

## Programme Specification

### Foundation Degree Practical Theology

<i>School:</i>	Humanities
<i>Subject area:</i>	Theology and Religious Studies
<i>Entry from academic year:</i>	2021-22
<i>in the month(s) of:</i>	September
<i>Awarding institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Teaching institution:</i>	Congregational Institute for Practical Theology
<i>Delivery location:</i>	Congregational Federation Offices, Nottingham
<i>Programme/s accredited by:</i>	Not applicable
<i>Exit awards:</i>	Certificate of Higher Education Practical Theology
<i>UCAS code / GTTR / other:</i>	
<i>Joint Honours combinations:</i>	Not applicable
<i>QAA subject benchmark statement(s):</i>	Foundation Degree Qualification Benchmark
<i>Mode/s of study:</i>	<a href="#">Undergraduate periods of study</a> <sup>1</sup> for part-time
<i>Language of study:</i>	English
<i>Paired with foundation year</i>	No
<i>Study abroad opportunities:</i>	No
<i>Placement year opportunity:</i>	No

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### Introduction and special features

The Foundation Degree (FD) Practical Theology is designed to provide members of Congregational Churches and others with an understanding of what it means to be a Christian in a Congregational setting in our time. It is taught part time by Blended Learning (see below under Teaching and Learning) over a minimum of four years.

Practical Theology is theology as action as well as study. It underpins tools such as the Pastoral Cycle and Action/Reflection or Action Research models of learning, which you will learn to use during the programme.

You will study biblical, theological and historical subjects alongside discipleship, worship, mission, global issues and church development. You will have the opportunity to train in a wide variety of Christian ministry and service, including pastoral ministry, worship leading, mission enabling, chaplaincy and teaching.

You will attend four training weekends per year: September (including a summer school), January, April and June, where you will take part in face to face teaching sessions and meet your personal tutor. The time between the weekends will be supported learning and independent study. You will receive a handbook for each module, which guides you through your reading, and helps to prepare you for the assignments. There is a library available at the Congregational Centre, with module related resources as well as wider reading. You will be provided with a list of academic libraries throughout the UK, with details of their availability. Membership of Luther King House Library will give you access to online journals and electronic resources, as well as a lending library. You will have access to online resources through CONGLE, the Congregational Federation Virtual Learning Environment, and may be invited to online tutorials or seminars. Your personal

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<sup>1</sup> The standard period of study will apply unless otherwise stated

tutor, the module tutors, and the Director of Studies, will keep in touch with you, and you will also be supported by your local Area Pastoral Care Board representative. There are work-related modules of different kinds throughout the course. For two of these, and for the year-long placement, you will have the support of a local mentor or supervisor and support group.

All our tutors are, or have been, practitioners in forms of ministry, and you will have the opportunity to work with local church and community projects in work-related modules throughout the course. The modules are integrated, so that learning through study and practical experience interact.

You must complete the FD in order to be received onto the CF Roll of Ministries in an accredited ministry. This must include a Level 5 placement major in the ministry in which you seek accreditation. The course is designed to support you in your Christian development whether or not you are seeking such accreditation. There is also support to help you discern and test your vocation, but there is no expectation that you will be working towards one of the accredited ministries.

As well as skills in a variety of ministries, we aim to equip student with skills in communication, both oral and in writing, including the use of communications technology; the ability to integrate personal reflection with experience, using a number of reflective tools; and the ability to engage with others, enabling others to gain and develop skills, and building supporting communities.

### **Admissions criteria**

You must meet the University's general entry criteria for [undergraduate](#) study. In addition:

- All students on the FD programme are required to hold a current enhanced Disclosure and Barring (DBS/CRBS) certificate obtained through the Churches Agency for Safeguarding acceptable to the Congregational Federation.

If your first language is not English, you need to take an IELTS test or an equivalent qualification accepted by the University (see <https://www.yorks.ac.uk/international/how-to-apply/english-language-requirements/>).

If you do not hold sufficient formal qualifications, you can achieve admission through the CF GIFT Programme, which acts as an access course, or you may enrol on the first Level 4 module of the programme, and upon successful completion of the module, go on to enrol for the full programme, transferring the 20 credits.

Alternatively, you may be eligible for entry on the basis of [Accredited Prior \(Experiential\) Learning \(APL/APEL\)](#).

You can apply for the FD Practical Theology through the CF website [www.congregational.org.uk](http://www.congregational.org.uk) or by contacting the CF offices. Applications are initially handled through the Congregational Institute for Practical Theology (CIPT).

Members of Congregational Federation churches, or working for a Congregational Federation Area or the National office, with their church, Area or National endorsement, are admitted to the course at reduced cost. If you qualify for reduced cost, you will need to use the church endorsement form which you will find alongside the application form. Endorsement must be renewed at the beginning of each year of study.

## **Programme aim(s)**

1. To equip the student with knowledge of the Christian scriptures in the context of current scholarship and a range of theological approaches.
2. To equip the student with a framework of theological reflection and contextual analysis, using a variety of models, in the practice of Christian discipleship and service and in a variety of settings.
3. To develop the ability to reflect on personal and corporate spiritual experience, and on the relationship between faith and wider issues, such as mission, international affairs, poverty, justice and the environment.
4. To offer specific, vocation-based opportunities to develop knowledge and skills for a variety of Christian service and leadership, including (but not confined to) pastoral ministry, worship, mission, chaplaincy and teaching.
5. To enable the student to gain a deep and extensive knowledge of the Congregational tradition in the context of the Churches and wider faith communities throughout the ages.
6. To cultivate the discipline of independent thought, reflection, reading and research, with skills to discern appropriate resources and apply them.
7. To inculcate a habit of corporate working, with skills in setting up and using support groups, personal and spiritual advisers and working in teams.
8. To cultivate the skills of enabling other people in the church to learn and develop their skills, and reflect on these processes.

## **Programme learning outcomes**

Upon successful completion of the programme students will be able to:

### **Level 4**

#### **Knowledge and understanding**

- 4.1 Outline key concepts in Christian theology, biblical studies and the Congregational way of being church and its relation to Christian tradition in history and in the present day.
- 4.2 Explore the worship, witness and governance of Congregational churches.
- 4.3 Outline key concepts in Christian discipleship and mission in local and global contexts.

#### **Intellectual and cognitive skills such as:**

- 4.4 Relate biblical and theological knowledge to personal discipleship and spirituality.
- 4.5 Distinguish between fact and opinion, and make appropriate choices from primary and/or secondary sources.
- 4.6 Demonstrate basic skills in gathering and organising information, and using evidence appropriately to support conclusions.
- 4.7 Explore their personal experience of faith in the light of their experience in the church and community and their awareness of wider issues.

#### **Skills and other attributes**

- 4.8 Demonstrate skills in presentation of material in written and oral form using a variety of media.
- 4.9 Demonstrate skills in Christian service in the context of the local or wider church or the community.
- 4.10 Demonstrate a developing ability to enable others to learn and develop their skills, which are specific to vocational ministries or to Christian service in the community.

## Level 5

### Knowledge and understanding

- 5.1 Critically engage with a variety of models of theological reflection and contextual analysis.
- 5.2 Critically analyse knowledge of the Christian scriptures in the context of current scholarship in a range of theological approaches.
- 5.3 Critically reflect on specific areas of Christian ministry and service, including pastoral and preaching ministries, mission, teaching and service within the wider community.
- 5.4 Critically reflect on Congregational traditions in the context of the wider Church and faith communities throughout the ages.

### Intellectual and cognitive skills such as:

- 5.5 Integrate reflection on personal experience of discipleship and wider issues, such as mission, international affairs, poverty, justice and the environment;
- 5.6 Use with confidence the 'action reflection' or 'pastoral cycle' model, in practical theological reflection as applied to Christian ministries in a variety of settings;
- 5.7 Demonstrate the ability to undertake further skills development and research, and to achieve personal support by accessing and applying appropriate resources.

### Skills and other attributes

- 5.8 Demonstrate skills in effective presentation to a variety of audiences, including the creative use of print and electronic media.
- 5.9 Demonstrate skills in evaluating and enabling the development of learning and understanding in others.
- 5.10 Demonstrate skills related to specific areas of Christian ministry and service, and reflect on these processes and mission and service within the wider community.

### Programme structure

Code	Level	Term	Year	Title	Credits	Module status	
						compulsory or optional to take <b>C or O</b>	non-compensatable or compensatable <b>NC or X</b>
VCF4001M <sup>W, M</sup>	4	2&3	1	Mission in Context	10	C	X
VCF4002M <sup>W, C</sup>	4	2&3	2	Exploring Christian Service	10	C	X
VCF4003M <sup>B</sup>	4	1	even	The Bible: Jesus and the Prophets	20	C	X
VCF4004M <sup>T</sup>	4	2	even	Practical Theology in Contemporary Contexts	20	C	X
<b>Optional modules – choose ONE module from each numbered group<sup>1 2 3 4</sup></b>							
VCF4005M <sup>W</sup>	4	3	even	World Religions	10	O <sup>1</sup>	X
VCF4006M <sup>W</sup>	4	3	even	Christian Ethics	10	O <sup>1</sup>	X
VCF4007M <sup>W</sup>	4	3	even	Pastoral Care	10	O <sup>1</sup>	X
VCF4008M <sup>W</sup>	4	3	even	Conflict, Resolution and Reconciliation	10	O <sup>1</sup>	X
VCF4009M <sup>B</sup>	4	1	odd	The Bible: Jesus and the People of God	20	C	X
VCF4010M <sup>C, T</sup>	4	2	odd	History of Christian Life and Thought	20	C	X
VCF4013M <sup>W</sup>	4	3	odd	'To be a Pilgrim'	10	O <sup>2</sup>	X
VCF4014M <sup>W</sup>	4	3	odd	Dancing with Elephants: Preparing for Teaching	10	O <sup>2</sup>	X

VCF5001M <sup>W, C</sup>	5	1&2 &3	1	Christian Leadership and Service	20	C	X
VCF5002M <sup>T</sup>	5	1&2 &3	2	Action Research as a Way of Doing Theology	20	C	X
VCF5003M <sup>B</sup>	5	1	even	The Bible: Law and Letters	20	C	X
VCF5004M	5	2&3	even	Approaching the Bible: The Big Picture	10	O	X
VCF5005M <sup>B</sup>	5	2&3	even	The Word and the Words	10	O <sup>3</sup>	X
VCF5006M <sup>W</sup>	5	2&3	even	The Learning Church	10	O <sup>3</sup>	X
VCF5007M <sup>W, M</sup>	5	2&3	even	Multicultural Ministry	10	O <sup>3</sup>	X
VCF5008M <sup>W, C</sup>	5	2&3	even	Living Congregationally	10	O <sup>3</sup>	X
VCF5013M <sup>W, C</sup>	5	2&3	Even n	Pioneering and Fresh Expressions of Church	10	O <sup>3</sup>	X
VCF5009M <sup>T</sup>	5	2&3	odd	Theological Dialogues	20	C	X
VCF5010M <sup>C</sup>	5	1	odd	Congregational History and Principles	20	C	X
VCF5011M <sup>W, M</sup>	5	2&3	even	Beyond the Church	10	O <sup>4</sup>	X
VCF5012M <sup>B, T, C, W, M</sup>	5	2&3	even	Negotiated Study	10	O <sup>4</sup>	X

A number in the 'year' column denotes whether you will study this module in your first or second year. Other modules are offered in even-numbered or odd-numbered years. If you are a 2020 entrant, you will study 'even' modules in your first year and 'odd' modules in your second.

B	Biblical Studies
T	Theology
C	Church History/Congregationalism
W	Work-related
M	Mission

## Learning, teaching and assessment

### Teaching and learning

The FD is a part time programme, studied over four years. It is designed to work alongside your existing commitments, so that you can combine your study with other areas of your life. This has the advantage that you will be able to draw on your experience in your study, and your reflections should feed back directly into your Christian discipleship and service.

We aim to provide high quality, creative and challenging learning experiences that will enable students from a diverse range of backgrounds to achieve their full potential. The programme is delivered through Blended Learning, so that you are able to study part-time in a way which is flexible enough to meet your needs, yet to a disciplined framework of study. Blended Learning combines timetabled face to face teaching sessions, with a large component of supported and independent study in your own setting. This roots the learning experience in your own context.

You will meet tutors and other students at four training weekends a year, one of which includes a summer school, based at the CIPT training centre in Nottingham. Here, you will participate in sessions with our tutors, who are practitioners in a variety of Christian ministries. You will encounter a variety of teaching styles in small and large groups. At the beginning of the programme, you will be assigned a personal tutor, who will normally be with you through the whole period of study. You will have the opportunity to meet your personal tutor for one to one sessions at weekends to discuss progress on the course, and any issues that arise. Action points from the one to ones will be passed on to the Director of Studies.

Face to face teaching is blended with supported and independent study. You will receive a substantial module handbook for each subject studied, which provides guided study with reference to core books and electronic resources. You will also have the chance to interact with tutors and fellow students through online classrooms (facilitated through Google Hangouts). We provide resources through the library at the Congregational Centre, and information about academic libraries closer to you. Membership of Luther King House Library will give you access to online journals and electronic resources, as well as a lending library. Through CONGLE you will have access to resources and interaction.

You will also have access to your Pastoral Care Board Area Representative, who will be part of the team which helps to set up and support your work-related study. In addition, you will work with the tutors, and a local mentor and support group. This is not only useful for the work-related modules and placement themselves, but helps you establish ways of working with support for the future.

### **Assessment**

Your work is assessed in a variety of ways, in keeping with the practical nature of the programme. We aim to enable you to demonstrate a range of skills and abilities. You will engage in exercises designed to be formative, in helping you develop essential learning skills, and as preparation for the marked summative assessment. These include self-reflective tasks, such as journaling, presentations in a group setting, and proposals or plans for work undertaken in the module.

Summative assessment is marked and contributes to your final grade. This includes written work, in the form of essays, notes on Bible passages, reflections on practical experience, and a dissertation. You will have the opportunity to demonstrate skills, in recordings of your activities, and through reports by mentors, supervisors and support groups. Your mentor or supervisor will also reflect with you on your experiences throughout the module.

We use case studies in several modules. These may be formative, collective exercises in a group setting, with discussion. They may also form the basis of a summative assignment, to root the concepts of the module in an actual personal, pastoral or global situation.

We will also ask you to make presentations to group sessions from time to time. These may be short pieces of research, for example, into historical figures or ethical issues, with discussion and teaching to follow. Two modules include marked presentations. In one case, the presentation is marked by the group, as well as by the tutors in the session.

We will inform you of assessment methods and deadlines at the beginning of each module, and the information is also contained in the module handbooks. You will receive extensive comments on your assignments, which are designed to help you build up your skills in integrating knowledge and experience, and communicate effectively. Assignments include a variety of written assignments, including essays, notes on biblical passages and project reports, as well as reports on and recordings of practical tasks, case studies self-reflections and presentations. For work-related modules and the placement you will sometimes be asked to submit reports written by mentors or supervisors, or evaluations by groups with whom you have worked.

All assessments must be submitted by the deadlines given in the module handbooks. If there are mitigating circumstances, which mean that you cannot meet a deadline, this must be agreed with the Director of Studies in advance.

We aim to return all work within three weeks of the deadline. You will find that tutors give detailed comments and guidance, normally including tracked comments in the text of the assignment. This is to enhance your learning experience, and give you guidance in strengthening your work. A sample of work is second marked. The second marking tutor will have seen the first marker's comments, and may add to them. If the second marker disagrees with the mark, the matter will be resolved between the two tutors. You will only see the final agreed mark. This is designed to be an open and collaborative process, which is fair, appropriate and helpful in a distance learning context.

As well as marked assignments, you will engage in formative work. This takes place during teaching sessions, or in on-line interaction, or as preparation for marked assignments (for example plans for work-related modules or the placement, or proposals for case studies or research projects). Proposals for research projects will be guided by tutors supervising projects and will be monitored by an ethics committee in line with York St John University.

### **Progression and graduation requirements**

The University's general [regulations](#) for undergraduate awards apply to this programme.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the Programme Structure section as non-compensatable.

You will be offered vocational support and guidance during the programme. The completion of Level 5, with a Level 5 placement major in the accredited ministry, is a requirement for reception onto the CF Roll of Ministries in an accredited ministry. If you wish to be received onto the Roll of Ministries in one of the CF recognised ministries, you must complete the FD with a Placement Major at Level 5 in that ministry.

### **Internal and external reference points**

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

- [University mission and values](#)
- [University 2026 Strategy](#)
- [QAA subject benchmark statements](#)
- [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications](#)

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*Date written / revised: April 2019*

*Programme originally approved: 20/10/15*