midweek format; there is also a weekend format primarily used by part-time students. It would normally take a part-time student four years of study to reach the diploma level. Mid-week, a full-time student would take two to three years to reach the diploma, and the period of study agreed by the Education and Learning Panel of the Assessment Board would be completed with courses that do not form part of the external award. In either format the award is made at higher education level five and meets the requirements of the United Reformed Church for candidates for ordination.

Northern College are able to respond to requests to mix weekend and mid-week study to support particular family circumstances should the Education Panel at the Assessment Board agree to this.

The Durham diploma course includes modules in these areas, and the College would guide the choices to be made:

- Studying theology contextually
- Spirituality
- Biblical studies and languages
- Worship, preaching and pastoral care
- Mission
- Theological themes
- Radical church traditions
- Ethical thinking in context
- Environmental issues
- Service and leadership
- Children, Young People and Family work
- Community Development

BA in Theology Ministry and Mission (TMM)

The Education and Learning Board often recommend that full-time students at Northern College continue beyond diploma level to honours degree level and complete a University of Durham BA in TMM. This can easily be accommodated within a four-year, full-time, programme. Students undertake the same modules as diploma candidates, and then choose from further areas of study with options that include:

- Christian homiletics
- Old Testament texts
- New Testament texts
- Conflict transformation for churches
- World-shaking mission
- Encountering Islam
- Art and theology
- Other than Western approaches
- Intersectional theologies
- Society, Community and Mission
- Personal study module (equivalent to one module)
- A personal dissertation on a relevant topic (equivalent to two modules)

MA in Theology Ministry and Mission (TMM)

For full-time or part-time church ministry students who already have a degree in theology, it may be possible to progress to study for a University of Durham MA in TMM, also taught by the staff team here at Luther King House.

The MA course includes the following possible study areas:

- Methods in modern theology
- Reflective practice
- Liturgy and Spirituality
- Preaching
- Chaplaincy
- Biblical study

- Injustice and Empire
- Other faith traditions
- Mission
- Embodied theology
- Paul's Gospel in Rome
- A dissertation (is a requirement to complete the MA)

‘Both administrative and teaching staff are immensely supportive.’
 – Walt Johnson

Students with University-level qualifications in subjects other than theology may be able to audit modules for one or two years, or study for the undergraduate certificate or diploma in TMM, to obtain a good grounding in contextually-rooted theology, and then register to undertake postgraduate work. It is possible to study for this option in the normal four-year EM1 programme.

Ministry of Church Related Community Work (CRCW) course

CRCW students normally follow a specially-devised four-year, full-time pathway with both community work modules and modules shared from the wider palette at LKC. It is possible to qualify with a diploma or BA from the University of Durham. The community work pathway through these programmes is recognised as a professional qualification in community development work by the English Standards Board for Community Development (ESB), as well as being the required qualification for CRCW ministry. Our course is regarded, by the ESB, as innovative, creative and a benchmark for other providers.

The CRCW course is timetabled to enable integration between the ministry of CRCW and MWS students; a number of MWS students now choose to take one or more CRCW courses as part of their diploma or degree. The CRCW-required courses are:

- Foundations for Reflective Practice in Context
- Community Development and the Church
- Exploring Education for a Learning Church
- Biblical Perspectives on Social Justice and Equality
- History and Theology of Community Development and Organising

- Theological Perspectives on Discrimination
- Mission and Ministry in a Rural Context
- Mission and Ministry in an Urban Context

If a student is completing a BA, the modules are made up with choices from the wider palette of subjects, and all students must undertake either a private study module, or a dissertation.

Research degrees

Students who are registered elsewhere for research degrees may still undertake their EM1 at Northern College, and participate fully in the placement and college time programmes.

Studying full-time

A typical week for a full-time MWS student would involve working for somewhere between 8 and 12 hours a week (the time increases as students progress through their courses) on church and community placements, normally nearer home, with two days' attendance at college during teaching terms for classes, college time, tutorials and shared worship. The MA classes are taught on Mondays with options available for block-taught Winter- and Summer-Schools. The diploma/BA (midweek) programme is taught on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Some module options involve block teaching when classes are held over three or four consecutive days or are spread across four Saturdays. All students attend on Tuesdays for college time and tutorials whenever their academic sessions are taught. The weekly pattern of attendance creates community both within Northern College and with students from other colleges. They belong to many different denominations, and that includes the joy of studying alongside students from the World Church.

Most private study is likely to be done at home, though there are library facilities at LKC. Resources can be gathered from the library, and significant resources are available online. Arrangements can be made to use a university library near a student's home.

For CRCW students the first two years of the full-time programme at Northern College are based around extended weekends and block-taught days. The timetable varies slightly each year, and all prospective CRCW students are encouraged to contact the college during the candidating process (see contact details on page 41) to talk through the potential time commitments. For example, CRCW students in years one and two might attend college for six extended weekends and two other blocks of teaching plus four additional Saturdays.

For the third and fourth years of the CRCW course, students would attend as a midweek student in the same pattern as full-time MWS students. During this time it is possible to complete a Durham BA in Theology Ministry and Mission. In some circumstances, students may be able to undertake postgraduate study. The CRCW tutor will offer guidance in respect of module choices to ensure the best possible preparation for this ministry.

Studying part-time

MWS students on the part-time diploma programme have academic teaching provided online for six weekends in the year. There is an on-site Northern College programme tailored to support your formation for your particular ministry.

Students will do much of their work at home, and courses, like those for full-time students, are centred around placements that will be arranged as near home as practically possible.

It is also possible to undertake the MA as a part-time student. Anyone who feels this might be the course for them is invited to contact the college (see page 41) and ask about the pattern of attendance. The timetable for MA modules involves some Monday teaching and some block teaching.

NSM Model 4

This still relatively-new pathway into self-supporting ministry is completely tailor-made. Taking one year full-time or two years part-

time, a portfolio approach based around the URC Marks of Ministry, your past experience and the synod-agreed role description will be developed. Attendance at college will include the three block weekends for the formational programme together with attendance/online teaching dependent upon your particular portfolio of training. You would have a local supervisor, and learning objectives set in your church/pastorate/particular synod situation to build your experience.

NSM CRCWs

We are looking forward to receiving students for this new pathway of training which has been developed. Each student's prior experience and learning will be taken into consideration as we develop a portfolio of requirements for their EM1 period. The ESB qualification will be required (see under CRCW training on page 33) with modules available online. Students may need to take other modules, some of which may require onsite attendance. We would also require attendance at Luther King House for formational time, potentially three weekends a year, and for developing practical skills for community development a further weekend a year together, with some one- or two-day short courses during their EM1 period. Placement hours would be fulfilled either in a student's workplace or another locally-organised and suitable community development opportunity. The training will take three years part time, and can be started at various times in the year by negotiation.

(Candidates interested in this form of ministry are strongly advised to contact the CRCW tutor, the Revd Dr Noel Irwin, for further information as this course is developed noel.irwin@lutherking.ac.uk)

Additional courses

All students are required to undertake formational courses that are not part of their academic qualification. What we call 'college time' is the heart of this programme and there is a carefully-designed, four-year programme to support development towards ministry. There are also additional required courses to be taken during the period

of study which are scheduled according to students' availability. Currently these are:

- Safeguarding of children and adults at risk (undertaken before you begin at Northern College)
- Safe boundaries in pastoral practice, and
- Worship and the art of public speaking.

We also offer a short 'worship basics' course for students who have not previously undertaken courses on worship leading and lay preaching, or who do not feel confident in leading worship in the URC tradition. Although they do not always preach or lead services, CRCW students are welcome to participate. Students may decide for themselves that the course will be helpful; occasionally, a tutor may recommend a student takes the course to support their development as a preacher and worship leader.

Placements

MWS students normally have three placements (with full-time students in additional 'minor' placements):

- first year – a placement in a church of another denomination;
- second year – a 'secular' placement such as a chaplaincy;
- over years three and four – a 'major' placement in a URC pastorate.

The activities and responsibilities experienced during these church placements are individually negotiated between student, placement supervisor and college tutor, to best fit the student's learning needs and prior experience, and the opportunities offered by the placement setting. The time expectations for the placements increases during EM1 from 8 hours per week for full-time students in their first two years to 12 hours per week during their major placement. Part time students are expected to accumulate a minimum of 800 hours on placement during their four years of preparation for ministry, at an average of five hours per week.

Alongside this core structure of placements, full-time students are asked to develop a related community placement (years one, three and four) – perhaps in a school, or with a community group or chaplaincy, and a church placement alongside their secular placement (year two). The placement hours set out above are inclusive of these additional placements.

Full-time MWS students are encouraged to include a world Church placement outside the UK of a few weeks' duration. Full-time students also spend six to ten weeks offering ministry in a vacant URC pastorate in the UK; this usually takes place during the summer at the end of their first or second year of preparation for ministry.

Those preparing for CRCW ministry will be based in substantial community work placements as close to their home as an appropriate placement can be found. During the four-year course, there will normally be two such placements, each lasting for two years. At least one of these will normally be in a church-related context.

Living arrangements

The pattern of attendance at Northern College for both full- and part-time students means that they can continue to live in their existing homes. In recent years Northern College students have travelled to Manchester from: West Midlands, Darlington, Oxford, Pembroke, North Wales, Reading, London, Kent, Surrey, the Lake District, Leeds and Sheffield as well as from closer areas: Liverpool, the Wirral, Blackburn and the Greater Manchester area. Students who wish to move to, or nearer, Manchester can discuss this with the Education and Learning Board during the Assessment Conference.

Anyone who lives more than 25 miles from Manchester qualifies for overnight accommodation in Luther King House (single rooms with en suite facilities) for either one or two nights each study week (or weekend).

In all cases, we arrange church and community placements as near as possible to your home.

What our students say

Alice Gilbert studying full-time for CRCW ministry

‘Well what can I say about Northern College and life at Luther King Centre. From the start you are received into a warm, welcoming and supportive environment, where people are really friendly. I have found that there is so much support available, from paperwork and finance help, to the library. If you are struggling to find something relevant all you have to do is ask. Plus, if you are finding things difficult or having problems with anything I have found that there is always a door open, with a listening ear, and help is offered.

Life at college is great, the learning opportunities we are given are fantastic. I have learnt so much from my modules and time in placement and being able to apply learning from one to the other—understanding in context is so important.

Being a CRCW I began my training on the weekend program before moving to midweek for my final two years. This meant I got to interact with more people and have a fuller picture of what was on offer.

Alongside learning is the privilege of studying and worshipping with those from other denominations and backgrounds, which brings a rich tapestry to the time spent here. The support that we give each other is an invaluable part of life during training, be it chatting and laughing at mealtimes or in the student kitchen, to trips out for dinner or the walk Sainsbury's to buy it.’



Walt Johnson studying part-time for Ministry of Word and Sacraments in Non-Stipendiary Ministry (Model 2).

‘NSM’ students follow a different pathway with six intensive weekends’ online teaching per year, plus in-person ‘College Time’ and placements. The learning experience is enriched by studying alongside others from many different traditions in the wider Luther King Centre (LKC) community.

I began my training in September 2019. NoCo responded superbly to the restrictions of the Covid pandemic. There is a good balance between online learning and in-person practical training. The Library facilities and access to additional online resources through the University of Durham are excellent.

Both administrative and teaching staff are immensely supportive. Every student comes to NoCo with a life-time of unique experiences and skills which form a bespoke learning plan.

For me as a linguist, this means being able to learn Hebrew and Greek as additional courses. Like others on this learning pathway, I also have full-time employment and studies are interleaved with work and personal life. For me, the greatest and most difficult transition was laying down the considerable commitments in my sending church to give me the time and energy for my training.



I value that NoCo is small enough to offer its students a personal learning pathway, but large enough as part of a greater whole through the other URC RCLs and Luther King Centre to be part of a diverse learning community which resources us to respond to our calls to ministry relevantly to today's context.

As my EM1 training draws to a close, I am pleased to write that my learning experience has been an excellent all-round preparation for future ministry.

CS Lewis' Aslan said, "Do not dare not to dare!" Isaiah said, "Here, I am, send me!" Jesus said, "Come, follow me!"²

● **Kate Wolsey studying full-time for Ministry of Word and Sacraments in Stipendiary service**

From my first visit to Northern College during the candidating process I realised there was something special about the community here. Everyone who walks through the door receives a really warm welcome. Beginning EM1 meant big changes in my life, and I was apprehensive about how I would manage to complete my training being a busy Mum of

four children. However, I quickly settled into college life, and I felt really at home. I had done academic study before but wasn't sure at if, at the grand old age of nearly 40, I would be able to be a successful student again. However, the tutors are all experts in their fields and employ a variety of teaching, methods to ensure everyone can learn and grow successfully. There is a great balance of academic and practical placement work. Placements are arranged to ensure you get the experience you need in planning and leading worship, preaching and pastoral care. In my first year I was on placement with a local Anglican Church and this year (my second) I am with a local URC church. Both these placements have given me a great perspective on wider church life, and I look forward to bringing this knowledge to my major placement in years three and four and into my future ministry. The Academic support, pastoral care and administrative support are second to none. At Northern College you are never left to deal with any problems alone.'



Contact

For more information, or to arrange an exploratory visit with us in Manchester, please contact the Revd Dr Adam J Scott.

post: Northern College, Luther King House, Brighton Grove, Rusholme, Manchester M14 5JP

phone: **0161 249 2506** (college); **0161 249 2530** (Principal)

email: adam.scott@lutherking.ac.uk
or the college administrator via: paul.barrett@lutherking.ac.uk

This is one in a series of booklets about the United Reformed Church's programme for Education for Ministry Phase 1 (EM1).

The booklets can be read and downloaded at:
www.bit.ly/EM1-info



© United Reformed Church 2023
Produced by the Communications Team of
the United Reformed Church on behalf of its
Education and Learning Committee.
The United Reformed Church, Church House,
86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT
020 7916 2020

www.urc.org.uk

