



The  
**Shepherd's**  
Academy

# Prospectus 2022/23

Equipping Christian Leaders for Christ-Like Ministry in Today's World  
*The Oxford Centre for Religion and Public Life*



# 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.

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.

**Professor Patrick Sookhdeo PhD, DD**  
***Executive Director – 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 help transform learners into the image and character of the Good Shepherd. Through our courses, you will begin a journey of holistic transformation which will shape your head, heart and hands.

**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 the undergraduate wing of **The Oxford Centre for Religion and Public Life (OCRPL)**.

OCRPL exists to advance a global understanding of religion in public life and to educate people through degrees at all levels for contextual Christian ministry and service.

The Shepherd's Academy fits within this vision by equipping Christian leaders for Christ-like ministry in today's world. Our goal is to see grassroots church leaders equipped with the necessary tools they need lead in their churches and communities faithfully and effectively.

In partnership with existing theological institutions and churches, we provide transformative training programmes for all Christian ministers and leaders, particularly those who have no previous formal theological training.

# Our Values

We have four key values which shape our programmes:

**Accessible** – we seek to bring theological education into the homes and churches of Christians through providing online courses which transcend the typical boundaries of residential training in a language and form that is fitting for the complex contexts of Christians across the world today.

**Affordable** – we seek to provide theological training which is affordable, in terms of both time and finances for Christians who otherwise would not be able to participate in training.

**Applicable** – we seek to provide theological training which goes beyond head knowledge, but affects the hearts and hands of the learners. Our programmes seek to be transformative by encouraging learners to develop into the image of the Good Shepherd. Our programmes seek to be practical by enabling learners to apply their learning directly to the contexts and communities around them.

**Accredited** – we seek to offer quality theological education which meets the standards of accreditation bodies and Higher Education providers globally.

## “Equipping Christian Leaders for Christ-like Ministry in Today's World”

Interested in finding out more? Contact us: [info@shepherds.academy](mailto:info@shepherds.academy) | [shepherds.academy](https://shepherds.academy)





A man in a dark suit and white shirt is seated at a table, looking down with a thoughtful expression. His hands are clasped in front of him. A laptop is open on the table to his left. The background features a large window with a grid pattern and a brick wall. The entire image has a teal color overlay.

**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.

## Self-study and Reflection

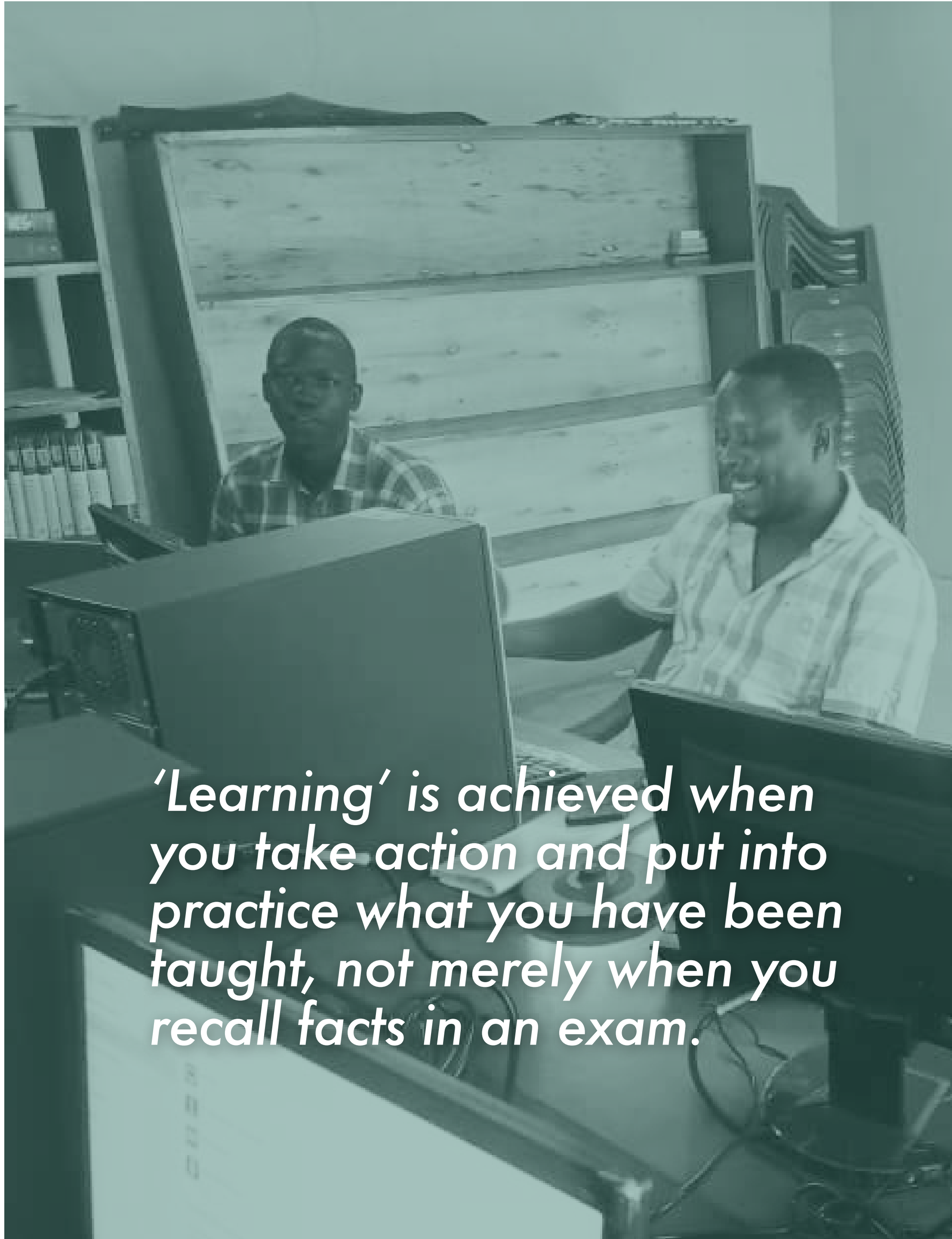
You will complete the required self-study material, take the quiz and reflect on the discussion questions at your own pace throughout the week. This will enable you to continue working within your church and community.

## 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 photograph of two men in a computer lab. One man is standing and looking at a computer monitor, while the other is sitting at a desk, also looking at a monitor. There are several computer monitors and desks visible in the background.

*'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.*



# A Programme Designed For You

We have designed the programme to fit around your work and daily life.

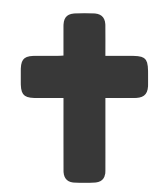
We provide a 'nested programme' that flows at three progressive levels. As you complete the requirements for the Certificate programme (Level One), you can choose to finish your studies or continue to the Diploma programme (Level Two). Once you complete the Diploma requirements, you can again choose to finish your studies or continue to achieve a Bachelors degree (Level Three).

## Programme Design

At each level, you will take a variety of core and elective courses from five key subject areas which are essential for ministry training.



**Bible, Culture and Context** – this cluster provides you with an understanding of the Bible in relation to your culture and context. It will cover specific books of the Bible, and provide skills to interpret and apply Scripture to the various areas of your ministry.



**Christian Theology and Ethics** – this cluster provides you with an understanding of key theological and ethical issues. It will allow you to acquire knowledge and develop skills necessary to lead and instruct your church and community.



**Christian History and Missions** – this cluster provides you with an understanding regarding Christian mission and history. It encourages you to engage with the wider context of global Christianity and relate your own experiences to this context.



**Religions, Ideologies and Persecution** – this cluster provides you with practical skills and knowledge to navigate your various religious-cultural contexts. It will give you tools to respond faithfully to the challenges of other religions, world-views and persecution.



**Christian Ministry and Management** – this cluster provides you with an awareness and understanding of the key areas and skills required for effective ministry. It will give you the knowledge and skills to engage in community transformation and achieve long-term sustainability for your church.

**We want to hear from you.**

If you are interested in any of our programmes please contact [info@shepherds.academy](mailto:info@shepherds.academy)





# OUR COURSES



# Certificate

The Certificate programme is designed for all those who are engaged in or preparing for Christian ministry. It provides a foundational understanding of the Bible, mission, theology and ministry. You will cover a range of core courses which relate to church leadership, as well as having the opportunity to choose a variety of courses. It provides key cognitive and practical skills and personal growth required for effective ministry and engagement with your local church and community context. It is comparable to an EQF Level 5 Short Programme.

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.

**Full-time** (1 year). Estimated 32-36 hrs/week.  
**Part-time** (2-3 years). Estimated 10-18 hrs/week

**Completion Requirements.** Completion of 60 ECTS credits or 12 courses, supervised ministry placements, and personal transformation and growth reports



# Diploma

The Diploma programme is designed for those who are already engaged in or beginning Christian ministry. It builds on the foundation of the Certificate programme by providing you with a rigorous understanding of the Bible and theology, alongside developing a greater awareness of your cultural and religious contexts.

It also provides you with key cognitive and practical skills required for practical engagement and further study. It is comparable to an EQF Level 5 Programme.

**Full-time** (2 years). Estimated 32-36 hrs/week.  
**Part-time** (3-4 years). Estimated 10-18 hrs/week

**Completion Requirements.** Completion of 120 ECTS credits or 24 courses, supervised ministry placements, and personal transformation and growth reports



# Bachelors

Building on the foundations provided in the Certificate and Diploma programmes, the Bachelor programme provides in-depth training for those who want to deepen their understanding of Christian ministry and leadership and develop their skills for professional practice. The core courses provide learning with advanced knowledge and understanding, and a variety of specialised courses are offered to equip learners further in the practical elements of ministry. There will also be the opportunity to complete a research or ministry project on a topic of the learner's choice. It is comparable to an EQF Level 6 Programme.

**Full-time** (3 years). Estimated 32-36 hrs/week  
**Part-time** (4-6 years). Estimated 10-18 hrs/week

**Completion Requirements.** Completion of 180 ECTS credits or 36 courses, supervised ministry placements, and personal transformation and growth reports





## Specialised Programmes



Alongside our Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor programmes 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 the successful candidates 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](mailto:info@shepherds.academy)**

*Our goal and vision is to see grassroots Church leaders equipped with the necessary tools they need to lead in their churches and communities faithfully and effectively.*



# 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 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.

Fees are set by your local study centres. For more details on fees please contact **info@shepherds.academy**.

Bursaries and scholarships may be available for those most in need, especially for those already involved in Christian ministry and pastoral work.

## 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, how to apply, or details regarding entry requirements, please contact us at **info@shepherds.academy** or find our online application on our website **www.shepherds.academy**

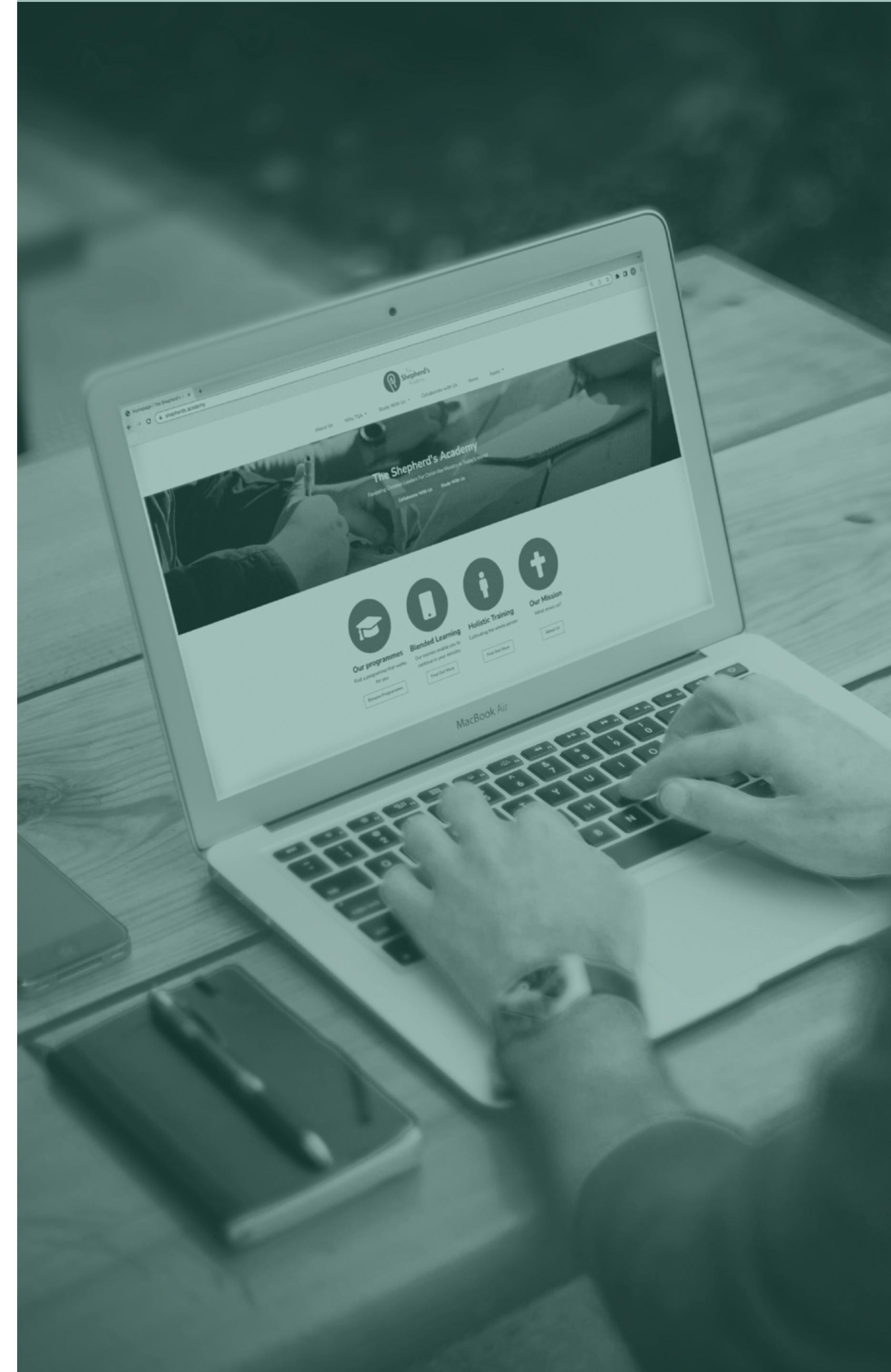
We will start cohorts at three points throughout 2023 in January, May and September. Applications are always open.

## Accreditation

We are working towards programme accreditation with accrediting bodies. We are members of ECTE (European Council for Theological Education).

## Our Study Centres

Each learner becomes part of a local study centre. These centres are located in existing theological training centres, organisations, or churches who share a mutual vision and desire to train grassroots Christians. These centres host tutorial sessions, provide internet connectivity, and offer learning support. They are key in providing theological training that is **relevant**, **contextual** and **applicable** to your life and ministry.






# Online Classroom

Students learn using a **bespoke online classroom**. This classroom is a Moodle-based Learning Management System (LMS), which contains self-study material, online discussion forums and interactive activities.

The online classroom can be accessed on both a laptop and mobile device. For mobile users, we have a **mobile app** which allows learners to download course content on their device and work offline. This provides added flexibility for those who have poor internet connectivity.

You can view and read the course material in a structured way each day, take weekly assessments of various kinds at your own pace, and communicate with your classmates through online discussions. This online learning is followed up by weekly tutorials that are guided by a trained tutor using discussion questions which are based on the learning outcomes for each week.

This online style of learning gives you the **freedom** to learn from your own home and church, and the **flexibility** to fit your learning around your life and ministry.

 Study Skills V.2

Course

Participants

Week 1

Lesson 1

Lesson 1 | Introduction to TSA

View

Go through the activity to the end

Last accessed activity

Discussion Forum

View

Make forum posts: 1

← Course Introdu...

Week 2 →

<

01

Attempt: 3

In this course, you will study the story of Jesus in the ‘**Synoptic Gospels**’ and the story of the Early Church in ‘**the Acts of the Apostles.**’

The ‘Synoptic Gospels’ are the first three Gospels – Matthew, Mark and Luke. They are called ‘Synoptic’ (which means ‘seeing together’) because they often tell the same story in the same way – using almost exactly the same words.

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## For Partners

Local churches and theological institutions across the world use our curriculum and online classroom to provide training for grassroots Christian leaders that is affordable, applied, accredited and accessible. We are looking for partners who will help us deliver and promote our programme regionally.


## There are several ways in which we could partner together

**Individuals** who could run tutorial groups, or provide translation services.

**Churches** who want to provide affordable and contextual training for their church leaders.

**Theological Institutions** who want to expand their student base and complement their residential programmes with an online programme.

If you wish to partner with us, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact us at **info@shepherds.academy** or visit **www.shepherds.academy**.



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





## Contact us.

**Email:** [info@shepherds.academy](mailto:info@shepherds.academy)

**Website:** [shepherds.academy](http://shepherds.academy)