

Prospectus

2021/22



The
Shepherd's
Academy

*Equipping
Christian Leaders
for Christ-Like
Ministry in Today's
World*

A part of the **Oxford Centre for Religion
and Public Life (OCRPL)**.

From Our Executive Director

As Christianity grows in the global south, we find ourselves in a significant historic moment that is unprecedented in the history of Christianity as a world religion.

In many countries across the global south, Christianity is young and Christians exist as a minority in the midst of other majority religions and are largely persecuted.

In such a context, equipping the Church and her leadership becomes crucial. Moreover, robust, contextual, Biblical, and practical ministerial training is scarce, often expensive and requires time away from family and ministry. Many new Christians find themselves as church leaders as soon as six months after their own salvation experience.

Considering this need and gap, the Shepherd's Academy has been developed to support individuals in this position with the provision of

quality ministerial training through distance education that is affordable and attainable.

As well as this, many governments are now requiring church leaders to have formal theological degrees. Our programme aims to meet this challenge by providing a recognised degree through proper validation and accreditation that will meet the stringent educational requirements on church leaders.

It is our sincere effort and prayer that through The Shepherd's Academy, we would be able to address this upcoming challenge before it devolves into a crisis, and that the leadership of the Church will be properly trained in their role, to be shepherds of their flock.

Dr Patrick Sookhdeo
Executive Director
The Oxford Centre for Religion and Public Life

“We find ourselves in a significant historic moment that is unprecedented in the history of Christianity as a world religion.”



Our Philosophy

The concept of The Shepherd's Academy is based on the life and ministry of Jesus Christ as presented in the Gospels. Jesus calls himself the Good Shepherd (John 10:11-18) who **leads**, **provides**, **cares**, **protects**, **multiplies**, **trains**, and **understands** His sheep.

Our programme, content, and learning outcomes are modelled after these seven characteristics of the Good Shepherd.

As church leaders and disciples of Jesus, we are called to follow in his example and become 'shepherds of the flock' or church (1 Peter 5:2-4). In order to be faithful and qualified shepherds, we must lead our churches in the same way Jesus leads us.

We want to journey along with you, as the learner, and broaden your existing understanding of Biblical knowledge and relate this to social, spiritual, emotional, financial, managerial, national and global issues.

In other words, the programme enables you to do ministry in, for and through your context.

Leading towards Mentoring, Modelling, Instructing, Prophetic Engagement, Discipline and Servant Leadership.

Providing with Spiritual Nourishment and Biblical Applied Knowledge.

Caring for Holistic Development and Transformation.

Protecting from Internal and External Challenges.

Multipling through Discipleship, Evangelism and Mission.

Training with life skills for Church, Society and Nation.

Understanding the Bible, Church, Culture and Context.

Who are we?

The Shepherd's Academy is a part of the Oxford Centre for Religion and Public Life (OCRPL).*

The Shepherd's Academy seeks to work with existing institutions, networks, and churches to deliver training programmes that address the gaps in theological training for grassroots Christian leaders.

Recent statistics show that there are over two million untrained church leaders in the Global South. In light of increasing persecution and marginalisation, equipping the Church and her leadership becomes crucial. Furthermore, Covid-19 has had devastating effects on the state of theological education across the world. Within such a context, it is essential that we ask ourselves how we can best support and train those who are most in need.

Our goal and vision is to see grass-roots church leaders equipped with the necessary tools they need to faithfully and effectively lead in their churches and communities.

**Affordable.
Accessible.
Academic.
Applied.**

Interested in finding out more?

Contact us.

info@shepherds.academy
<http://shepherds.academy/>

Who is this for?

If you are an existing or aspiring grassroots church leader with no formal theological training, then this programme has been designed for you.

Typically, our learners will fit into one or more of these categories:

- Full-time church leaders who are unable to train in a residential set-up.
- Lay leaders and elders who cannot afford traditional theological training, both in terms of finance and time.
- Missionaries and Evangelists who would like to enhance their understanding while in ministry.
- New converts who have had to 'step-up' into church leadership and have limited access to theological education.

*<https://www.ocrpl.org/>

STUDYING WITH US

How does it work?

Our modular courses are delivered through a blended learning approach with online material developed by subject experts, peer group learning under a qualified mentor, and weekly **tutorial meetings**.

Our courses are hosted on an online Learning Management System (LMS). Instead of lectures, you will read **self-study** lessons for each week and then discuss what you have learnt in a guided tutorial. **Assessments** will vary with each course, but aim to encourage practical action and reflection.

These informed **peer-to-peer discussions** will encourage critical and self-reflective thinking, and enable effective application within your specific contexts.

‘Learning’ is achieved when you take action and put into practice what you have been taught, not merely when you recall facts in an exam.

Self-study and Reflections.

You will complete the required self-study material, take the quiz and reflect on the discussion questions at your own pace throughout the week. This will enable you to continue working within your church and community.

Tutorials.

Following the online discussion and self-study, you will attend a weekly tutorial with other learners. These tutorials will be led by a trained tutor and will be an opportunity for you to discuss the content, ask questions, and apply and reflect what you have learnt. This will be made possible through regional and local ‘hubs’ or ‘study centres’.

Assessments.

Our courses will have different kinds of assessments dependent on the type of course. For us, ‘learning’ is achieved when you take action and put into the practice the things you have been taught, not merely when you recall facts in an exam. Our assessments are based around this model of learning.

A Programme Designed For You.

We recognise that each learner will have different requirements. As such, **we offer a nested programme that flows at three progressive levels**, that is, a learner moves from achieving credits for a Certificate in Ministry to a Diploma, and finally, is able to achieve a Bachelor's degree.

This means you have the freedom to either complete a **Certificate** level, or a **Diploma** level, or go all the way to finish a **Bachelor's Degree** by successfully completing the requirements of the entire programme.

A full-time learner can complete each level of the programme in one year, thus completing the entire Bachelor programme in about 3 years. If done part-time, the entire programme can take about 6-9 years depending on the requirements at each level.

Programme Design. Our programme is structured around five key clusters which are essential in ministry training:

- Bible, Culture and Context (BCC)
- Christian History and Missions for Multiplying (CHMM)
- Christian Theology and Ethics (CTE)
- Religions, Ideologies and Persecution (RIP)
- Christian Ministry and Management (CMM)



We want to hear from you.

If you are interested in any of our programmes please contact info@shepherds.academy

OUR COURSES

Certificate

Our Certificate level (Level 1 of the Bachelors Degree) is for all those who are engaged in or preparing for ministry. It provides a robust, foundation understanding of the Bible, Mission, Theology, and Ministry. Learners will cover a range of core courses which relate to church leadership, as well as having the opportunity to choose a variety of specialist courses.

These courses are designed for practical engagement with your church and community context. Throughout these courses you will be given the opportunity to apply your learning in your church and community context.

You will need to complete a total of 40 Credits or a minimum of 12 Courses.

Full-time (1 year). 32-36 hrs/week

Part-time (2 years). 16-18 hrs/week

Diploma

The Diploma (Level 2 of the Bachelors Degree) builds on the Certificate by providing a more rigorous understanding of key areas in Christian Ministry.

This programme will give you the opportunity to grow in your understanding of the Bible and theology, alongside developing an greater awareness of your cultural and religious contexts. This will enable you to engage in more effective public witness.

You will need to complete a total of 40 Credits or a minimum of 12 Courses, in addition to completing the Certificate Programme.

Full-time (1 year + Certificate). 32-36 hrs/week

Part-time (2 years + Certificate). 16-18 hrs/week

Bachelors

The Bachelors (Level 3 of the Bachelors Degree) provide in-depth training for those in Christian ministry and leadership. It offers a variety of specialised courses which will equip you in the practical elements of ministry, such as engaging in community transformation and development, ensuring financial sustainability, utilising media and technology, and more. There will also be the opportunity to complete your own research project on a topic of your choice.

You will need to complete a total of 40 Credits or a minimum of 12 Courses, in addition to completing the Certificate and Diploma Programmes.

Full-time (1 year + Diploma). 32-36 hrs/week

Part-time (2 years + Diploma). 16-18 hrs/week

Specialised Programmes

Alongside our certificate, diploma, and bachelors programme we offer **stand-alone courses** or **refresher courses** for those wishing to enhance their existing ministry training. These courses are also available for theological institutions to use for filling gaps in their existing curriculum.

We are developing **Specialised Streams** of courses, such as “Bible and Hermeneutics”, “History and Missions”, “Religions and Ideologies”, “Theology and Ethics”, and “Christian Ministry and Management”. These streams will be composed of 3-4 courses and will be awarded a certificate from the Oxford Centre for Religion and Public Life.

For our full list of courses please contact info@shepherds.academy

“Our goal and vision is to see grass roots church leaders equipped with the necessary tools they need to faithfully and effectively lead in their churches and communities.”

Joining Our Learning Community

A Global Community

Our programmes are designed for you to be equipped and empowered for ministry in your local church and community. Becoming a learner in The Shepherd's Academy connects you with a **global learning community**.

Engaging with this community provides an opportunity for you to step outside of your context and engage with others in a unique and expansive learning experience.

Fees

In order to maintain affordability, our learners pay for each course they take as they progress through the programme. Our programmes are non-residential.

Each credit costs \$7 USD. This means a full (4 credit) course is around \$28 USD; a half (2 credit) course is around \$14 USD. In total, each level of the programme is 40 credits or \$280 USD.

Bursaries and scholarships are available for those most in need, especially for those already involved in Christian ministry and pastoral work. There are further provisions made for those taking multiple courses.

How to Apply

Whatever educational background or experience you have, we want our programmes to be accessible for you.

If you would like to find out more about our courses or how to apply, please find our online application form: <https://shepherds.academy/apply-online.html>.

Our programmes will launch in June 2021, and we will be starting cohorts throughout the year. Once you have completed the application form, we will be in touch with further details.

Accreditation

We are currently working towards programme accreditation with a number of accreditation bodies and universities to provide degrees such as: Bachelor of Theology; Bachelor of Ministry; BA in Christian Studies.

Many governments are now requiring church leaders to have formal theological degrees. As such, our priority is to meet this challenge by attaining a recognised degree through proper validation and accreditation.

For Partners

Our vision is to partner with churches and institutions to provide training or grassroots Christian leaders that is affordable, applied and accessible.

We are looking for partners who will help us deliver and promote our programme regionally alongside their existing training programmes. For theological institutions this will mean the opportunity to expand their student base and programmes; for churches, this will mean affordable and contextual training for their church leaders.

There are several ways in which we could partner together.

- **Individuals** who could run tutorial groups, or provide translation services.
- **Churches** and **church networks** who have pastors in need of training and would like to partner with us in training.
- **Theological Institutions** who are able to host and run our programmes; or who want to use some of our courses to address gaps in their existing curriculum.

We would be delighted to begin a conversation with you.

Please complete this form (<https://forms.gle/qkAzmuSBBtdNQ7DT9>) or contact info@shepherds.academy.

“The Shepherd's Academy seeks to work with existing institutions, networks, and churches to deliver training programmes that address the gaps in theological training for grassroots Christian leaders.”



Contact us.

Email. info@shepherds.academy

Website. <http://shepherds.academy/>