

# WHAT REALLY MATTERS ABOUT TEACHER EDUCATION AT CATHEDRALS GROUP UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES?



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## VOLUME 2: THE CASE STUDIES

National Institute for  
Christian Education Research



The Cathedrals Group is an association of sixteen universities and university colleges with Church foundations. It is the only grouping in the UK higher education landscape based on ethical principles informed by faith-based values. Members share a common faith heritage and a strong commitment to values such as social justice, respect for the individual and promoting the public good through our work with communities and charities.

Within Cathedrals Group institutions there is a strong commitment to providing a high quality education for students, supporting personal and spiritual development within a challenging learning environment.

Our faith-based values:

- Contribute to a 'whole person' student experience
- Support a positive working environment for staff
- Link with research and knowledge exchange activities, and
- Shape our partnerships and community engagement.

Our member institutions make a significant contribution to the intellectual, cultural, social, spiritual and economic life of the communities they serve.

(Cathedrals Group, 2018)

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# Introduction

What is distinctive about teacher education at Cathedral Group universities? Institutions in the Cathedral Group have a Christian foundation and seek to offer high quality education with faith based values. Between 2016 and 2018, a research team led by the National Institute for Christian Education Research at Canterbury Christ Church University, sought to find answers to that question in a research project involving hundreds of students, university tutors and school partners. The main findings of the project are available in the Final Report document, *What really matters about teacher education in Cathedral Group universities* available from:<sup>1</sup>

**[www.canterbury.ac.uk/nicer](http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/nicer)**

This document contains five case studies. Five pictures of how universities work through their various missions and approaches to teacher education in different ways, in differing contexts and parts of the country, whilst making claims to the centrality of shared values in the work they undertake.

The case studies show insight into the extent that there is a shared understanding between schools, students and staff members in some of England's oldest providers of teacher education in England. Is there something particular about that provision? Could it be described as distinctively, implicitly or explicitly Christian?

Is there a sense of shared thinking about the answers to these questions in the provision of teacher education and the students, university tutors and school staff members who partner with these universities to educate the next generation of teachers?

This document provides five answers to those questions. The answers are snapshots of the perception of teacher education at these universities, at a time when teacher education has become a major purpose of schools, and universities have found themselves being questioned and challenged about their role in the development of new teachers.

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<sup>1</sup> Bowie, R, Casson, A and Hulbert, S (2018) *What really matters about teacher education at Cathedrals Group universities and colleges? Volume 1: The Final Report*. Canterbury: Canterbury Christ Church University.

# Methodology

The five case studies were written during a research project exploring teacher education in Cathedral Group universities. It used a combination of methods with phases in 2016-17 and 2017-18. Each university undertook a study of documentation; from these studies, open ended questions were developed, and these were used in interviews with staff, students and school partners.

Consent was obtained from smaller groups of participants, who had been invited to be interviewed and subsequently offered an option for follow up information about the project, given the right to withdraw from the research project at any time. Interviews were recorded and transcribed. From that information, online surveys were developed, and participants were recruited at all five of the initial participating institutions, as well as a sixth institution, using university internal and partnership networks.

The case studies here are interpretations of the data from the different strands of evidence – university documentation, face to face interviews in group settings and also survey responses.

They have been completed by staff members at each university. The research undertaken was led by a team from Canterbury Christ Church University's National Institute for Christian Education Research.

The five case studies were written independently from one another in a style developed by the authors at each institution. They reflect the authors own perspectives of their institution's teacher education provision. This document does not standardise the formula of how information is presented.

A more detailed account of the methodology along with the overall findings are available in the final report of the project *What really matters about teacher education in Cathedral Group universities* available from

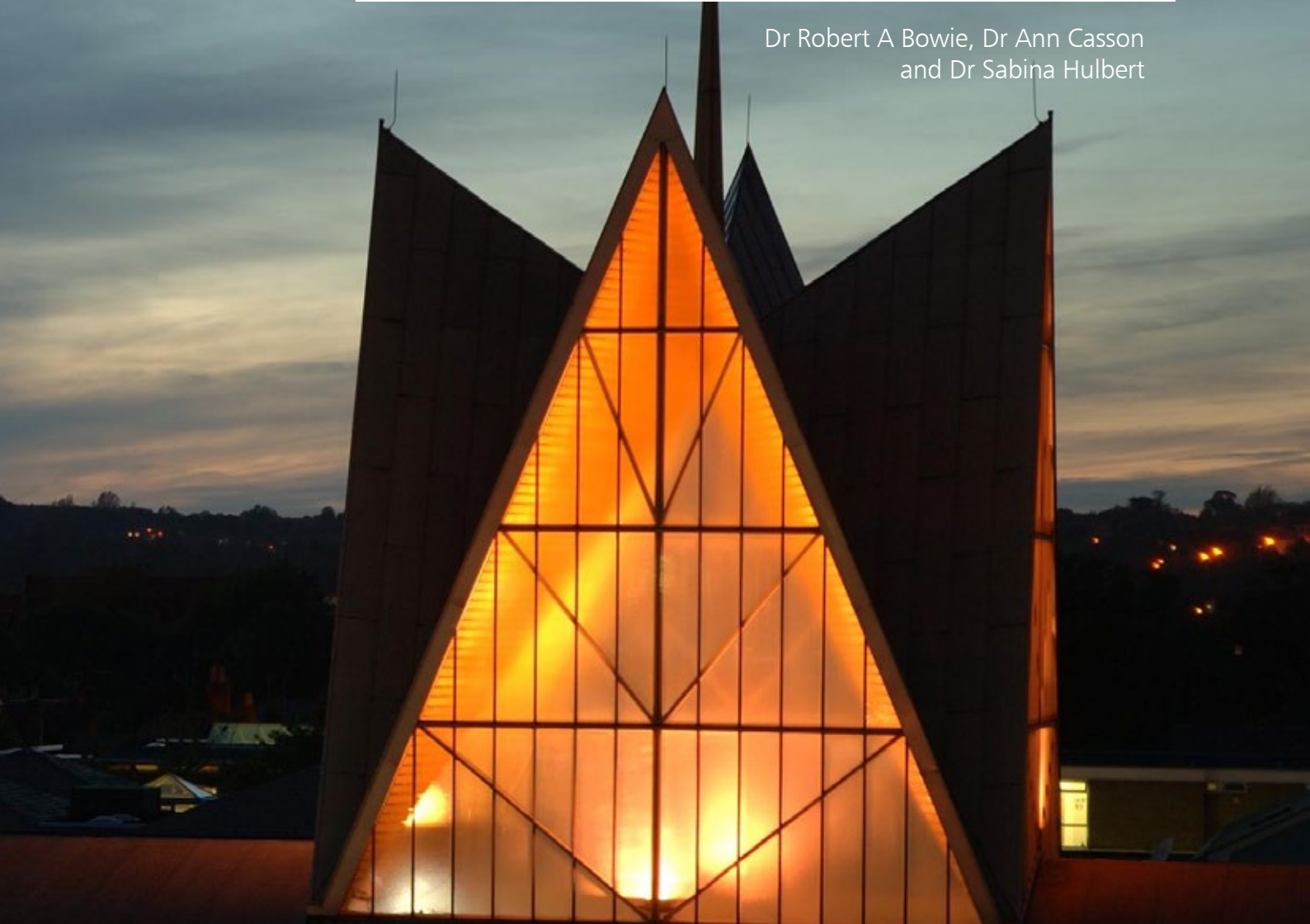
**[www.canterbury.ac.uk/nicer](http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/nicer)**

# CHAPTER 1



# Canterbury Christ Church University

Dr Robert A Bowie, Dr Ann Casson  
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# Introduction

In 1962, Canterbury Christ Church University was established as a Church of England foundation teacher training college. Its original aim was described in its 1962 Articles of Association as the advancement of education learning and research for the benefit of the public. It sought to ensure that Church of England schools were supplied with enough suitably qualified teachers to contend with burgeoning class sizes. In the 1950s and 60s, more than 70 000 primary school classes exceeded 40 pupils.

Christ Church Canterbury was the first Anglican teacher training college established since St Gabriel's' in London in 1899, and only one of two in the twentieth century. It was built in the historic heart of the Church of England, on land owned by Canterbury Cathedral, between the ruin of St Augustine's priory and the ancient St Martin's Church (Watson, 2007).

Since 1962 the college has diversified with additional programmes in health, social care, policing, crime, business, law. It became a university in 2005 and gaining power to award doctorates soon after. This diversification has continued to the present with the recently announced construction of a school of engineering and a joint medical school. Today its programmes are offered not only in Kent and Medway, but also London, Sussex and Essex.

## A Christian Foundation for the Common Good

The idea of an Anglican foundation for the common good manifests in physical structures, institutional leadership, governance structures and the expressed ambitions of the university values.

The original college sought to develop a Christian ethos through the physical signs of a central chapel on one side of a central square with the teaching block, library and common eating area on the other three sides. This layout, inherited from the classic design of abbeyes and monasteries, was to emphasise a sense of fellowship among staff.

[T]he College would be a place where those who come may not only be trained in the technical business of teaching, but may find in their own fellowship in the College, and in chapel and in relations with staff, a rich expression of Christian community living (Watson, 2007, p.21)

Over time it sought to shape its identity through a sense of hospitality and welcome:

A huge part of the Christian tradition is about hospitality and unconditional welcome. It is also about the search for what is true and, therefore we encourage everybody to engage in that search without necessarily enforcing what answers they are going to find. (Watson, 2007, p.128, quoting Jeremy Law, Dean of Chapel in 2004)



This has manifested itself in structures that have sought to promote diversity and equality, including a university Committee on Equality and Diversity and an interfaith council to support chaplaincy. These express a commitment to ensure students and staff of all religions and beliefs are welcomed and feel a part of the community. In addition, the university's Foundation Committee supports the Vice Chancellor in his or her duties related to maintaining and advancing the Foundation.

The governing body of the university is permitted to have between 18 and 21 persons with not less than 10 being members of the Church of England. It is required that the Vice Chancellor be a practicing member of a Christian Church which is a member of Churches Together in Britain and Northern Ireland (Canterbury Christ Church University 2013, para 85).

Today, the latest expression of institutional values retains an expressed link with the Christian foundation as a source to inspire shared ideals for the common good.

Inspired by our Church of England foundation, the University's mission is to pursue excellence in higher education: transforming individuals, creating knowledge, enriching communities and building a sustainable future.

We value:

- the development of the whole person, respecting and nurturing the inherent dignity and potential of each individual
- the integration of excellent teaching, research and knowledge exchange
- the power of higher education to enrich individuals, communities and nations
- our friendly, inclusive and professional community of students and staff, preparing individuals to contribute to a just and sustainable future."

(Canterbury Christ Church University, 2018)

## Teacher Education

Teacher education has always been an important aspect of the work of the university; it offers a wide range of pathways into teaching including full and part time options and undergraduate and post graduate options. Throughout the 2000s the Faculty of Education explored a series of innovative teacher education initiatives. These programmes sometimes challenged established education norms in the development of pre-service teachers including, such as a significant 14-18 PGCE programme which offered dual qualification for schools and further education contexts and a number of part time training programmes. It became the largest provider of teachers through employment based routes (Jordan-Daus, Tingey and Howe, 2007). The 7-14 PGCE programme, qualifies students to work in both primary and secondary education phases, specifically sought to break down barriers between these sectors.

It was a striking course to have in Kent, given that it does not run a middle school system. One secondary school mentor interviewed for the research commented that students who trained through this route had a particular strong understanding of learning.

The faculty was also involved in some significant international projects, notably work who develop the teacher education systems of Palestine (Englebrecht, Wilson, Bsharat and Mahon, 2015; Shinn, 2012) and Malaysia.

Though now associated in teacher training in its own right, and linked to many universities, Canterbury Christ Church University was the first university to work with Teach First in 2003 with tutors from the university's existing teacher training programme, providing the tuition and teaching materials for many of the formative years of this initiative.

This role led to national attention and greater growth. Dean of Education, Dr John Moss was called to give evidence to the UK Government select committee on education in teaching to answer questions on the recruitment and training of teachers.

Dr Moss also praised the Teach First core competencies, which he said offered a "very good list" of the key personal attributes found in the best teachers. Teach First, which recruits high-performing graduates to train on-the-job in challenging schools, assesses applicants in eight areas alongside their formal academic criteria: Humility, respect and empathy; Interaction; Knowledge; Leadership; Planning and organising; Problem-solving; Resilience; and Self-evaluation.

(Parliamentary Education Committee, 2012, submission of John Moss)

The faculty's main work was in, and remains in, the provision of primary and secondary teachers through undergraduate and postgraduate routes, and additionally significant provision of early years qualified teacher routes.

It developed its own understanding of the teacher it strives to educate. Its articulation of that combines the sources of the distinctive foundation and values that can commonly be understood.

## The Canterbury Partnership Teacher

The Canterbury Partnership is committed to the development of outstanding teachers who have a transformative impact on learners' lives. We work together to ensure that the teachers we educate bring about progress in learning which transforms learners' knowledge, skills and understanding and their opportunities in life.

- The Canterbury Partnership Teacher is a reflective practitioner who applies creative and critical approaches to professional practice and academic learning, and who uses an extensive repertoire of knowledge, skills and understanding to make learning transformative.
- The Canterbury Partnership Teacher takes responsibility for his or her own professional development and demonstrates this through a sustained drive to excellence in professional practice and academic learning through initial training and beyond.

- The Canterbury Partnership Teacher benefits from and contributes to outstanding research informed teaching and experiences learning environments where the challenge and support needed to achieve outstanding outcomes for learners are constantly sustained.
- The Canterbury Partnership Teacher's practice is informed by a demanding professional and academic curriculum enriched by international and global perspectives and an understanding of and commitment to our collective stewardship of the natural world.
- The Canterbury Partnership Teacher is a champion of equality, diversity and inclusion. He or she is a resilient, resourceful professional, driven by a personal and collaborative quest to make a difference to the life of every learner.

This definition is underpinned by the values emanating from Canterbury Christ Church University's Church of England foundation, especially the belief in our responsibility to find and develop the God-given potential in all learners. The University works with partners whose values enable them to make a shared enthusiastic commitment to the development of teachers who have a transformative effect on learners' lives.

(Canterbury Christ Church University, 2016)

## The Pilot Study

Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) was the location of the pilot study of the research project, *What really matters about teacher education in Cathedral Group universities*, for which this document contains the case studies. CCCU documents were analysed to develop a set of questions which would then be used with participants and form that experience a set of survey questions developed using an online survey tool. The sheer number of teacher education programmes and pathways in the provision made it difficult to undertake a meaningful comparison of documents beyond the top level documentation of the institution and faculty. Nevertheless, the Canterbury Partnership Teacher is the universally applied document across the faculty's work.

Participants from across the range of programmes were engaged with interviewees and recruiting survey participants. 25 students participated in group interviews with semi structured questions and there were 119 valid participants in the online survey. The students included 3-year undergraduate degree primary students, 1-year primary and secondary post graduate students and cross phase 7-14 students. It included students from university led programmes and school led programmes.

There were 52 valid participants from school staff. Of those who declared the name of their school, about a third were from secondary schools and two thirds from primary schools. There were 47 valid participants from university staff from across all of the programmes and pathways offered. University staff interviewed included new members of staff, as well those who have been at the university for many years. It included 'front line' teaching staff, programme leaders and those in middle management positions.

What follows is an interpretation of the findings, organised thematically. In most cases the key themes were reflected strongly in the quantitative surveys undertaken in 2017-18. This was then used as a lens to look back at the transcripts of the interviews from 2016-17.

# The character of teacher education at CCCU

## Reputation, friendliness and tradition

Students were asked through the online survey about their motivation for choosing CCCU and were given a selection of possible answers to choose from. The three most important motives for choosing CCCU identified by students are:

- It has a good reputation
- The institution has a friendly environment
- It has a long tradition in teacher training

Geographic locality is not identified as important as these other factors.

In the 2016-17 qualitative research answers given by students suggested that often there was a key recommendation from a person they trusted. This may be one source for their sense of reputation.

Well as Christ Church started out as a teaching college I know it's going to be best for this course, and my step mum came here for teaching training 20 years ago and she was always amazing and she's a fantastic teacher, so I was like Christ Church. And I'm local anyway so that makes it even better

A And I think there are good reviews about here.

A I heard about it too.

A Our careers adviser at my secondary school recommended to come here for teacher training.

A I don't know. When I found out that she came here, because she's my step mum. And she said I don't know really, she said it was really, really good. The tutors were experienced and experts in their field so it was easier to kind of become a better teacher because you've got better people teaching you.  
(primary undergraduates)

But I wanted to specialise, I wanted to specialise in my subject and be able to work with people who had a passion for [subject] too. And I think that is what made me decide to do the PGCE at CCCU, because although it's university based we are in schools a lot.  
(secondary student)

The university's reputation, traditional work in teacher training and friendly environment come over clearly in interviews as well.

## Engagement with experts

When asked what added values came from the provision at Canterbury Christ Church the students chose:

- Trainees have the chance to interact with academic staff;
- Students develop a sense of professional identity;
- Access to subject specialist experts.

In the 2016-17 interview there were responses which referred to these factors as well.

She [the university subject tutor] gave me the impression that she knew her subject well. (secondary student)

But I could call my tutor up whenever I wanted, I could speak to my mentor at my school who is brilliant, and my tutor is brilliant. And it's having those supports, like the personal support I think is more important .... (PG secondary student)

Our tutor she's really supportive, she always comes into school when I'm in there, she comes in not because she has a reason, just to like see how we are and see how we're doing. Obviously she has actually has come in to observe and that but she also makes time to just come in to see how we are, which we all find really supportive. And she's always there for advice and emails or something, it's really helpful. (UG primary student)

## The importance of support from the cohort, the tutors and the teachers

Another feature that students identified was the importance of the support. Different students situated this support in different locations.

Yes we have support from each other.

I'd say my peer support has been the strongest support

But I could call my tutor up whenever I wanted, I could speak to my mentor at my school who is brilliant, and my tutor is brilliant. And it's having those supports, like the personal support I think is more important than having these workshops.

I agree with that, my class teacher and my mentor at school both have helped me quite a lot.

My class teacher is really helpful because every lesson I do he will observe, not formally but informally, and he will always give me little tips things I never would have thought. Like how to do transitions between the carpet and the chairs and everything. And just little things that if I put them all together are really going to help mould me to be a teacher.

(selection from primary and secondary students)

## A partnership approach to finding the kind of teacher you want to be

Both students and school staff spoke about the importance of the journey of discovering the kind of teacher they wanted to become.

They kind of said what teacher do you want to be? And then it's like well what teacher do I want to be actually? And I do want to be this kind of one and they bring up different types of personalities.

(primary student)

I think it's more them kind of guiding us in a route to try and be positive teachers. Because they've all got positive energy and obviously teachers with more of a positive energy do get probably better results because people can pay attention. But at the same time it's kind of free for us to kind of decide how we want to go about it and how we want to do it, but they're just trying to lead us to positivity I guess.

(primary student)

Well I suppose it was that common link about educators and educating. So therefore it was that combined with helping to develop that next generation. And I always find the colleagues I'd be working with were very welcoming. I never felt it was these are the academics and I'm just a lowly teacher, I was never treated in that way, so therefore it was that common goal to support the next generation of teachers.

(secondary school member of staff)

## School Trust in CCCU students

School trust in students applying for jobs from Canterbury Christ Church University was high. In the online survey, when asked to rank applicants by type, in terms of which was a safe choice for recruitment, schools clearly preferred a student trained at Canterbury Christ Church University by a significant margin over all other types. Following that, being "local" was the next criterion for choice (the two local options are the next popular choices). Finally, a non-local HE and a non-local school were the least preferred source of training for students when facing potential employment.

This was also reflected when school staff were asked to grade the qualities they found in CCCU students when compared to students from other training providers. In all cases, in each of a wide range of qualities, CCCU students were graded more highly than others.

School staff felt the most important motive for working in partnership with the university in teacher education was “the University’s commitment to high standards of academic, evidence-based professional development.

Both students and staff at schools reported a high willingness to represent the university. The Net Promoter Score (the extent to which Canterbury Christ Church University would be recommended) from the online survey was 36%, one of the higher performing universities in the Million+ group of universities.

## The university’s Christian foundation

One of the striking differences between students and staff and schools emerged from the responses to the survey question about the university’s Christian foundation. Participants were asked to choose from the following:

“I feel positive about working with an institution which has a Christian foundation”

“I am proud about Canterbury Christ Church University’s foundation and it strengthens my identity”

“I am indifferent to Canterbury Christ Church University’s Christian foundation”

“I don’t have anything to say about this”

“I don’t like Canterbury Christ Church University’s Christian foundation”

“I strongly reject Canterbury Christ Church University’s Christian foundation”

34% of student respondents feel proud or positive about working with an institution which has a Christian foundation. Almost 57% are indifferent or have nothing to say.

An ambivalence among the student population was present in the 2016-17 qualitative interviews.

Q So last question. This is a university it’s got Canterbury Christ and Church in the title so it’s a foundation, a church university, some sort of Christian basis thing. Is there anything in what you said or anything in how you feel about coming here that you make connections between any of those words and this? Is it kind of irrelevant, or is it something you notice?

A I think if some people who don’t know the university that much may kind of be ‘Christ Church’ ah probably religious maybe or more kind of one sided. But because the students that I know in older years, I know there’s quite a lot of international students, quite a lot of multi-cultural and multi faith and I don’t associate the title with kind of any meaning. I just think people are great, so it’s very diverse.

A When I first heard of it I was a bit put off by the name. I was thinking it's going to be a really religious place and so when I came to look around anyway and when I looked around I realised it wasn't like that at all, like on open day. So then I decided to come here because of all the good things I'd heard about it, I hadn't heard anything about it being religious and things like that.

A Yes and even walking down to the food court when you've got the chapel and then going from Fisher building down to touchdown and they've got prayer rooms for Muslim students I just...

Q So that's a positive thing?

A Yes. Because they're not segregating, they are catering to everybody's needs regardless of your faith, where you're from, anything. It's all joined in one.

Yes. I think in terms of the university the chapel was very, it's quite a focal point of the campus in a way. [physically]. And because I was there for my undergrad. And also when we started our first, the talk we had on the first day, the chaplain was quite a big presence in terms of support.

(primary students)

School staff responses place a much greater significance on the foundation status. The most frequent response is associated with the option "I feel positive about working with an institution which has a Christian foundation" (39%) followed by "I am proud about Canterbury Christ Church University's Christian foundation" (22%). 61% responded with one or other of these positive identifiers. There were no negative responses to this question from school staff. The number of primary Church of England schools is likely to be one reason for this high figure, although participating schools included secondary schools and schools with no religious affiliation, staff members could choose to identify their school type and not all did.

This question seems to identify a connection between school identity and that of CCCU and this might be the reason for an answer to the question of motivation for partnering with the university. The second most important motivation for working with the university was identified as "they share our education ethos and culture (the "why" of education)".

University staff returned a similar proportion of around 60% choosing one or other of the more positive comments with virtually no negative comments. When interviewed in 2016-17 staff gave a range of different responses, revealing something of the complex and diverse ways staff related themselves to the university's identity and ethos.

A I was asked that question at interview. And I was stumped by it, as somebody who's a fallen away Christian, call me what you want. And I talked about it from a non-religious point of view [...] about that care, about that nurturing, in an environment yes it is a religious whatever you want to call it, but for me it was wider than just religion, it was about that philosophy, about caring and so on. (university tutor)



A Yes and there's something about the moral purpose behind the things that we do. But whether that is expressed explicitly in a Christian way I am not sure. But I think it underpins what we do. . (university tutor)

A And also, this is a personal thing in terms of my own philosophies that seems to resonate with my idea of what Christianity is, and that is person-centred, the person. And the value that the university places on the person whoever that person might be. [...], and we're often described as the 'friendly university' or whatever and that resonates certainly in the Faculty and in the programmes I've worked across, it's about the person whoever that person might be. . (university tutor)

Q So that goes across, it's not just student centred?

A Yes. That's why it's so purposefully... it's not just students, I think it's across the place. I am going to be a little bit I don't know if it's clichéd, but if you think of bringing it back to the Christian idea, so the story of Christ saying bring the children to me. What resonates often across the teacher training I've been involved in across the years is this idea of the pupil at the centre, absolutely. . (university tutor)

A The only thing I can think of immediately is to do with the way that we describe ourselves in terms of our values and I think that idea of transformative, that we talk a lot about within the Faculty and the university. And there's something certainly for me that resonates with that idea of Christian values, of being transformed. So something like that immediately for me, anyway, does. . (university tutor)

A And I think that there is something then about working for Canterbury, there is something about the Christian ethos that is a pull to come back in some way. So yes I mean I think that definitely drew me back the second time. Even though people said to me 'you're mad!' (university tutor)

A Yes I would have said that when I first came, I'd have said that there was a very, very strong set of values and principles approach driving everything, it was never necessarily explicitly stated what these values and principles were but there was lots and lots of discussion about does this fit with our principles and that kind of thing. (university tutor)

# Reflection

In the open text questions of the 2017/18 survey, reflection was frequently mentioned in relation to the provision at the university and when interviewed in 2016/17 this was also a common theme in answers about what was distinctive in the teacher education at CCCU:

I would go with that reflective. I think that's probably thinking about that now that's actually the one thing we, if you come across a person – and within our roles anyway – that's not reflective, you start to worry. So you work on that, and that's what the journal's fantastic at actually, when it's used properly. (staff member from school)

Well I tend to agree with, I've asked students this sort of recently, a range of students and reflection is the big something that's going to come out – reflection and the nature of reflection and the way that is an ever present dimension in teacher education [...] maybe the degree of the way that reflection is used is something that is a key element in terms of the student's lived experience of teacher education here. (university tutor)

I think it's common. Every institution I've been to has had a reflective dimension to their work. I think the distinctive element has been the nature of the learning journal, not that students write reflections somewhere, but that part of the reflective process at Christ Church is about their own learning and the process of understanding what it is to be a teacher and their emergent identity as a teacher. And that I wouldn't say is unique but it's a significant dimension to our work here. (university tutor)

# An education for all

A final theme which was expressed in three different domains, was a commitment to education for all. This should be seen in the context of a region where an 11+ test takes place for most pupils and schools are divided between selective academic (grammar) and high schools.

When students would complain to me about being placed in a school that had very challenging behaviour and was in a rough part of the world, I would throw it back in their faces and say what you think you're here at Christ Church just to train middle class kids, is that what you think? (university tutor)

Now that's something the university has as a mantra. We transform individuals, or words to that effect. And it's an often-used term and its meaning has maybe got a little lost. But if you see 'transform' as something that has an epistemological shift in that person who becomes active in a different way, that they live that epistemological shift, then that's something I think we could hold onto. And it doesn't necessarily happen for all individuals but it's something that is a dimension of teacher education.

The easiest way I can explain that is through my enhanced studies module, the India visit. And that assignment, they think they go to India to learn about Indian education whereas in fact my steerage is very deliberate, it's about their process of learning and the ways that such a visit may alter their perspectives, not just of English education (of India as well) but of themselves. (university tutor)

Yes it does. And I think the other thing about that SEN experience is that they see adults, they see not just teachers but teaching assistants and the other adults in the classroom working in a very, very different way from primary. So often the thing that they comment on is sometimes they can walk into a classroom and they have no idea who the teacher is because there's clearly so much sort of integrated team work going on. And in a way that sort of provides an interesting and perhaps challenging model for ways of working back in the mainstream. And I think it's important to say that actually the SEN module, if we call that I suppose it is, is not really about learning to teach in a special school although some students do, it's about what they can take back and use in the mainstream. (university tutor)

## Conclusion

CCCU has within its structures of governance and leadership and its professed values statements, including those specifically articulated around the teachers it educates, a clear link to its Anglican foundation as well as a clear commitment to the education of and for all. This is framed through a lens that is person-centred, community centred and grounded through a strongly expressed wish for transformation. These values do seem to be experienced and articulated by schools, students and university tutors. Students show some uncertainty around the significance of the explicit Christian dimension of this connection but they do articulate a sense of the value of their own journey and the community they learn with. The significance of the Christian dimension grows considerably when university tutors and school partners are consulted. This was true for a significant majority of those school partners and university tutors who replied to the survey. The values and ethos of the university matter to schools and staff in ways that are seen to impact on the teacher education provision.

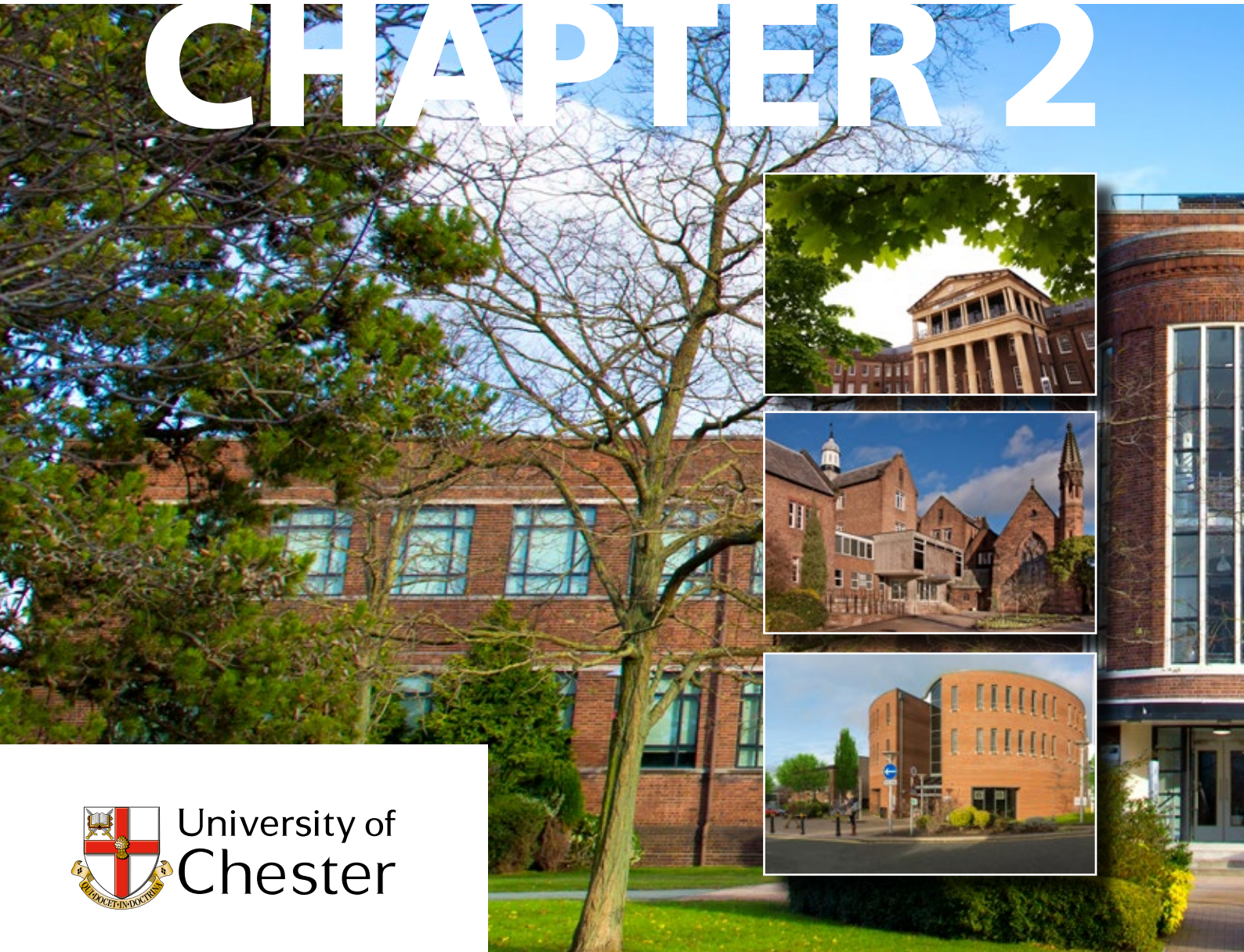
Schools in partnership with CCCU prefer CCCU students over and above any other category, and it is the long tradition of teacher training, its public standing and the expertise of staff that ultimately matter most for students and schools. For staff, there is also a personal matter about how they negotiate their own relationship with the university. For some there is a clear connection with the values of CCCU, and in some cases this extends into a religious self understanding of staff and the Christian dimension of the university.

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# CHAPTER 2



University of  
Chester

# University of Chester

Dr James Holt



The University of Chester is an institution that was founded in 1839 as an Anglican Teacher Training College with the hope ‘that a seminary will be instituted for the education of Masters, where their minds will be stored with sufficient knowledge, and their habits and dispositions so trained as to qualify them for teaching properly’ (White, 2014, p.5). Fast forward over 175 years and through various incarnations as Chester College and University of Chester, the University of Chester is spread across eight campuses and has approximately 15,000 students. This is a far cry from the small number of students who began their studies to become teachers in 1839. Throughout its history two things have remained central to the work of the University: first its Church of England foundation; and second, the importance of teacher education.

A quick glance at the University’s mission highlights its Anglican foundation:

The University, a Church of England institution founded in 1839, continues to be guided by Christian values and is justifiably proud of the open, inclusive and supportive environment that characterises the institution. The University welcomes students and staff of all faiths or none. (University of Chester, 2018)

This is further highlighted in the foundational values of the University:

Mindful of the University’s history and Christian foundation:

We recognise **the dignity and worth of every individual**. Therefore we value every member of the University; we endeavour to help each student and member of staff to discover his or her gifts and talents and grow to full potential; and we foster well-being for all.

We recognise **the vital role of education in the service of society**. Therefore we encourage the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills; and we acknowledge a responsibility to look for every opportunity to put that knowledge and those skills to good use throughout the community.

We recognise **the inherent value of the pursuit of truth and freedom of enquiry**. Therefore we find joy in discovery; we take pleasure in invention; we celebrate human creativity; and we seek wisdom, embracing it wherever we find it, and strive to apply it to every aspect of life.

**In humility, we aspire to honour these values and hold ourselves accountable to them.**

The links between the teachings of Christianity and these values are easy to see. The dignity and worth of every individual echoes the teaching of the Church that all are created *imago dei*. The vital role of education to serve society recognises that an individualist approach to life is incompatible with the Christian faith, everything that is done should be done to help others. In some ways, though, these values can be found and extended into the work of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in the University of Chester.



The Christianity of these values can be found to infuse the work of both the University and Initial Teacher Education (ITE); on the other hand they can be seen to be interpreted in a humanistic way and purely as a background to ITE in the University.

For the purpose of this report staff from the ITE department, staff from partner schools, and students themselves were interviewed in groups to discuss their views of ITE in the University and aspects of its Christian nature. Each of these groups' feedback alongside documentation found within the ITE department feed into the interim conclusions found below. Not every aspect of the responses will be explored, but the summary will focus on a couple of the themes that arose in the course of the research. To structure these themes the foundational values of the University outlined earlier will be used reflecting the suggestion that what makes Chester the place it is to train as a teacher are “the underpinning values that we’ve all talked about right through, that are associated with a Christian community. It’s the community, that’s the word” (Staff Interviews).

## We recognise the dignity and worth of every individual

In conversation with staff of the University they were asked what was distinctive about the education experience at the University of Chester. The focus was on the level of support that is given to the individual, one such respondent suggested:

I think we like to be role models for the way that, for the type of teacher that we want them to be. We hope that they will put the learner, their learners, at the heart of everything that they do and I think we model that really well by putting them as the student, you know the ATs [Associate Teachers] at the heart of everything that we do.

The support came through heavily in all of the interviews, but especially in discussion with staff and school partners. One school partner suggested that “the availability of the link tutors to support the students as and when needed is probably one of the strengths here. In terms of the size of the cohorts for the different subjects that they have, they’re relatively small for the most part so they’re usually able to come out with quite short notice and support if needs be.” Exploring External Examiner reports from recent years would suggest that this is recognised by all school partners and students. It is often the tutors themselves that receive the greatest praise in all of the reports and conversations. The focus on the development of the individual is a topic that comes through each of the interviews that took place. An important focus of the ITE experience at Chester seems to be to allow students to develop into the kind of teachers that they want to be:

Whereas building our mentality as a teacher and what we believe in and how we think the right way to teach is, I think that we are getting taught that, and that’s through the Master’s modules that we’re doing because that’s what it’s covering, it’s covering how we think we should teach our subject, our philosophy basically. I think yes we’re getting taught that through the Masters modules that we’re getting taught.

This is not to suggest that there are not parameters in the development and formation of teaching identities and approaches but that within these parameters students are given the freedom to develop into the kind of teacher they would like to be. This is very evident in the student interviews. Although there were only a small number of students they were from a cross section of experiences. Two such examples drawn on are for secondary students from PE and Geography. Both highlight that they are able to develop their own identity based on their prior and current experiences.

This is exemplified in some of the assignments that postgraduate students undertake where they are asked to reflect on their teaching philosophy throughout the year. The reflections of the beginning teachers suggests that the experience at the University of Chester helps them to transfer and develop the value of recognising the dignity and worth of the individual to their own teaching experience. One secondary geography student highlighted:

I mean we were set this question as our first Masters level assignment, the philosophy - you're going to write a manifesto for your subject. And for me it was that teaching and learning has to be relevant and has to be enjoyable for students and if it isn't those things then they will switch off. Even the brightest ones, if they can't see a point in it, as soon as they get that point it clicks and they become engaged in that respect. I also believe that education should be available equally for all and equal opportunities, no matter what their backgrounds, ability, challenge, for everyone. Not just the highest ability but actually challenge everyone to be independent thinkers.

There are many Christian teachings that highlight the value of the individual; not least of these is the belief that "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows" (Matthew 10:29-31). An individual's value in the sight of God seems to underpin the educational experience at the University of Chester. The implicit or explicit nature of this value in action will be examined after an exploration of the other university values articulated in the mission statement.

## We recognise the vital role of education in the service of society.

The recognition of the importance of the individual alongside that individual's place as part of community underpin the place of education in the service of society as a key value of the ITE experience at the University of Chester. Exploring a teacher's identity is always done in conjunction with the teacher's responsibility.

And then again as far as subject specific, that we as geographers it's drummed into us that we are, some of the topics that we deliver, like migration issues or climate change, these are big questions and they are so relevant and we're teaching the people who will have to deal with these things in a few years, it really brings it home to you. Especially the recent tragic events as well.

Some of the preconceptions that some of the students have and that you are as much an influence as people's parents and families and that is, there's such a sense of responsibility as well as a teacher that you are there to guide people as well.

Within the ITE experience at Chester students are encouraged to develop this focus on the child and the individual. This extends to the documentation and sessions that are deemed to be 'Professional Studies' - i.e. not subject or focussed on academic theory, "Things like you know some of the sessions like we had a Prevent session and you're dealing with the real thing, world issues, and trying to portray them or help children understand them or be a beacon in their life or a moral compass." This seems to be recognised throughout the Chester experience.

One staff member noted that:

It's also beyond what can be measured. It's immeasurable that, so the holistic development that we talk about in early years is very much the holistic development of the teacher, it's exactly what was just said and it's precisely what can't be measured is probably and often the most valuable.

This was similarly highlighted in a discussion with school partners about the "soft skills" that seem to set Chester students apart from students that they take from other institutions. This is something that schools recognise come from the experience at Chester, but are also part of the selection process before the beginning of the course, summarised by one staff member:

We recruit excellent people! And nurture them as best we can." The various aspects of the interview process reflect this emphasis: "At the front of that... before we talk about the selection process there's a slide that comes up that says caring and compassionate about children, that's what we're about. There's a lot of other criteria if you get the interview... we can all measure that very quickly it's immeasurable but also it's very tangible in a person when you meet them, so the intangible becomes tangible in some way.

This is not to suggest that there is one type of person that the University of Chester recruits, staff suggested that as a University "we celebrate diversity really in terms of we don't pigeonhole a person and say this is what the ideal teacher looks like, this is what the ideal personality is for teaching. We accept that not everyone is jazz hands, some people are quiet, and the whole range in between, and we celebrate that, we want that for teachers, we want diversity." But within that diversity the 'soft skills' are pre-eminent which are so valued by the partner schools, again reflected in the types of teachers that the University of Chester are seen to aspire to send out into the world:

They're somebody who you're confident enough can go and teach your children, and that's what we work at within our school and that's the skill that we try and give them, that they leave our school and they go and get a job at the secondary school that my daughter's at, and we're confident in that, and if I'm not willing to send them out at that point and sign them off then - if they're not good enough to teach my child then how can it possibly be that they can teach somebody else's (School Partners Interviews).

In terms of the Christian nature of such an approach, I have suggested elsewhere that such an approach is reminiscent of Christian expression:

Every year as I address a new group of trainee teachers I offer my philosophy of teaching which is to 'be the kind of teacher I want my own children to have' which is only a slightly disguised plagiarism of the Golden Rule. For me, as a Christian, I must follow Jesus' example in every aspect of my life. The command to follow him was not a part-time exhortation (Holt, 2013, p. 187).

In this sense, teaching and the formation as teachers in the service of society and humanity is fundamentally Christian, but the question as to whether this approach at Chester is distinctly and necessarily Christian will be explored below.

## We recognise the inherent value of the pursuit of truth and freedom of enquiry.

In some ways this aspect of the University of Chester's values is the most difficult to explore in terms of ITE. How does an Initial Teacher Education pursue truth? As a professional course the, pedagogy craft or practice of teaching is central to the teaching ethos of the courses and the Faculty. For students this seems to be most evident in their exploration of the own identity as teachers.

One student commented that the range of staff and opinions that they encounter at the University of Chester is

a real asset at [the University of] Chester because not only do you get different viewpoints of different lecturers and their experiences but you also get to blend in with the other ITTs from different subjects as well and different walks of life.

This enables students to critically develop their own 'truth' or identity as a teacher:

whereas building our mentality as a teacher and what we believe in and how we think the right way to teach is, I think that we are getting taught that, and that's through the Master's modules that we're doing because that's what it's covering, it's covering how we think we should teach our subject, our philosophy basically. I think... we're getting taught that through the Masters modules that we're getting taught.

Staff feel the same way in designing and delivering the courses, as well as developing their own teaching identities. The collegiality of such an approach seems to be a valued part of the ITE experience for staff at the University:

So it's that idea of working together, looking at critical incidents, looking at how we approach things, that allows us to move it on. So we never stop we're always thinking of something else that will support us all.

This partnership with schools is at the centre of the work of the University of Chester. It seeks to work with many different partners to ensure that staff and students are able to pursue and develop their own teaching identity. One school partner highlights this benefit for themselves and their staff:

So that partnership working in all sorts of different contexts with them sort of gives us more opportunities to do different things.

Underpinning all of this is the freedom of enquiry. It came through in the staff interviews that there was a freedom to explore, and even with the Anglican foundation of the University of Chester, people of all faiths and none are able to develop their pursuit of truth or teaching identity in a safe and supportive environment.

## A rather important caveat

Thus far this report has taken the values that are outlined in the University of Chester's mission statement and explored how they are found in the practice and ethos of ITE within the University. There is no doubt that ITE upholds and evidences the values of the University and by extension those of its Christian foundation. However, in exploring the Christian distinctiveness of the University it is important to explore whether these values are incidental as common human values, or whether they are expressed as fundamental Christian values within the ITE provision.

In exploring the various interviews and quantitative data surrounding the Christian foundation and its importance it is interesting to note that both students and school partners were largely unaware of the Christian foundation of the University. When asked about their attitude towards the Christian foundation of the University students responded in the following ways. The higher percentage is associated with the option 'I don't have anything to say...' (N=16, 34%) followed by 'I am indifferent about University of Chester's Christian foundation' (N=15, 31.9%). However the option 'I feel positive...' is the third most popular choice (N=11, 23.4%) showing that options which are supportive of a Christian Ethos are also chosen. Within the school responses the most frequent response is associated with the option "I am indifferent to University of Chester's Christian foundation" (N=6, 37.5%). The other three most popular attitudes are: 'I don't have anything to say about this' and "I am proud about this institution's Christian foundation" and 'I feel positive...' (N=3, 18.8% for each option). Only 1 participant chose the option 'I don't like...' (6.3%) while none of the respondents chose 'I strongly reject...' which is therefore the least favourite option with a frequency of 0%.

Further quantitative data about why students chose the University reflects a similar view of the Christian ethos, in this question two motives receive an average rating of around 4 and can therefore be considered least important: Previous experience with the institution and its Christian ethos. This is very reflective of the interviews where students struggled to highlight any aspects of a Christian underpinning to their experience. The closest that they could come to identifying aspects of a Christian foundation was the fact that one of the tutors on the Secondary programme teaches on RE:

There's a strong emphasis that one of the sort of main mentors that we've had for our sessions has been a teacher of RE and so potentially without sort of having necessarily a Christian value on things there have been moral, ethical values put on. And I know that's something obviously that teaching comes into.

School partners were similarly unaware of the Christian values outlined by the University. When it was suggested that the values they had seen in action in ITE were based in Christianity one respondent was firm that 'I would not use the term Christian' because to label them such "shuts it down, does it matter if you use the term Christian? – if you are doing that anyway?"

University staff were much more aware of the Christian foundation and were able to articulate how it influences the ITE experience at the University in the sense that the whole approach

embodies the Christian values to be honest, I think they are the Christian values that you see.

Further

I think it's down to that value set again. It's the underpinning values that we've all talked about right through, that are associated with a Christian community. It's the community, that's the word." This did lead to a discussion that is central to this report about "the difference between a faith institution and a non-faith institution, would those values be celebrated exactly the same? Yes, probably. So when you're talking about values of caring and compassion they're not necessarily Christian values.

The values that underpin the ITE experience in the University of Chester are Christian, but it seems to depend on the observer as to whether they are identified as such. The idea of ITE as a community which is at the centre of Christian identity is an idea that all partners recognise. Its expression of Christian identity is more ambiguous. It is at this point that the University has a decision to make. Knowing that its Christian foundation and values are an integral part of their ITE provision they may feel that that is enough. All of the experiences contribute to what has been identified as having "something different about the ethos. And I don't necessarily think it means you have to be a Christian but I think it means you're buying into that compassion, the compassionate caring ethos."

On the other hand it could be argued that it is not distinctively Christian as a large number of stakeholders are unaware of, or ambivalent to, the Christian foundation. Within the day to day experience of the students, and the interactions with partner schools should the rootedness of these values in Christianity be articulated? If this does happen would ITE and the University lose some of its community in identifying a Christianity that may be seen to exclude those that fall outside of its boundaries? It is a fine line, celebrating the Christianity of the institution without pushing people away. It would seem, however, that an articulation of its Christian values could be recognised in a way that they are compatible with, and a development of, wider societal values.

Returning to the mission statement of the University maybe it is enough for ITE to be 'mindful of its Christian foundation' as it certainly seems to be, and not have to proclaim a Christian distinctiveness.

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# CHAPTER 3





# University of Chichester

Dr Glenn Stone



## Chichester's historical and contemporary context

The University of Chichester can trace its origins back to 1839 when, what later became known as Bishop Otter College, was founded as one of the first church training colleges in the country. Bishop Otter College was named after Bishop William Otter whose vision and values of education were influential in its inception prior to his death in 1840. For Bishop Otter, the church was seen as being morally intertwined with the education of citizens at a time when secular and religious teachings were of great debate (McGregor, 1981). For the Bishop of Chichester, polemic debates about church and state education were perceived to be unhelpful and so he put forward a vision for the expansion of educational provision in a way that continued to maintain some of the traditions of religious instruction:

Let it not be thought illiberal, if, convinced of the paramount importance of religion over everything earthly [...] whatever advancement may be made in other subjects, Christian instruction shall still hold its first place and its due proportion in their schools (Otter, 1841).

In particular, the church was conceived as having a duty to educate all citizens, including the poorest in society who were 'still brought up on darkness and ignorance... at a moment when the light of knowledge is spreading rapidly through all classes of society above the poor' (Otter, 1841). As a response to a call for more teachers, a college in Chichester was formed, initially for the instruction of Masters, and so the present-day University of Chichester's Christian foundation was established.

Bishop William Otter was an early pioneer of developments in the training of teachers and the University of Chichester can be proud to associate itself with many more innovations in teacher education across the centuries. Following the 1870 Forster Act, renowned feminist Louisa Hubbard campaigned for women from the middle classes to train as school mistresses. A revived Bishop Otter College then developed an innovative curriculum for training women teachers using methods unlike those used by the predominant pupil-teacher schemes. By doing this, Chichester was once again at the forefront of developments in teacher training and the success, and reputation, of Bishop Otter College as an exclusive training college for women teachers continued into the 1960s.

Today, University of Chichester has two campuses with teacher training situated in Bognor Regis. The Bognor Regis Campus centres around three Georgian buildings used as an emergency training college for teachers in the post-war period. Documenting this history, Barbara Smith, a former head of the Bognor Regis College details how tutors and trainees made the most of their programmes: English involved trips to the theatre; Geographers trekked across the South Downs; History students excavated around Roman Chichester. Much of the content was arranged around 'themes to meet student needs and interests' (Smith, 2014, p.87). Whilst the Bognor site does not have church foundations in quite the same way as Chichester, it is evident from Smith's account that there was a strong teacher education community with trainees being encouraged to think about the fullness of life, and by association, the richness of opportunities bestowed to children.

Bognor transitioned into a permanent college before merging with Bishop Otter to form the West Sussex Institute of Higher Education. This new institute had ambitions for a broader academic portfolio and latterly evolved into the Chichester Institute of Higher Education, then University College Chichester and finally, University of Chichester today. Teacher education, and the education of children locally, continues to be a vital part of the university's work. For example, aside from Initial Teacher Training, the university established its own Multi-Academy Trust in 2012 with a vision for 'all young people to be inspired by an excellent education that raises their aspirations and enriches their lives'. Whilst it is not an overtly Christian trust, the vision is befitting for the university's Christian heritage: 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly' (John 10 10).

The university's Institute of Education provides a wide portfolio of teacher training programmes. Pathways include undergraduate, postgraduate and School Direct, and the university offers routes to become early years, primary and secondary teachers. This case study refers to group interviews with students, tutors, and school-based mentors. It also draws upon an analysis of documents taken from the different teacher training programmes, university website and alumni materials, and further analysis of questionnaires provided to staff, students and partnership schools.

## Why choose Chichester? The significance of its historical reputation

With 180 years of teacher training history, it is not surprising that the University of Chichester has accrued a well-respected reputation amongst students, tutors and partnership schools:

Whenever you go in [to schools] and you say you're training at Chichester a lot of them are like 'oh it's renowned [...] you must be good if you're training at Chichester.' (Student)

Students choose Chichester, in part because they had heard of 'the reputation of the teaching degree itself, as well as the reputation of the staff who deliver those teaching degrees'. Similarly, school partners are keen to work with Chichester as:

when you find out that you are going to get a Chichester student you already know what you are going to get (Mentor).

The questionnaire data reveal that the university's reputation and tradition for training teachers helps to attract both students and school partners. Factors rank, on average, to be 'extremely important' when students choose to study at Chichester included 'It has a good reputation'. The only factor ranking higher than this was 'The institution has a friendly environment'. For school partners, 'the long tradition of effective Teacher Training' ranks as the most important motive for working with the university.

Owing to the heritage of the institution, it is found that many mentors and head teachers that work locally are Chichester alumni. As a result, there is a sense of a life cycle: Chichester graduates become teachers in partnership schools and then become mentors for new trainee teachers. This works to reinforce the university's reputation:

It's been here a long time and has a good reputation and all the dealings I've had since then have done nothing other than support that view. (Mentor)

You know what you are going to get [from Chichester trainees] because so many of your colleagues in school have been there. Obviously there are going to be changes but the core of it remains the same. (Mentor)

The mentors recognise strong performance from trainees and this reinforces their desire to work in partnership with the university. Indeed, University of Chichester trained teachers are identified in the survey results as a 'safer choice' for employment by partnership schools when compared with other Higher Education Institution partners or school-based routes. In part, this becomes self-affirming as Chichester alumni who are now mentors and senior leaders are keen to uphold the reputation of the institution: 'There's a sense of pride having come from Chichester' (Mentor). Document analysis also reveals that former students continue to have a connection to the university and hold a sense of pride over its continued success. For example, a retired teacher, who trained to teach in the late 1950s at Bishop Otter College, commented:

the values, opportunities and friendships are common to everyone who has been fortunate enough to have been a student at Chichester [...] hearing from [former Vice Chancellor] as to how well the university is placed in various educational "lists" made us all immensely proud. (Bishop Otter College Guild newsletter contributor)

It is apparent that the history of the institution is significant for building both a positive reputation and a sense of pride. This is congruent with a perception that Chichester has successful outcomes for teacher education. As one student commented, 'We get the sense that they know what they're doing; they've been doing it for years'. Furthermore, the strength of Chichester's ITE partnership can be evidenced by its positive Net Promoter Scores. For example, 75% of school respondents would highly recommend the teacher training provided at University of Chichester.

## The Church foundation: forgotten but not gone?

As with all Cathedrals Group universities, University of Chichester has built upon its church foundation. Yet, when questioned about its Christian foundation, stakeholders were unable to articulate how this is relevant to the work of the university today. For example, a student commented 'I'd never clocked onto it really. It's never crossed my mind.' Furthermore, the questionnaire sample indicates that the 'Christian ethos' of the university ranks (on average) as 'not important' for students' motivation in selecting University of Chichester.

The questionnaire responses also reveal that the majority of school partners (76%) and students (68%) are most likely to feel 'indifferent' or have 'nothing to say' about the Christian foundation of the university. However, a larger number of staff (52%) are more likely to suggest that they are 'proud' or 'positive' about the Christian foundation. Very few respondents across all sample groups reject the Christian foundation. Despite this, the larger percentages for indifference suggest that the Christian foundation is not overtly identified as salient to the way that different stakeholders value Chichester's Initial Teacher Training provision.

Tutors credited the university's ethos with its general history of teacher training, rather than specific religious foundations:

I've never considered the link with the cathedral [...] I have always attributed the ethos much more down to a primary school ethos [...] I've always put it down to the fact that we're in a very caring profession. (Tutor)

This lack of awareness may be borne out of developments in the university's designation: 'it isn't called Bishop Otter anymore' (Tutor). 'University of Chichester' does not carry the same religious connotations and school participants were more likely to refer to 'Chichester' students as opposed to the 'Bishop Otter' appellation. This is a recent phenomenon as within living memory, the Bishop Otter College Guild newsletter provides evidence of a stronger sense of the Christian foundation and how this was appreciated, even by those without religious belief:

Bishop Otter College had a Christian ethos. I was so lucky to be made welcome in its benign embrace for I was, and still am, an atheist (Bishop Otter College Guild newsletter contributor)

A further reason for the lack of awareness of the university's church foundation may be due to its dual-campus structure. Teacher education is housed mainly in the regency buildings of Bognor while the chapel and university's 'Bishop Otter' spiritual home resides in Chichester:

We very rarely go over to the Chichester campus, but actually the chapel which is a significant building is smack bang in the middle [...] on a day to day basis people pass that building, [so] there's much more of a feeling when you're over there that this has some sort of Christian basis (Tutor).

Tutors with experiences of other church foundation universities identified the significance of a central chapel or strong presence of a chaplain. Whilst this may be true of the Bishop Otter campus in Chichester, the Bognor Regis campus does not contain the same level of physical space dedicated to Christian worship, celebration or symbolism.

A systematic analysis of documentation in use within the teacher training programmes at the university also found very little explicit mention of the church foundation. Reference to Bishop William Otter exists on the university website as part of the history of the institution but day-to-day documentation and reference material for students and school partners is devoid of an overt Christian message.

The university tutors that responded to the online survey similarly do not place value on teaching ‘sessions that specifically address Catholic / Christian /religious aspects of education’. This is seen as ‘optional / extra’ by the majority of respondents and was one of the lowest ranking categories for curriculum content. This is clearly a significant shift in the teacher training curriculum from the vision of education espoused by founder, Bishop Otter.

However, whilst it may be stated that the Christian foundation of teacher training at the university has been **forgotten**, it is not the case that it has gone in spirit. Firstly, a transmission of values may have been passed on through the generations of tutors that have worked at the university in its various guises:

its foundations and its long history has meant that it’s created this environment where we step into it or we appoint people that fit with the way we work and that ethos is maintained and sustained (Tutor)

Secondly, document analysis and interviews with stakeholders elucidate an alignment between the culture of teacher training, the Cathedrals Group values and by association, Christian messaging. This will now be explored in an attempt to define the ‘Chichester Teacher’ and the learning environment that grows these future professionals.

## The ‘Chichester Teacher’ and their training environment

Despite teacher education developments at the university, it is believed that ‘the core of it remains the same’ (Mentor). The aforementioned reputational capital emerges from a belief that there is a particular brand of Chichester teacher. What constitutes a ‘core’ set of values, mission, ethos and culture within Chichester’s teacher education programmes can be gleaned from document analysis, questionnaire responses and comments by interview participants. One of the documents analysed identifies an explicit criteria for a ‘Chichester teacher’ that is trained for the primary classroom. However, this list of attributes was only created within the last five years and yet, the reputation of Chichester teachers precedes the document’s creation. So what does a Chichester trained teacher bring to the partnership?

Firstly, the Chichester trained teacher understands that they are agents for societal change. Like founders Bishop William Otter, and later, Louisa Hubbard, tutors on the programmes are committed to the transformational potential of education:

There is definitely a sense of a moral purpose about training people for teaching as doing something worthwhile for society, something that is going to make life better for people - the whole widening participation agenda here is enormous. (Tutor)

Indeed, one of the values of Cathedrals Group universities is ‘supporting social justice for all people, at home and abroad’ (Cathedrals Group, 2018) and this notion is not lost on those who train at University of Chichester:

I think it all falls under the umbrella of social justice. Everything is: racial inequality - that feeds into social justice; Doing your best by EAL learners - that's social justice; Ensuring that children who are underprivileged have the same access - that's social justice. This university shows you how all these implications are all to do with social justice and how we could turn this around for children. (Student)

The document analysis sheds further light on the social justice agenda at Chichester. Specific modules on different programmes make reference to: education for social justice; challenging injustice; equality and diversity; and global citizenship. On one programme, the vision for a 'Chichester Teacher' is overt in its expectation that teachers should be 'globally aware, courageous and committed to social justice' (Document: Primary vision for a 'Chichester Teacher').

The students see their own commitment to social justice as integral to meeting children's individual and holistic developmental needs: 'that's something I felt has been taught very well' (Student). This is reinforced by tutor expectations that make their own moral purposes as teacher educators clear:

despite the grade that they might get [...] I want them to know that the key thing is [...] they need to go and have a love of learning and to make a difference in children's lives [...] and what an important job they're going into [...], what a privilege it is to teach and to be in education. (Tutor)

I think it's really about humanity. I think that what we do .... is to sort of counter a rather Ofsted-driven, data-driven, assessment-driven philosophy... education is about more than that (Tutor)

Tutors have an educational vision and mission that goes beyond current English policy context. Open ended questions on the online survey, suggest that university tutors believe that students should leave with 'a strong sense of social justice', 'a positive belief in the power of education to improve the lives of children', 'global awareness', understanding of the holistic needs of the child', and an understanding that 'every child is different'. In the Cathedrals Group publication, *World Class Teachers, World Class Education*, Genders (2017) states that 'good education promotes life in all its fullness'. It is evident from tutor comments and a document analysis of course content that the University of Chichester considers children's holistic needs in a global context, and this can be seen as a way of supporting young people to flourish as human beings.

Training logs completed while students are on placements and collected as part of the document analysis, indicate that student teachers have bought into the concept of educating the whole child:

[Pupil] is always hard working and he is a motivated pupil who wants to do the best he can at all times. This week I've seen [pupil's] self-belief and confidence [...] He has been confident enough to contribute, ask me questions and help others [...] Hopefully [Pupil] can continue to believe in himself as this can help to progress his learning even further. (Extract from student's school-based log).

However, whilst tutors may model and value a child-centred pedagogy, students are also given time to discover their own teaching philosophy.

The opportunity to develop a personal philosophy for teaching is an important component of training at University of Chichester, particularly on its university-led routes. Questionnaire responses from school partners, university tutors and students all recognise that students develop a ‘clear philosophy of teaching’ on these routes. However, there is one small anomaly in the data set for students engaged in school-based training where school partners are less likely to suggest that this is an important characteristic.

Students on university-led programmes comment that they have the freedom to explore their own identities as teachers:

You develop your own pedagogy and your own philosophy and with the help of the tutors [...] you can get that down to a fine point [...]

It’s allowing you to be what you want to be [...]

they haven’t criticised that passage either [...] it’s like, that is you, and that’s lovely.  
(Extract from group interview with student teachers)

Analysis from students’ questionnaire data highlights a belief that development in ‘professional identity’ is one of the most likely ways that the University adds value.

The Christian value of respecting others is evident in the way that trainees feel that they can find their own path as opposed to conforming to particular ways of thinking. This is integral to programmes and accentuated in many places, including academic assignments:

Be duly cautious and not over-sweeping about your own experience, but on no account should you discount it, because part of the philosophy of this course is to value the expertise and knowledge student teachers bring to the programme. (Document: Extract from School Direct PGCE handbook)

It is therefore an expectation at University of Chichester that students will develop their personal philosophies both formally and informally across their teacher training programmes.

Another important aspect of training to teach at Chichester derives from its community and fellowship:



We're like one big family. (Student)

It's good in that everything we need is right here, it's quite a small campus, it's nice, you get to really know everyone and your lecturers are just up the road you can just have a chat to them whenever you need to.

(Student)

It's very student-facing; it's all about the students. It is about ensuring they have a really good experience and that they get the most from their time here ... I think that is down to the support we give and that sort of family atmosphere because of our small size that we can maintain or develop. (Tutor)

The small size of the university and avowal that it is a 'family' are evidently reasons why students and staff enjoy being part of the university. This is further qualified by questionnaire responses in that its 'friendly environment' is cited as the most important motivation for choosing Chichester for teacher training. Similarly, when asked to write the 'first thing that comes to mind when you think of the University of Chichester', nearly a third of students wrote comments that related to its small, friendly and supportive campus.

The university family, or community, is not just about the student experience on campus but also imperative to the strength of the partnership:

I have had students from different universities [...] from Chichester, they are a lot more involved, they care a lot more about, not only their students, but about the school. Other universities have not been there as much – they put their student in and leave them, whereas with Chichester we have had a lot of involvement from the university [...] The University really seems to care. (Mentor)

The university's empathy and care for students is evident in the way that mentors and students speak about the support they have received. For example, interview participants mentioned how a tutor had voluntarily met a student on their weekend in order to provide further pastoral support and teaching guidance. Mentors also value the responsiveness of tutors when they have concerns or questions. One mentor explained how the extent of support that their student received resulted in a 'rejuvenation' of practice.

Document analysis also reinforces the high level of support available to student teachers. For example, there are a number of documents about the pastoral role that tutors have as 'Academic Advisors' who guide students through assignments, signpost them to services and help set professional development targets. School partnership documentation makes clear the supportive measures that can be put into place if a student is having difficulties and interview data suggest the university provides interventions 'straight away' (mentor) in order to ensure the partnership remains successful. If generosity is perceived as a Christian value, then the generosity of time and support given to students and schools can certainly be interpreted as being compatible to the university's Christian foundation.

## Conclusion

This research set out to investigate why trainees and partnership schools choose Chichester as a Christian foundation university, as well as what is particularly or deeply Christian about its provision. This case study of University of Chichester has shown a complex picture. Whilst the Christian foundation of the university is not evidenced through articulated religious preferences or practices within its teacher education programmes, the implicit values and spiritual beginnings is omnipresent.

Tutors, school partners and trainees are happy to talk about: moral imperatives in the form of social justice education; the importance of a teaching philosophy; the educational community within the university and across its family of partnership schools; a commitment to children's holistic development; and the caring supportive network around both the student teacher and the children that they teach.

The University of Chichester has a strong reputation for developing teachers. It has been argued that a transmission of historical and Christian values can be identified within current training programmes, and therefore, the spirit of the university, and by association its Christian foundation, continues to shape the teachers graduating from Chichester.

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# CHAPTER 4



Leeds Trinity  
University

# Leeds Trinity University

Dr Pam Jarvis, Ed Podesta and Liz McGuire



# Introduction

Over 2016-2017, Leeds Trinity University (LTU) participated in a Cathedrals Group Initial Teacher Education project, led by Canterbury Christ Church University. The research took place over three stages:

- A document study of institutional materials carried out by an extended research team following a framework produced by NICER, to establish how universities express themselves: Feb - March 2017
- An interview day of trainees, partner schools, programme leaders and marketing members of staff, led by the NICER team at participating institutions to hear perceptions from key stakeholders, students, placement providers and university staff: March – June 2017
- An online questionnaire devised from the findings of phase 2 and 3 for trainees and partner schools to complete to quantify these perceptions and to examine behavioural choices: November - December 2017
- This document reports on findings from the Leeds Trinity samples, and where appropriate, compares them to the findings of the overall sample.

## Document Study

A range of documents used in relation to Leeds Trinity the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Programme were accessed, collated, and a small sample chosen to screenshot and thematically examine.

Seven screen shots were used in the analysis, two from over-arching university publicity (the website publicity focusing on the Catholic faith foundation of LTU and the Chaplaincy's website page), three from teaching documents used in the Catholic Education/ RE ITE curriculum, one from a module handbook, stipulating the learning outcomes of the Catholic Education module (primary and secondary education), and one from a PGCE report document, the page which reports on contribution to school ethos.

The clearest over-arching theme to emerge from these documents was **the need to create a balance between educating specifically in the Catholic faith and the need to engage with other faith/non-faith perspectives**. This was most clearly articulated in the teaching document 'Teaching Catholic Education in a Multi-Faith Society'

Learning to live in, and contribute to, a complex and pluralistic society while holding fast, but not uncritically, to Catholic faith... a new challenge of professing the truth in a diverse social and cultural climate

There was also a theme that arose from a **Catholic articulation of moral and ethical values and mores, bestowing the potential to offer leadership**. This was explicitly articulated in 'Teaching Catholic Education in a Multi-Faith Society' but arose in many other less obvious formats, for example in helping non-Catholic children "*to integrate faith and life*" in 'Catholic Schools - student outline' and in the link to Every Child Matters in 'Catholic Education Portfolio'. The PGCE reporting document represents an invitation to students to engage with both issues.

The Chaplaincy web pages were most interesting for the dichotomy it set up in its attempt to create a delicate balance between the University's Catholic foundation and the desire to embrace a more diverse population within the society of the university. On the one hand, one Chaplaincy webpage stated that an 'inclusive events programme' and an 'interface space' are offered to all, but another used a quote from a student who said that the main advantage of the Chaplaincy was that as a Catholic, she was able to meet other people there who 'have similar beliefs'. This is the only student quote used in association with the work of the Chaplaincy.

There was also a good example of the dual nature of learning outcomes in the PGCE Stage one report in that students in Catholic and non-Catholic schools were asked to undertake the same reflections upon ethos; however those in Catholic schools were guided to interpret this from a Catholic perspective. This encompasses both themes, that of the specifically Catholic perspective, and that of a more general moral/ethical approach. It is plain that the university ITE programme is embedded in a moral and ethical approach, with which students can engage from a Catholic or non-Catholic position.

In a conversation between the Principal Investigator and the co-researchers, the following questions were discussed:

- The sociological construct of 'the truth' and the potentially dichotomous relationship between a critical approach and the concept of Catholic 'magisterium'
- How moral leadership might be articulated from a Catholic perspective within a pluralistic society, particularly with respect to diversity policies and practices in both schools and other teaching and learning institutions such as universities
- The fact that students taking the Catholic Education module are required to undertake a reflection on their contribution to the ethos of their placement hosts, and if the placement host was Catholic foundation, to explicitly consider this point.
- How the quite complex questions of a Catholic articulation of education in a pluralistic society might be further explored by ITE students, both within the Catholic education frame and in the wider ITE programme
- Whether/how these issues arise for ITE lecturers in other faith-based universities, particularly those rooted in other Christian denominations, and how they are discussed
- The absence of representation of the university's faith foundation in the majority of mainstream teaching materials, how the National Curriculum/ OFSTED system may underpin this, how this issue might be replicated/ discussed in other faith foundation ITE providers

# Screen shots summary

**Screen shot 1: Website publicity** - ‘Our Catholic faith foundation remains central to our activities [however] we’re committed to ensuring everyone in our community feels valued- Catholics, those of other Christian denominations or religion and those who don’t profess a faith’.

**Screen shot 2: The Chaplaincy** - The Chaplaincy advertises an ‘inclusive events programme’ and an ‘interface space’. However, the quote used from a student proposes that ‘as a Catholic... it’s a great place... to make great friends with people who have similar beliefs’.

**Screen shot 3: Teaching Catholic Education in a Multi-Faith Society** - Embraces the dichotomy, raising:

- Moral and social issues
- Faiths in a pluralistic society
- Truth and tolerance with social cohesion
- Understanding difference
- Moral leadership: cultural and moral values.

*‘A unique identity which creates a spirit of ownership and solidarity... learning to live in, and contribute to, a complex and pluralistic society while holding fast, but not uncritically, to Catholic faith... a new challenge of professing the truth in a diverse social and cultural climate. Need a vision and a scheme’.*

**Screen shot 4: Catholic Schools (student outline)** - Reflecting on the dichotomy:

- Specialist RE is important- teaching explicitly to embrace the Catholic faith
- Taking on the responsibility to help non-Catholic children to ‘integrate faith and life’
- Contradictory perspectives between school, Church, local community and LEA.

**Screen shot 5: Catholic Education Portfolio** - Linking the RE curriculum with Every Child Matters.

**Screen shot 6: Module Handbook: Catholic Education** - These are the learning outcomes from the Catholic Education module (Primary and Secondary). They outline the balance between Catholic education and the need to recognise and plan learning around ‘world faiths’.



**Screen shot 7: PGCE Stage one report: ethos contribution** - This is a sheet for reflective practice offered to students at the end of their stage one report, indicating that those placed in Catholic schools should reflect upon their contribution to the faith foundation of the school. They are asked to reflect upon how they:

- Supported the school ethos
- Supported the school's mission statement
- Supported the pastoral process in the school

whether they were in Catholic or non-Catholic schools.

## Interviews

Interviews were undertaken with a three different focus group samples, students, staff and placement providers. Numbers were quite small, 7 students, 4 staff and 1 placement provider. Nevertheless, common themes emerged.

### **Theme I: 'They know your name'**

The major reason articulated for choosing LTU by students was that it was a small university where people are more likely to know your name. Quotes included:

It's a small uni- all the lecturers know you, they know your name

The university staff also reiterated this, beginning their conversation with a discussion of Leeds Trinity's motto 'a name not a number'. A related theme that tended to arise alongside the 'know your name' concept was the smallness of Leeds Trinity and the consequent sense of community.

### **Theme 2: Sense of Community**

One student commented

There is a sense of community- [we] know each other.

The placement supervisor, who had also been a Leeds Trinity student commented that she had chosen Leeds Trinity because *'it was small and all on campus... I liked the fact that it did feel like a family and it was very supportive'*.

The university staff commented quite extensively on the sense of community, coming to the conclusion that this made Leeds Trinity quite a singular ITE environment, linking into the aspect of the Christian Foundation. This was the most nuanced theme in the research, across all three stages. On the one hand, participants from all groups tended to deny that the religious ethos was of any great importance, but on the other, there was evidence of identification with it, and the part it played in the construction of the sense of community. This element can be divided into two sub-themes.

### **Theme 3: Religious Identity**

#### **Sub-theme 3a: Religious identity as 'invisible'.**

The students were most vocal about this, being most likely to claim that the university's religious identity had played no, or very little part in their choice of Leeds Trinity for their teacher training:

I don't feel like I've chose for that reason. It's not really made an influence on my decision  
I didn't know until I came and saw a church

When asked to sum up what teacher training was about, in the sense of whether it was tied to the university's RC/Christian foundation, they commented:

For me there is no correlation at all  
We do the CCR (Catholic/Christian Religion) Certificate don't we... but apart from that I agree there's no real correlation between them

Reasons given for opting into the CCR principally revolved around enhancing employability.

The placement supervisor also stated that as a student, she had not consciously chosen Leeds Trinity for its Christian ethos, and the university staff were broadly in agreement that they had not consciously chosen to seek employment at an RC or Christian university, one reflecting on the lapsed nature of his faith and finding some of the religion's structures problematic. Nevertheless however, they contemplated together that the Christian identity of Leeds Trinity was important in rather more subtle ways.

**Sub-theme 3b: Religious identity as the glue in 'community'** The university staff had the most to say about this theme, one participant reflecting that possibly the university's faith base gave it the opportunity to:

Resist... the more technicist way of thinking that teacher education is increasingly, especially in some school led providers.

Another replied:

I think we feel supported by the management that if we have a mission that will be supported, it will be facilitated in as much as they can ... this gives an element of 'resilience'.

This elicited the further comment:

We have more freedom to think about [that] here than we do in other institutions.

One member of the group commented that the CCR Certificate in particular helped the trainees to:

Actually look at the child as a person and fully human rather than just someone who they're going to talk at, dictate to, transfer knowledge into.

The group also discussed that all present had been to an RC or C of E school themselves and that maybe their gravitation to LTU had been

A matter of where you feel comfortable... somehow it's like home, and you've been raised if you like with that ethos and you then give that back.

Another commented

We have had very similar upbringings and very similar experiences, professional upbringings, professional experiences and I think that informs that closeness.

The Christian ethos was seen as an important driver of ethical practice throughout the institution. One member of staff commented:

I'd like our trainees to be ones that are going out with a broader concept of what it means to be a professional teacher than they might get from other institutions [and]... resistance to unethical education policies.

Another replied

They have an internal monitor... it's not just about delivery of x, y and z subjects.

This was clearly a very personal feeling too, as voiced by one member of the group:

I can actually plug into something that was here and is something like the way I was raised as a child... those values are validated. I think I have worked in other places where I have felt that they weren't, that you know, I was the oddity... My daughter went to the RC college... she came [to see me here] with her baby and she immediately said "gosh, this is so nice here you feel so at home... like being back at college again.

A conversation then took place relating to ‘seeing people at the centre of everything’ which elicited the replies ‘our concerns are people rather than systems’ and ‘...a different future- redemption’.

A member of the group summed up:

It is quite unusual for an HE institution to talk about community in that way I think.

The group ended on a reflection that it had been an interesting conversation, reflecting on things that ‘we don’t talk about... much, do we?’ Another agreed ‘it’s a sort of stepping back, almost.’

The placement supervisor made a similar comment, reflecting:

I don’t know if that’s intentional or whether that’s anything to do with the Christian background but I liked the fact that it did feel like a family and it was very supportive.

She also commented, similarly to the university staff, that in terms of the attitude to pupils that such an ethos entailed treating them as

More than just meeting a target or being a number... I think that’s something that very much comes from LTU as in the focus on the pupils rather than the data and the paperwork... we did a lot of work on, when I was a student... on the children’s wellbeing.

She felt that the student she had worked with from a Bradford SCITT had made her think that the non-faith based ITE approach did *‘prepare [ITE students] better for the data side of it...but I wouldn’t want to see that overtake the focus on the children’*. This echoed the staff points about resistance to ‘technicist’ ITE culture.

The students reflected similarly when specifically asked if the Christian foundation had any part to play in creating a sense of community, some agreed that it had:

I think there is definitely more of a sense of community

Interviewer: So you think that comes with it being a church foundation?

Yes, I would say

And some less consciously considered reflections were in evidence:

I am from a Catholic family so that was one of the reasons it did appeal to me. It also reminds me of my college because of the school community

This echoed the sentiments of the university staff, and the specific point about the sense of community shared by the university, RC schools and the local RC college.

## Questionnaire

### Students

Forty seven students participated in the Leeds Trinity questionnaire.

When asked what the first thing that came to mind when they thought about the university the most popular answers were *unsurprisingly teaching/ classes/ education/ degree/ study*. However this was closely followed by *close-knit/ community/ homely/ friendly/ welcoming*, which supports the community emphasis raised in the interviews.

The most important reason for choosing LTU was principally good reputation; the least important was the Christian ethos. This was common across the group of participating universities. Influence on choosing Leeds Trinity was given as applicant days, the best university for ITE and 'small'. When asked about 'added value', participants mentioned community and ethos. This finding then also has echoes in the interviews in the initial denial that the Christian ethos of the university is important, but the broader elements of community and general ethos rooted in the Christian foundation are emergent from further reflection.

When asked how they viewed their fellow students, Leeds Trinity students rated them lowest on risk taking and highest on strong professional values. They reported experiencing positive change throughout their programme and gaining in confidence.

Their 'net promoter' score (how likely they were to recommend Leeds Trinity) was positive, at +2%, but this was considerably lower than the sample across all universities- +37.7%.

Just over 40% of the sample said that they were either positive (30.77%) or proud (10.26%) of Leeds Trinity's Christian foundation, while 30.77% said they were indifferent. Only 1 person (2.6%) said they rejected it while 25.84% proposed that they 'didn't have anything to say' about it. This was slightly more positive than the overall sample, where 23.40% were positive and 10.64% were proud, the majority, 28.99% reported being 'indifferent', while 26.33% had 'nothing to say'

## University Staff

Only eight staff took part in the questionnaire stage of the research, so their contribution is not necessarily a valid representation of the opinions of the staff body as a whole. They did not refer at all to the university's RC foundation in free answer questions, although they did refer to the requirement for positive partnerships:

An excellent programme as a result of consultation and collaboration with schools

Top quality pastoral support from subject specific tutors, great mentors in school and strong link tutors who visit trainees in school.

Large support structure around (ITE students)...provided by subject and link tutors from the university and coordinators and mentors in school plus trainees supporting each other within the various groups they are part of

They also referred to the moral and ethical standards they expected to communicate to their students:

Trainees will understand the importance of high standards of professional and personal conduct with both colleagues and students

Hard working and conscientious with pupils at the centre of all they do

Mirroring the whole multi-institutional sample and the placement providers, they rated religious education as their second lowest priority, with only experience in other countries and cultures rated as being of less importance. However specialised sessions on values, character and ethos were voted the second most important priority, only outranked by subject specific pedagogy and school/classroom experience. This was also very similar to the multi-institutional sample, and in general, quite similar to the placement supervisors' responses. The only clear difference between the LTU tutors and placement supervisors was the rating of evidence and research based education, which LTU placement supervisors rated at 2.27 and LTU tutors rated at 2.71, quite a clear difference given that the rating scale was 0-3 and all areas were ranked 1 or more by both samples.

When asked how they felt that university-led trainees compared to school-led trainees, the university staff felt that the schooled trainees were stronger on all counts but two. They proposed that the university-led trainees were slightly more hard working and were more likely to have a clear philosophy of teaching. The clear philosophy of teaching was seen as quite a clear strength of the university-led programme, rated as +.71 in favour of the university-led programme. It could be speculated that this rating might have some unconscious roots within the Christian ethos that underpins the university, again hinting that it is yet another piece in an overall pattern of unconscious identification with the university's RC identity, in terms of the associated moral and ethical concepts. 4 participants were positive about Leeds Trinity's Christian Foundation, two were proud and one had 'nothing to say'.

The other did not respond to this question.

Only three participants took part in the 'net promoter' question, making the result of +14% invalid.

## Schools

Sixteen valid responses were received from Leeds Trinity placement host schools, representing ten different schools. There was a clear preference for students trained in their own institution, and for locally trained students. The least preferred was a non-local candidate, and this was also the case across the whole inter-institutional participant sample.

The most important reason for choosing to take LTU students was the high standard of training at the university, followed by the university's long tradition of effective ITE; this again was the same across all participant institutions. The schools rated the most essential area of training as primary pedagogy, and the experience of education in a different country or culture, followed by experience of research were rated as least essential. Christian education came third lowest. This was again very similar to the statistics drawn from the whole multi-institutional sample.

When asked to compare LTU students to students from other universities, the employers said that they were less likely to take risks, (mirroring the student evaluations) and that they were slightly lower in conscientiousness, slightly more limited in teaching approaches, slightly weaker and slightly less hard working than students from other ITE institutions. Leeds Trinity students were rated more highly than students from other ITE institutions on clear philosophy, flexibility in response to change, strong professional values, reliability and punctuality. The whole multi-institutional sample reported the participating institutions' students as stronger across the board; however the willingness to take risks got the lowest ratings, an intriguing indication that maybe faith based institutions are inclined to produce more conservative and obedient trainees!

Leeds Trinity did reasonably well in the question of whether employers would recommend the university to a friend +40% with no detractors. The overall statistic was +53%, (58% positive – 5% detractors).

63.6% of Leeds Trinity's placement hosts were either positive about or proud of the university's Christian ethos, somewhat higher than the overall multi-institutional sample score of 46%.

## Conclusion

The most intriguing finding in this research project is the frequent denial of all participant groups that the Christian foundation of Leeds Trinity matters, but the emergent recognition of the sense of community that it elicits. The university staff, as would be expected, discussed this in the greatest amount of depth in the focus groups. The university itself is clearly aware of this situation at a basic level, in the attempts to balance the Catholic articulation of moral and ethical values and more with the need to engage with other faith/non-faith perspectives revealed in the document scrutiny. Bringing this feature of the Leeds Trinity culture to full consciousness has been an extremely valuable element of the project.

One point for reflection is that the mirror image of a warm, close knit cohesive community is the possibility that it might exclude those who do not feel that they are, in that sense, 'one of us'. The staff focus group was small, but it is of note that all of them had themselves attended Christian foundation schools. It might certainly be worth monitoring the staff and student body at Leeds Trinity to formally record numbers of staff and students who did/did not attend Christian foundation schools, and those who come from non-Christian backgrounds in terms of both recruitment and retention.

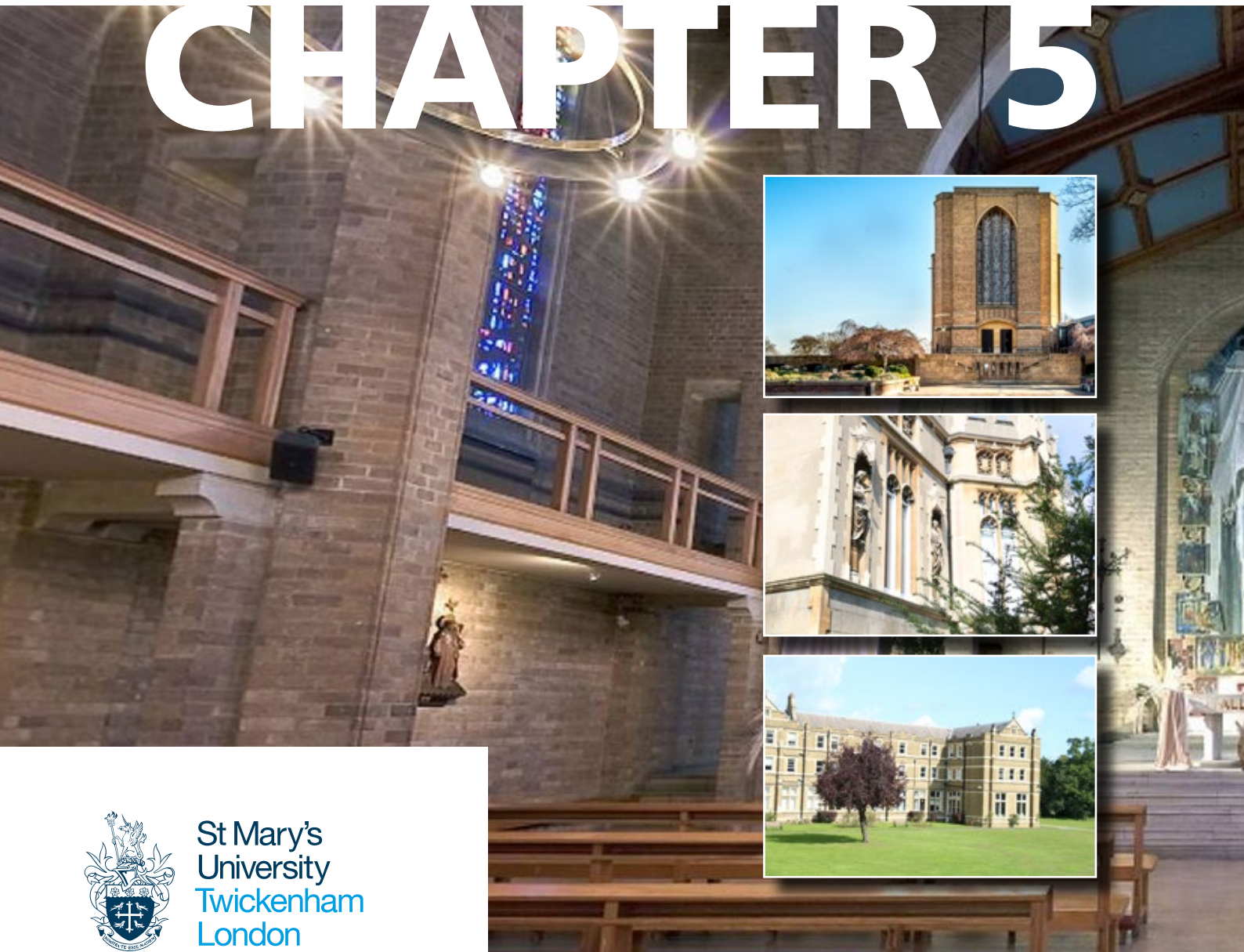
There is much that is subconscious about human identification (e.g. Heiphetz et al 2013), and this phenomenon seemed to have a large part to play in this research. The fact that many students recorded their preference for a small one campus university is also of interest, particularly as this was repeated to some extent across the sample as a whole. There are many large ITE providers in the Yorkshire area, and the fact that there is a clear preference for a small, local institution with a clear moral ethos amongst both students and placement hosts is a useful piece of marketing information for the future.



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# CHAPTER 5



St Mary's  
University  
Twickenham  
London

# St Mary's University

Dr Maria James and Mary Benton



## A brief history of St Mary's

Established in 1850 as a Catholic teacher training college, St Mary's in Twickenham has a long-standing reputation for academic excellence and a distinguished history as an institution for the education of teachers. It was founded in the mid nineteenth century by the Catholic Poor Schools Committee to meet the need for teachers to provide an education for the growing number of poor Catholic children and so, from the outset was founded on principles of altruism and social justice. On the 23rd January 2014, St Mary's University College was awarded full university title by the Privy Council. At the time of this writing it is seeking Research Degree Awarding Powers (RDAP) and so its academic reputation continues to grow and develop.

St Mary's had its genesis in Brook Green in Hammersmith, where it was run by the Brothers of Christian Instruction, with an intake of just six young men. In 1899, the Congregation of the Mission (Vincentian) was asked to undertake the administration of the College. In the years to follow, there was an ever-increasing demand for Catholic teachers and by the end of the 1920s the College campus at Brook Green was inadequate. In 1925 St Mary's was able to purchase Strawberry Hill House and build living accommodation and classroom space for about 250 students. Teacher education was the focus of the institution until 1975 and today, around a third of the university provision is dedicated to this work. In 1967 it became possible to stay for a fourth year to convert the Teacher's Certificate into a Bachelor of Education degree and now many student teachers continue to complete their full Masters at St Mary's through various routes. St Mary's education department is renowned for quality, diversity, inclusivity and promoting academic study and research, recognised by its last Ofsted inspection as outstanding.

On 17th September 2010, Pope Benedict XVI visited the campus as part of the first Papal visit to the United Kingdom since 1982. Children from local schools joined in the celebration of the Big Assembly which was transmitted live to all Catholic Schools and many visitors from different faiths were invited. On meeting the Pontiff, the presiding Chief Rabbi Sacks said the following which celebrates the voice of faith in society and the need for dialogue between different communities.

'We celebrate both our commonalities and differences, because if we had nothing in common we could not communicate, and if we had everything in common, we would have nothing to say ... Britain has been so enriched by its minorities, by every group represented here today and the intricate harmonies of our several voices. And one of our commonalities is that we surely all believe that faith has a major role in strengthening civil society ... though our faiths are profoundly different, yet we recognize in one another the presence of faith itself, that habit of the heart that listens to the music beneath the noise, and knows that God is the point at which soul touches soul and is enlarged by the presence of otherness' (Sacks, 2010).

The idea of listening to the music beneath the noise is a beautiful one to consider. Data reveals that students, tutors and mentors are convinced that St Mary's is a place where this 'otherness' that Sacks mentions, might flourish and this in a setting that retains its distinctive Christian character and ethos. A place secure in its identity is unafraid to reach out, dialogue with, and learn from others who hold different perspectives.

In 2015 St Mary's celebrated its 165th anniversary and marked it with various events both on campus in Strawberry Hill and in central London, including the official installation of Chancellor Cardinal Vincent Nichols at Westminster Cathedral in May. His motto is "Fortis ut Mors Dilectio" (Love Is Strong As Death) and it is hoped that St Mary's seeks to hold at its heart, this vital virtue of love: for pedagogy; for learning; for the St Mary's community; and for the wider society in which it thrives. This following university tutor believes that it does for she writes that St Mary's has a *'Very strong pastoral support in place for students, a professional and supportive environment and a professional and 'loving' attitude of staff to colleagues and students'*.

## The Research

Having considered a very brief background of St Mary's University, this case study draws upon analysis of documentation and data about the different teacher training pathways and the faith-based distinctiveness of this provision. Data included emerges from document analysis, survey questionnaire responses and group interviews with student teachers, tutors and school-based mentors. St Mary's was pleased to be approached by Canterbury Christ Church University to participate in this research project about IIT provision within a university with a distinct Christian foundation, because it has helped to make the implicit, more explicit.

The research, in common with other participating organisations, was conducted over two stages.

Stage 1a - A document analysis of St Mary's documentation;

Stage 1b - Three small focus group interviews were organised at St Mary's with colleagues from Christ Church in attendance, conducted over one full day. The groups consisted of approximately six people in each interview. The main themes and foci that arose from discussions with the IIT students were distinctiveness, the characteristics of a good teacher and St Mary's Christian foundation. Semi structured interviews held with the university tutors elicited responses about: the distinctive features of St Mary's IIT provision; ways in which St Mary's IIT provision is unique; characteristics of a St Mary's teacher; and how the Christian foundation of the university is expressed. School based colleagues working in partnership with the university discussed matters mostly to do with: quality; theological literacy; cultural bilingualism; and the strength of their partnership with the institution.

Stage 2 of the research process consisted of organised surveys with as many students, university staff and school partners as were willing to participate. This resulted in 20 university tutors, 20 school partners and 52 students taking part in the survey. 88% of the tutors felt positive or proud about working with an institution that has a Christian foundation. 65% of the school partners felt the same. 60% of the students claimed this positivity whilst 30% felt indifferent about working with an institution which has a Christian foundation. The participants and documentation involved in this research retain a Primary School IIT focus.

# The Distinctive Vision and Mission of St Mary's.

Since 1850 St Mary's mission has been to provide high quality academic and professional education, inspired by a Catholic ethos and Christian values. Amongst words that students use to describe St Mary's are: inspiring, community, family feel, friendly, fun, pleasant with a steel heart, supportive and welcoming. Many students choose St Mary's as a place to train due to its good reputation, friendly environment, long tradition in training teachers and academic excellence. They come because it has been recommended by friends and families (generations of teachers from the same family have been trained at St Mary's – 'once a Simmie ...'). Another reason is the flexibility of the provision as many choose the work-based route of training and some the part-time course and some the PE specialism. Often, students say that they know at the interview stage that they want to attend because they were made welcome and it felt like a community. They believe that at St Mary's they will have chance to interact with academic staff, develop a sense of professional identity and have access to subject specialist experts.

The institution's key document *Vision 2025* presents the vision of the future of the university. It describes St Mary's as 'a public university with a faith identity' (page 4). The document maintains that this vision is outworked through being an inclusive Catholic University that seeks to develop the whole person, and this includes empowering its community to have a positive impact on the world.

After much democratic cross-university discussion and deliberation, four core values were identified that, it is believed, define St Mary's: Inclusiveness; Generosity of Spirit; Respect; and Excellence. Whilst these values are not specifically Christian and so do not evidence distinctiveness per se, they are exercised within a Christian faith-based context and foundation and legacy and so, take on a specific complexion. However, such a list may remain abstract and nebulous, more rhetoric rather than reality, and so to mitigate this possibility, the significance of how these values may be embodied at St Mary's is discussed later.

## An Analysis of St. Mary's salient documentation

In the document analysis, the following texts were reviewed:

1. Outstanding and Distinctive Primary ITE Provision (May 2015);
2. A Guide to postgraduate Study at St Mary's (October 2016);
3. The Place to Be (St Mary's Undergraduate Prospectus) (2017-2018);
4. St Mary's Teachers Stand Out (ITE/PGCE Information Pack) (2017-2018);
5. St Mary's Primary Partnership Agreement (2017-2018);
6. BA Honours in Primary Education (with the award of QTS) Programme Handbook (September 2016).

Following a trawl of this literature, key words were identified that reverberate throughout the documentation. As expected, the four key institutional values featured whilst other terminology that was understood to be significant because it featured consistently, included: outstanding and distinctive; integrity; nurture; challenge; partnership; equality; collaboration; diversity; academic rigour; community; value; student focus; and support. This constellation of concepts would appear to be sympathetic and analogous with the four main institutional values.

There is evidence of the link between teacher training provision and the Christian foundation of St Mary's in all the documents relating to ITT. The document, *Outstanding and Distinctive Primary ITE Provision* (2017) discusses how the programme allows 'all trainees to develop their physical, intellectual and spiritual potential' (2017, p.1). The aims of the overall ITT programme are identified 'within the context of the St Mary's University Mission Statement' and offer 'special provision for those intending to teach in Catholic and other Christian schools' (2017, p. 1).

There are implicit references to Catholic social teaching (although these could equally be read as secular). For example, the core value of inclusiveness states that 'St Mary's is a place where students and staff can reach their full potential and make a positive contribution to society' (*A Guide to Postgraduate Study at St Mary's*, 2016, p.9).

Although the vision of the university is explicitly Christian, the extent to which this vision is reflected in the ITT documents is inconsistent. University wide publications make explicit reference to the Catholic ethos of the university and the Christian values expressed in the Vision. However, the School of Education, Theology and Education (SETL) documents do not always make this explicit reference to the Vision whilst some reflect the vision and values of St Mary's, more implicitly. For example, *Outstanding and Distinctive Primary ITE Provision* (2015) is written 'within the context of the SMU Mission Statement' and the *BA Honours in Primary Education Programme Handbook* (2016) refers to the four core values and states 'our values ... should permeate through your time at St Mary's'. In *St Mary's Teachers Stand Out* (2017-2018) there is no explicit or implicit reference to Christian values as the document merely states that 'St. Mary's history and reputation for training teachers began at its foundation in 1850'. *St Mary's Primary Partnership Agreement* (2017-2018) is a key document for partnership schools that reflects the number of Christian faith schools within the partnership. The four core values are stated on the inside cover with a fuller explanation of each value on page 4, which refers to the framing of the agreement within 'a strong community of mutual respect based on our Catholic ethos and identity' (2017, p.4).

One tutor sees St Mary's as a place where 'everyone is an honoured guest' and so respect for all within the learning community is evidenced. This idea of community witnessed through hospitality is echoed in the Vatican documents relating to Catholic education which note how the religious dimension of the educational institution is expressed as 'daily witness', 'through the celebration of Christian values in Word and Sacrament, individual behaviour, in friendly and harmonious interpersonal relationships, and in ready availability' (The Congregation for Catholic Education 1988:§26). This sense of community, belonging and availability were themes that emerged, strongly, through much collated data and its importance is encapsulated in the following written by university tutors:

We have a strong focus on Partnership and seeing training is in different locations but contributing to the whole. We use the university as a 'third space' to talk about what has been seen and learnt in school, but also to think critically about possible other approaches. We hold Alexander's view of a 'repertoire not a recipe' at the centre of our education and training.

Our institution is closely knit by size helping to create a community atmosphere where everyone is there to help, listen and provide advice when needed.

The idea of space where students might dwell on their learning, values and developing identities is something that is cherished at St Mary's through its emphasis on reflective practice. At the heart of such provision of the third space is the ability to listen people into speech (Palmer, 2000). Palmer also identifies the provision of space as a criterion for a good learning experience. He maintains that learning and teaching spaces should be: hospitable but charged; a provision for whole group and individual voices; supportive of solitude; able to create a sense of community; welcoming of both silence and speech (2000, 16). Such space is needed for reflection and the ITT provision encourages students to reflect on their own personal core values. This reflective practice is encouraged throughout the modules, in assessment for and of learning and is a central theme running through Master's provision. For some this will mean reflecting on their Christian faith and values and the significance of these for and in public practice.

## Christian Values

As noted, St Mary's is underpinned by four distinctive core values which are: inclusiveness; generosity of spirit; respect; and excellence. These are painted in the main reception and on the wall of the refectory, so to be noted by all and staff wear them printed on their lanyards. Being institutionally contextualised and expressed in a Christian context they take on a faith-based hue but still, an all-important question becomes whether they are: rhetoric or reality; merely expressed or evident; laminated or lived. The integrity of the university mission statement (in its four core values) is tested through 'fidelity in practice and not just in public rhetoric' (Grace 2002:432), taking it beyond 'an exercise in marketing' (Grace 2013). At interview, all candidates for academic roles are expected to understand how the Christian values underpin practice and the general ethos of the university and many postgraduate students at interview maintain that they have chosen St Mary's because of its Catholic identity.

The spirit of the place is emphasised in the Christian vision for the University, which maintains that 'Since 1850 our mission has been to provide high quality academic and professional education, inspired by our Catholic ethos and values' (Undergraduate Prospectus, p1). The Vision 2025 document reinforces this by stating, 'We are an inclusive Catholic University seeking to develop the whole person and we empower our community to have a positive impact on the world' (p6). Whether Catholic or otherwise many teaching colleagues are willing to support the vision of the university:



‘The ‘values’ of St Mary’s are what makes the university distinctive - being human, knowing your flaws and accepting them and not being afraid to make mistakes; students come first; wanting to serve the children; there is no room for a blame culture in a Catholic university; forgiveness’ (Tutor interview response).

What follows are specific ways that the four main institutional values are embodied at St Mary’s; with a sample of responses from the data evidencing expression of these core values in practice:

**Inclusiveness** – this translates to celebrating difference, including different faiths and worldviews, recognising that everyone is born with a unique identity. Such inclusion means developing a setting where students and staff can reach their potential and make a positive contribution to society irrespective of whether they are practising Christians or not;

Catholicity is there if you need it but not forced upon you and you don’t feel an outcast if you are not Catholic (Student interview response);

As a Christian foundation a place is provided for expression of these virtues but that does not mean that they need to be Christian themselves but it allows for a common language and freedom to express faith and values (Tutor interview response);

St Mary’s students who practised a non-Christian faith did not feel threatened by the school’s Christian ethos, i.e. having been welcomed by the St Mary’s community, they felt secure enough to practise their own faith in a different faith community, whilst still being supportive of the school’s Christian ethos (School Partner interview response).

This data indicates that the Christian distinctiveness is evident and all are welcome through the concept of hospitality. Inclusion is therefore lived and modelled. It is vital that the ITT provision includes an emphasis on inclusion in practice as the student teachers need to model this in school or as one student puts it: ‘A good teacher should be accepting – so children don’t feel they have to fit in a box and can be accepted for who they are’.

**Generosity of Spirit** – this is evidenced through the encouragement, collegiality, empathy, helpfulness and service found across the university. A mark of this is seen in following Christ’s example of servanthood;

Lecturers and academic tutors are very helpful and supportive, feel that we are cared for and more welcoming than other universities visited, staff really happy, starting from the induction day (Student interview response);

SMU is a ‘genuine partnership’ and I value the honesty that comes with that. For example, Link Tutors showed respect for the opinions of the CTM, there was no feeling of hierarchy (Partnership Head interview response).

It is not clear whether these positive responses are derived from a secular concept of a caring, collegial community or a Christian theological concept where the values that underpin the community arise from the teachings of Christ and his model of servanthood: 'based on a philosophy of service, which has love at its foundation' (Punnachet 2009:122). The staff providing this valued support are not necessarily Christian but may have embraced an ethos that reflects the Christian foundation of the university with, as noted, 88% of the university staff responding that they 'feel positive about working with an institution which has a Christian foundation or are 'proud about this institution's Christian foundation'. Generosity of spirit is evidenced through time spent in tutorials with those who are struggling in some way or the ability to share thinking and ideas in order to work collaboratively on projects. It is also experienced in the small and normal things of university life and in the relationships that are built across disciplines for the benefit of all so that academic colleagues do not work in silos.

**Respect** –the embodiment of this value helps to build a place where everybody is respected, and all opinions are valued. From a Christian perspective this is because all are made in God's likeness. In ITT respect is a value that students need to replicate in school with their pupils.

Small seminar groups allow us to all feel involved and get to know each other. Helps to be able to talk things through in smaller groups – helps confidence, personal approach – teachers know us by name' (Student interview response);

Regardless of their own faith, having studied at St Mary's I feel that St Mary's students understood the expectations of a faith school. St Mary's students have been part of a Christian culture and ethos and as a result are comfortable with, respectful and ready to commit (and not afraid not to commit) to the school's ethos (Partnership interview response).

Respect is reflected in terms of the individual and their response, in turn to institutional distinctiveness.

**Excellence** – where high personal and institutional standards are set and maintained, and continuous improvement is sought in all practices and work.

Well prepared for going into school. Have lesson plans ready for each subject, Good subject knowledge – lecturers for specific subjects where they are experts, provide us with resources (Student interview response);

SMU students are better trained and more professional than other applicants. They have values and an understanding of vocation. When compared to trainees coming from School Direct route, they are more grounded. They have a strong foundation and greater depth of understanding (Partnership response).

Excellence is seen in the data in terms of academic rigour and professionalism.

## Evidence of distinctiveness

Academic colleagues, school partners and students expressed views that the Christian foundation of the university is evidenced implicitly through embodied values, coming from the staff and that this allowed for a shared ethos with other faiths. Interviewees maintained that the Christian distinctiveness was evident in a variety of other ways too. They felt that the layout and the architecture displayed this uniqueness through the centrality of the university Chapel and Chaplaincy both geographically and symbolically. Crosses situated across the campus act as evidence of the Christian faith. Opportunities for celebration of sacraments, worship and sacramental preparation of students are advertised through various posters around the campus whilst staff are also invited to take part in a week-long retreat led by religious visitors on a yearly basis. The presence of priests and nuns on the campus as well as photographs of Catholic spiritual leaders at the Main Reception remind visitors of the Catholic perspective of the place. The explicit distinctive Christian character is also made explicit through the Bible readings, prayers and hymns sung at graduation, in celebration of achievement.

Distinctiveness of provision was seen in the data in terms of: being part of a small community and hence, known as an individual; being a recipient of the personal tutor systems; taking part in the 'Get set for progress' programme and the 'wrap around' care; the importance of studying and preparing to teach the whole curriculum in school; teamwork and collaboration; and the way everyone in IIT understands the vocational nature of their roles – tutors and students alike. At present, the IIT takes place within SETL, the School of Education, Theology and Leadership. It is thought to be significant by some throughout the university that education and theology form one school. Historically, the Christian Church has been at the foundation and the heart of educational provision in this country and so this seems fitting in a place that seeks to retain and develop this reciprocal influence. One major way that the distinctiveness is realised in the IIT curriculum is through the enhanced RE provision for primary and secondary students for those wishing to teach in Christian schools and the provision of the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS).

Specific Religious Education provision: As well as offering CCRS, the accentuated provision of RE is characteristic of all IIT programmes. The need for 'enhanced provision for RE' is noted in the Outstanding and Distinctive Primary ITE Provision Handbook (2017, p.34). The comment that 'the distinct nature of the university promotes high quality RE' is noted in the document, The Place to Be (2017, p.84) ensuring that RE is central to all training.

Student-focused IIT prepares emergent teachers for flourishing careers in both faith and secular contexts, made possible through thriving partnerships with a wide and varied range of schools. The RE tutors are concerned that IIT St Mary's education students develop a strong religious literacy. It is therefore gratifying that colleagues from partnership schools noted that the St Mary's students evidence cultural bilingualism and theological literacy. At a time when RE is neglected in some Higher Education institutions, the subject holds a central focus in the training programmes of all IIT students as evidenced in the following.

Undergraduate provision includes:

- Year 1 – 5 sessions (whole cohort) of foundational RE;
- Year 2 – Elective modules in World Religions and Teaching in a Christian Context;
- Year 3 – Elective module in Pedagogies for RE, including opportunity during enhancement placement to further RE study;
- CCRS (from year 2 onwards) – comprising 8 modules, the first two of which are education based;
- Year 3 Research Project – some students choose to focus on RE;
- Work based route and other appropriate routes into teaching – RE provision.

Postgraduate (full time and part time) provision includes:

- 6 sessions of RE;
- CCRS – comprising 8 modules, the first two of which are education based;
- Some students choose RE as their focus for their second Master's position paper.

First year undergraduates study RE as part of a compulsory core module aimed at developing confidence in teaching and learning in humanities and ICT, leading students to consider the potential of RE as a vehicle for learning across the curriculum. Students develop knowledge of the aims and purposes of RE and are introduced to teaching resources such as religious artefacts and stories.

In the second and third year undergraduates are offered RE as an elective. There are two second year RE electives: 'World Religions' and 'Teaching in a Christian Context'. The elective modules aim to develop confidence in teaching and learning in RE, providing students with a solid foundation of concepts, attitudes, skills, knowledge and understanding within RE. In 'World Religions' students develop in-depth subject knowledge in the teaching of major world faiths. 'Teaching in a Christian Context' is designed for students considering teaching RE in church schools and provides an introduction to specific schemes of work and diocesan requirements for teaching and assessing the subject. The module provides opportunities to explore explicitly the distinctive role of the teacher within a Christian school and prepares students to appreciate the personal contribution they can make to the ethos of a Christian school

One university RE tutor noted:

From a Christian perspective: we talk to students in Year 2 RE Elective about modelling their ministry on Christ. This is also witnessed in how colleagues relate to each other, so students see this modelled for them at University.

Another highlighted the enhanced provision in the following:

Strong partnership and collaboration between schools and St Marys' ('school-led provision') and in-school teaching as part of electives, broad curriculum provision and more provision for RE than other institutions and tutors still hands on in school (Tutor response);

A student reflecting on the RE module for teaching in a Christian context maintained:

It prepares us for teaching in church schools, not just in RE but across the curriculum, promoting the development of spirituality and morality.

The third year undergraduate elective in RE allows students to build confidence and competence in embracing creative pedagogies in the teaching of RE and thus become leaders of the subject within schools. Students gain an understanding of pedagogical research in RE and develop a broad range of teaching and learning strategies to create a personal pedagogy that is based upon informed theoretical, conceptual frameworks. This sense of personalised pedagogy and philosophy of education is a particular theme that comes through much data as the students begin to appreciate their roles as critical thinkers, capable of building up their own identities as practitioners in the classroom.

As students note:

There is an emphasis on students developing their own teaching philosophy and staying true to that' and developing their 'own professional identity in the classroom.

Postgraduate students (full time and part time) and students on the Work Based Route receive six two-hour sessions of RE, providing them with a critical understanding of the importance, purpose and relevance of effective RE in the curriculum. Students examine concepts and themes within the context of the major world faiths and explore different pedagogies and conceptual frameworks.

Student evaluations at the end of RE modules comment on their increased confidence to teach RE. As noted, this is borne out from the Partnership interviews conducted for this research project where school partners referred to St Mary's students as 'theologically literate'. For Catholic schools CCRS was deemed very attractive as it provided students with a theological foundation. School head teachers also expressed concern about succession planning when recruiting for Catholic schools and CCRS is regarded as essential for leaders in Catholic schools (head teacher in group interview).

## What does a St Mary's teacher look like?

St Mary's students are viewed as being hardworking and reliable by the tutors and the lowest rating in the survey is associated with being a 'reasonable risk taker'. Tutors saw school experience, subject specific pedagogy and experience of inclusion and special needs as being the most essential aspects of the curriculum. They are confident that students will leave St Mary's as consummate professionals who are adaptable and flexible and who 'have a positive attitude and enthusiasm for learning – that is both their own and that of the pupils'.

Developing reflective practitioners who teach with compassion and hope featured often in tutors' survey responses. The hope is:

that trainees learn how to critically reflect on their own practice, and then having identified their own needs, know how to go about proactively addressing them.

Giving them the tools to enable them to become a resilient, flexible classroom practitioner who is self-reliant whilst also able to work professionally with others' and those that will be able 'to think critically and ask questions. Using reflection to improve practice.

This formation does not happen using didactic and transmissive pedagogies by teaching colleagues. It is nurtured through the use of constructivist approaches where 'trainees benefit most from discussion and shared understanding-building'. The use of dialogue is a strong element in the development of independent and critical thinkers and so in the undergraduate provision a module entitled 'Critical thinking' is included, where 'research informed practice is embedded into taught sessions and strong theory /practice links are made and trainees' ability to undertake research in school to support pupil progress'.

According to the survey data from tutors the success of this formation is brought about through:

strong partnerships with schools, strong support from university support systems such as Student Advice, support with academic work, group support, and working in learning communities established at the start of their programmes so that they can support one another.

It is also due to understanding about individualising provision and support:

ensuring that they have well trained school based and university based mentors who have a secure understanding of the standards required, and of how challenging some trainees find it to reach them whilst also understanding that some will get there more rapidly than others, but most will get there with the correct support.

St Mary's tutors are passionate about developing trainees who will be able to problematise and question the status quo and government policy that is not in the best interests of the child.

They seek to do this:

By offering different viewpoints based on evidence and research including from people who are researching topics themselves. For example, our behaviour provision goes beyond the behaviourist/assertive discipline of rules and rewards to look at humanist perspectives, approaches such as solution focused or restorative approaches.

We want them to question what they observe and hear. Schools are full of practices that may or may not be conducive to improved learning. We want students to question what they see, ask questions and research best practice during their placements and time at university.

From the survey findings it is apparent that schools are happy working with St Mary's students. This, they maintain, is due mainly to 'the university's commitment to high standards of academic evidence based professional development accompanied by the fact that the institution has a long tradition of effective teacher education/training'. Being punctual, hardworking and values based proved high on the ranking of characteristics observed in these students. 76% of school mentors would recommend taking students from St Marys.

The following screen shot shows the aspirations of the ITT provision in developing outstanding practitioners. It is taken from the ITT booklet, Outstanding and Distinctive Primary ITE Provision.

- promote passion in teaching and learning, underpinned and enriched by research and scholarship;
- provide a culture which promotes integrity, nurture, challenge, partnership and colaboration allowing all the trainees to develop their physical, intellectual and spiritual potential;
- foster equality of opportunity for all with respect to diversity, inclusion and individual need;
- guide and support trainees to meet the professional attributes, knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to meet the Teaching Standards (2011) for entry into the teaching profession;
- offer special provision for those intending to teach in Catholic and other Christian schools;
- develop newly qualified teachers who are confident in subject and pedagogical knowledge and who are ready to meet the challenges of today and to anticipate and shape those of tomorrow;
- develop critically reflective practitioners who are committed to their continual professional learning;
- nurture teachers ready to meet the challenges of today and anticipate and shape those of tomorrow.

The following grid includes data that evidences what students and tutors at St Mary's say about being a good teacher and how the university fares in such formation

The characteristics of a good teacher from students' interview responses	What a St Mary's teacher looks like from University tutor's survey and interview responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Someone who strives to improve, is well prepared, reflective, adaptable, relational, inspirational, someone who makes a difference</li> <li>• Developing the whole child – for different experiences, not just tests, emotional wellbeing, how to connect with others socially, being resilient, how to be kind to others</li> <li>• Be positive and approachable so children can enjoy learning</li> <li>• Create a sense of security so children feel safe to try things and learn and be able to make mistakes, persevere and have confidence in themselves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Values based – they know what is important to them personally and professionally, which defines their pedagogy</li> <li>• Tenacious – we insist on outstanding</li> <li>• Team players because of how course is taught</li> <li>• Enthusiasm and commitment to learning</li> <li>• Willing to go the extra mile (as modelled by their tutors)</li> <li>• Reflective e.g. personal assessment sheet, Masters modules</li> <li>• Resilient</li> </ul>

It can be deduced from various data presented in this case study that St Mary's is interested in developing the whole person as a pedagogue and a graduate teacher as an all - rounded professional. A few years ago, the previous St Mary's Vice Chancellor stood in the quadrangle at the heart of the campus. He summed up St Mary's vision and mission from this position, from which you can see the Chapel, the library and if you peer beyond, the Sir Mo Farah running track. He spoke about St Mary's offering its students a holistic education concerned with nurturing the whole person as soul, mind, and body and he linked this geographical view, metaphorically. It is therefore pleasing to see that university tutors see this holistic approach as 'the opportunity to learn together, peer review and discuss and to understand the need for 'whole child' teaching, not mere preparation'.

This case study would seem to evidence that St Mary's values are lived in the experience of those at the university and beyond in partnership schools and that the distinctiveness of the university is also evident. It is recognised that St Mary's is far from perfect and that sometimes it experiences itself in terms of a mission drift (Grace 2013) and a living contradiction (Whitehead 1989) when its values are not lived in practice. However, it appears that the university's Christian values and distinctiveness are more reality than rhetoric, more lived rather than purely laminated and evident in its ethos.



Throughout the discussion of values there has been room for both a secular and a 'prophetic' interpretation (Walsh 1993:5), 'where secular realities are simultaneously respected for what they are and placed in a wider theological context'. The wider theological context is based in the Christian foundation of St Mary's and the evidence suggests that this allows for diversity and inclusion. Cardinal Basil Hume explained this juxtaposition of independence and interdependence within an institutional setting, describing individuals "as missionaries to each other for the values that are really important to each one of us" (Hume 2007:79). The evidence suggests that the strength of the community and the relationships within it prevent the values from being purely subjective. There is a common understanding formed by the community of the Christian foundation these core values represent. The challenge for St Mary's future will be how it retains its distinctiveness and values-base in the face of increased marketisation, secularism and consumerism. Time alone will tell.

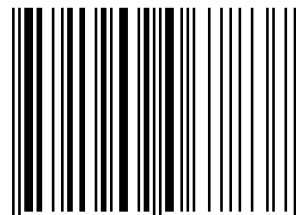
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