

## SCTEI Common Awards draft admissions policy

1. Admissions decisions are made by the centre of study within the SCTEI, by the relevant programme leader.<sup>1</sup> In making decisions, staff from other centres within the TEI may be consulted.
2. The Management Committee shall monitor the admissions processes within the TEI, and may issue guidance on such processes.
3. Standard entry qualifications permitting admission to the programmes are:
  - 3.1 For postgraduate awards, either a 2:1 degree (or other equivalent level 6 qualification, e.g. a Graduate Diploma) including a substantial element of theology and/or ministry; or a 2:1 degree in any subject and an additional qualification at level 5 or above in theology and/or ministry at 2:1 standard or equivalent; or a 2:1 degree in any subject and an additional qualification at level 4 or above in theology and/or ministry at 2:1 standard or above.
  - 3.2 For the Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma a Diploma of Higher Education or equivalent in theology and/or ministry, or a 2:1 degree or equivalent in any subject;
  - 3.3 For the BA, 3 A levels at grade E or above, or equivalent or higher qualifications;
  - 3.4 For the Diploma of Higher Education 2 A levels at grade E or above, or equivalent or higher qualifications;
  - 3.5 For the Certificate of Higher Education 1 A level at grade E or above, or equivalent or higher qualifications; except that for mature students relevant experience may be considered in lieu of academic qualifications.
4. Others, especially mature applicants, who do not meet the above qualifications, may be admitted to the Certificate of Higher Education, Graduate Certificate or Postgraduate Certificate if the centre believes they are capable of undertaking these awards, and allowed to progress from these to higher awards if their performance in them is satisfactory. Such admissions require either the agreement of the Management Board or the satisfactory completion of an assignment equivalent to an assignment in the award to which admission is being made. (Likewise others admitted to lower awards may be permitted to progress to higher awards if their performance in the lower awards has been satisfactory.)
5. Potential applicants whose first language is not English may be asked to provide evidence of English Language ability. The centre may require evidence in accordance with the relevant programme specification (see <https://www.dur.ac.uk/common.awards/programmes/>). Tests in English language are undertaken at the potential applicant's own expense.

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<sup>1</sup> These are currently for the Guildford centre Canon Dr Steve Summers;; for the Winchester centre Rev Paul Dunthorne; for the Sarum centre Rev Paul Burden (undergraduate awards) and Dr Beth Dodd (BA + postgraduate awards) , and for the Oxford centre Revd Dr Phil Cooke (CertHE and DipHE), Revd Dr Beren Hartless (BA and Graduate Diploma) and Revd Dr Phillip Tovey (postgraduate awards).

6. Admissions decisions are based as appropriate on previous qualifications, evidence from church selection processes, sample work, interview and references.
7. Admissions decisions are made on the basis of merit and potential. This may include not just merit and potential with regard to the academic award *per se*, but also with regard to the contribution that an applicant can make to and the benefit they may gain from the life of the centre to which they are applying.
8. In making admissions decisions, staff shall take every care in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 to avoid unlawful or unjust discrimination.
9. Before an offer is finalised, at least one reference will be taken up, except in the case of those who have been recommended for training for ordained or licensed ministry who therefore come with the commendation of their diocese (or equivalent in other denominations).
10. Since the programmes include placement work which is likely to bring students into contact with children and / or vulnerable adults, applicants will be asked to declare any criminal convictions (including those that are spent), cautions or bindover orders, and may be asked to obtain a DBS disclosure. The centre will carry out an appropriate risk assessment and use this in assessing the applicant's suitability for the programme; the centre may make offers of places conditional on the satisfactory outcome of DBS disclosure and/or risk assessment.
11. The reasons for all admissions decisions, and supporting evidence as appropriate, shall be recorded, held by the centre, and made available to the TEI and Durham University on request.
12. Admissions may be made conditional on the candidate subsequently gaining the sponsorship of their diocese for ministerial training (or equivalent in other denominations).
13. If an applicant is found to have provided false or misleading information to the centre (whether in formal application processes or in other ways), this is sufficient grounds for refusing admission or withdrawing offers already made.
14. Feedback on admissions decisions is given on request only.
15. If following receipt of feedback an applicant has a concern related to a procedural error, irregularity or mal-administration in the admissions procedures or policies, a complaint may be made in accordance with the following process:

- a. Stage 1 – informal resolution. Students should make their complaint to the centre as soon as possible and no more than 28 days after the event unless there is good reason for the delay. Even if a formal complaint is received, the TEI should try to resolve the complaint using informal mechanisms in the first instance, where appropriate. At the conclusion of any informal resolution attempts, the student should be informed of the formal complaint procedure, including the name of the person to whom the formal complaint should be submitted, and deadline for submitting a formal complaint.
  - b. Stage 2 – formal resolution. If the student remains dissatisfied once informal processes have been exhausted, they should make a formal complaint in writing to the centre as soon as possible and no more than 14 days after the end of the informal processes unless there is good reason for the delay. The centre should request a member of staff responsible for making admissions decisions from another centre within the SCTEI to review whether it correctly followed due process in handling student's application in light of the complaint, and report to the centre and the student within one month of the complaint being received.
  - c. Stage 3 – review by Durham University. If the complainant remains dissatisfied following the completion of both stages 1 and 2, the complainant must be informed of their right to request a review by the University. The University will determine whether to review the admissions complaint to ascertain whether the SCTEI's admissions policies and processes had been implemented correctly. If procedural irregularities are identified, the complaint might be referred back to the TEI for further review.
  - d. The outcome of all formal complaints shall be reported to the Management Committee, which may request such further information concerning any complaint as it sees fit.
16. Appeals, defined as a request by an unsuccessful applicant for a formal review of the outcome of an admissions decision, will not be considered.
  17. Applicants will not be discriminated against in any further application should they request feedback, or make a complaint under these policies and procedures.
  18. A centre may close admissions to any programme when it believes it has recruited to its capacity. However it must ensure that fair treatment is given to all who have applied prior to the closure of admissions. This may include taking into account (in addition to merit and potential, as in section 7 above) factors such as when the application for admission was made, when the applicant made themselves available for interview, and when the applicant would be in a position to confirm acceptance of their place.
  19. If further places become available following closure of admissions, the centre shall either offer those places to those who had previously applied (ensuring they are all treated fairly), or reopen a fair admissions process.