

# **Rock of Ages or House of Cards?**

## **The future of the Cathedrals Group universities**

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## Introduction

This document brings together four research papers designed to assist building up a picture of the Cathedrals Group of church-related universities as they were at the start of the Covid pandemic.

Their original purpose was to form the backcloth for a final chapter of a book on the history of the church universities. However, an additional purpose evolved, which was to provide information and statistics to help those planning for the future of the institutions themselves. Accordingly, each piece of research has already been made available to the vice-chancellors and officers of the Cathedrals Group. The purpose of this document is to make the material more widely available to those who are more generally involved in supporting and planning for the future of the institutions and to those who have a responsibility for their foundational purposes.

The papers are as follows:

1. An examination of the legal articles of association of the universities from the perspective of their status as church-related institutions.
2. An assessment of their three bedrock activities of teacher training, academic learning, and theology and religious studies, using current statistics from the Higher Education Statistics Agency and the Office for Students.
3. A review of how the universities feature in the *Sunday Times Good Universities Guide*, with a particular focus on their social inclusion.
4. A review of how the universities feature in the 2021 Research Excellence Framework

As the research is restricted to England, the University of Wales Trinity St David, although a member of the Cathedrals Group, has not been included when the analysis has been related to overall national figures for England.

The texts of the four papers follow the summaries. They have been edited since originally distributed in earlier 2021 and brought together into this single document. However, they have been left largely in their original formats.

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## Summaries and key conclusions

### *Paper 1 : The Articles of Association of the Church Universities*

This paper examines the current [as at October 2021] articles of association of the universities and assesses the extent to which their articles require their church foundations to be acted out in their life and structures and to be retained should they be involved in any institutional reconfigurations.

The first section examines the articles by subject heading. These include their charitable objects, the composition of their governing bodies, any faith requirements for their vice chancellors, any rubrics relating to chaplaincy and worship, and their dissolution and winding up clauses. The second section examines the articles by university.

All three Roman Catholic universities are clear in their articles about their foundation. So, the majority of their governors must be Roman Catholics and their governing bodies must preserve and develop the university's Roman Catholic nature. If any were to be amalgamated, federated or closed, their church assets are protected.

The articles of the six freestanding Church of England universities range from including strong statements about their church identity to silence. Two state that they were founded as Church of England institutions and continue to be so. A third says it is designated as having a Church of England character, a fourth that it is developing such a character and a fifth that it will operate 'in accordance with the principles of the Church of England' although in none of these three latter cases are the character or the principles defined. The sixth university says very little.

The dual mode Roman Catholic and Church of England university includes a strong statement about its aims as a Christian foundation. In three of the four universities which were mergers of Church of England colleges with secular ones, references to the Church of England in their objects are of a weaker nature. In the fourth, which is collegiate, the Church of England college has its own statements.

In three of the six freestanding Church of England universities and in two of the five mixed mode ones, their dissolution and winding up clauses offer explicit protection for the church's assets. In the other six, there is no such protection.

Whether or not church governors are in a majority could well matter in the future. In only one of the freestanding Church of England universities would they definitely be so, in two they could be and in the other three they would not be. At the joint church university, the combined church

governors would be in a clear majority, at three of the other four mixed mode ones they would be in a minority and at the fourth there are no church governors.

***There is an issue especially for the foundation governors of the Church of England universities: are their articles sufficiently robust to protect their foundation and its purposes and its assets, should their university enter into any partnership arrangements with others?***

## ***Paper 2: Rock of Ages or House of Cards?***

This paper assesses the three bedrock activities of the Cathedrals Group [CG] universities, namely teacher training, academic learning, and theology and religious studies, using current statistics from the Higher Education Statistics Agency and the Office for Students.

### ***Education:***

- ***19% of all GC students are studying education - 13% training to be teachers and 6% following other courses in education.***
- There is a sharp contrast between the continuing strength in the CG universities of initial teacher education and an overall decline, which was steep in the last year, in the number of students taking other education courses.

### ***Academic subjects***

- ***50% of all the CG students are studying what are currently being deemed as the ten lowest value subjects.*** The proportion varies considerably across the CG universities from 17% to 74%.

### ***Implications for the CG universities***

- Any restructuring of teacher education which diminishes the role of universities will have very serious negative implications.
- A significant hole in student recruitment could arise if the current definition of subject value takes hold.
- A national challenge to the current definition of subject value is needed.

***Theology and religious studies [TRS]*** This section sets CG TRS within the wider national picture of TRS. Of particular note is the growth of the ‘alternative providers’ who account for 44% of all TRS undergraduates. These are mainly the bible and other Christian colleges.

### ***Paper 3: By design or Default? The Social Inclusion of the Church Universities***

This paper analyses the relative positions of the church universities as reflected in the metrics used in the *Sunday Times Good University Guide 2021*. There are tables giving:

- Overall university ranking and ranking by individual measures
- Subject ranking by university
- Detailed ranking by individual measures for Education and for Theology/Religious Studies
- There are also two appendices. One uses figures from the recently published *Sunday Times Good University Guide 2022* to update the first table and to present a new table on the Pandemic Impact and a second appendix presents figures on gender balance.

***Social inclusion emerges as a strong feature of the Church universities reflecting their foundations and values.*** They are recruiting significantly from a relatively small pool of students many of whom have modest entry standards. Many are also from deprived areas, are mature students, have a working-class background, are from state schools and are the first generation of their family to attend university. The universities also score particularly well on their admission of students with disabilities. As a result, the sector's overall social inclusion ranking is high.

***However, there is a downside to being socially inclusive*** in that it has negatively affected rankings for entry standards, application levels, completion rates and graduate prospects as measured by salary levels.

The extent to which the church universities can maintain their strong level of social inclusion will depend on the extent to which government is prepared to recognise the value of diversity within the university sector. Its Office for Students has identified two core themes for its regulatory work – quality and standards, and equality of opportunity. In trying to balance these two themes it will be interesting to see how it manages to avoid a seesaw effect.

Whilst being socially inclusive reflects the foundations and values of the church universities, the extent to which it is a conscious operational choice is not clear. ***Are the universities socially inclusive by design? Or is it a default position*** resulting from them entering the university sector at the eleventh hour and so having little choice as to which subjects to expand into and which tariff-levels of students they can recruit?

#### ***Paper 4: Cathedrals Group universities in the 2021 Research Excellence Framework***

This paper analyses the relative positions of the church universities as reflected in the 2021 Research Excellence Framework.

In terms of overall ranking 2021, Roehampton at 51<sup>st</sup> is in the second quartile, Canterbury and St Mary's Twickenham at joint 92<sup>nd</sup> are in the third quartile and the other 12 are in the fourth quartile.

There are the two subjects historically most associated with the church universities. In education, Roehampton is in the first quartile at 19<sup>th</sup>, Canterbury is in the second at 41<sup>st</sup>, 5 are in the third quartile and 6 in the fourth quartile. In theology and religious studies, Chester is the second quartile at 14<sup>th</sup>, 4 are in the third quartile and 8 in the fourth quartile.

The overall rankings from the 2008 and 2014 REF are given for comparison purposes. The average ranking for the CG universities as a group has hardly changed in the 13year period from 2008 to 2021.

Of the total 138 subject submissions made to the REF by the 15 Cathedrals Group universities, 2 (1.5%) such submissions were ranked in the first quartile of the relevant subject area, 6 (4.5%) in the second, 32 (23%) in the third and 98 (71%) in the fourth quartile.

There are questions as to the level of significance which the research rankings should be accorded by the Church universities and the amount of human and financial resourcing which should be given to enhancing research standing. For instance, the Guardian says it focuses its student guides "on the things that matter most to students, such as good teaching and job prospects, rather than basing them on academic research".

# **Paper 1: The Articles of Association of the Church Universities**

## **Summary**

This report examines the legal Articles of Association of the fifteen church universities in the Cathedrals Group and assesses the extent to which their articles would protect their church foundations in the event of any future university sector reconfigurations.

All three Roman Catholic universities are clear in their articles about their Roman Catholic foundation. So, the majority of their governors must be Roman Catholics and their governing bodies must preserve and develop the university's Roman Catholic nature. If any were to be reconfigured their church assets are protected.

The articles of the six freestanding Church of England universities range from including strong statements about their Church identity to silence. Two state that they were founded as Church of England institutions and continue to be so. A third says it is designated as having a Church of England character, a fourth that it is developing such a character and a fifth that it will operate 'in accordance with the principles of the Church of England' although in none of these three latter cases are the character or the principles defined. The sixth says very little.

The dual mode Roman Catholic and Church of England university includes a strong statement about its aims as a Christian foundation. In three of the four universities which were mergers of Church of England colleges with secular ones, references to the Church of England in their objects are of a weaker nature. In the fourth, which is collegiate, the Church of England college has its own statements.

In three of the six freestanding Church of England universities and in two of the five mixed mode ones, their dissolution and winding up clauses offer explicit protection for the church's assets. In the other six, there is no such protection.

Whether or not church governors are in a majority could well matter in the future. In only one of the freestanding Church of England universities would they definitely be so, in two they could be and in the other three they would not be. At the joint church university, the combined church governors would be in a clear majority, at three of the other four mixed mode ones they would be in a minority and at the fourth there are no church governors.

In the 1970s, when the Church of England lost half its colleges, the college trust deeds were strong enough to protect their historic assets. Today those assets of around £76 million underpin a wide range of educational work undertaken by the twelve Church College Trusts.

The Church of England, through its national and diocesan boards of education and foundation governors, has also been particularly successful in developing its schools and in protecting its educational assets there. If a church school closes its assets are normally recycled back into supporting other church schools. When church schools have been grouped with others into academies, the church's educational influence has rarely diminished and usually grown.

However, should there be institutional changes in the higher education landscape, the Church of England's foundations and assets within the university sector are potentially vulnerable.

## **Introduction**

This report is based on research which examines the current articles of association of the Cathedrals Group of church-related universities and the extent to which the articles require their Christian foundation to be acted out in their life and structures and to be retained should there be any institutional restructurings.

There is also an immediate issue especially for the foundation governors of the church universities: are their articles sufficiently robust to protect their foundation, its purposes and its assets, should their university enter into any partnership arrangements with others? If they are not robust enough, might not this be the right time to revise them before it is too late?

The report does not attempt to examine how effective the universities are as church foundations, for such a study would require a different set of methodologies. In principle a church university could have very robust elements in its articles relating to its church foundation and yet display very little of this in its operational life. Conversely a university could be acting out its church foundation in very effective ways despite there being very little requiring it to do so in its articles.

All the universities are registered charities and as such one of their key legal documents is the articles of association which sets out the charity's purpose and rules. This includes its charitable purposes (objects), what it can do to carry out its purposes (powers), who runs it, how meetings are to be held and the how the trustees are appointed, how the trustees can change the governing document (amendment provisions) and how to close a charity (winding-up and dissolution provisions).

Rather like insurance policies, the articles often lie unread until an event such as the appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor or chaplain sends governors rushing back to the articles to remind themselves of what stipulations are made in them. Why therefore examine them now? It is almost certain that the further and higher education landscape post-Covid will not look the same as it looks now. Mergers, federations, joint

working agreements and even closures are all possibilities. A recent report from the Institute for Fiscal Studies<sup>1</sup> warns of several risks to university finances including pension deficits, reduced income from accommodation, conferences and catering, and further income loss if too many students drop out. A recent Times Higher headline read *Forty English universities in financial difficulty*.<sup>2</sup> Financial necessity is likely to be a significant driver of institutional reconfigurations.

Once discussions involving a church university with other institutions begin, however informal and under the radar these discussions might be, the question arises as to the basis on which a church university is able to form an association with another institution. At this point what is written or is not written down in the articles becomes crucial. Hence this report.

## **Methodology**

In terms of methodology, the most recent articles of each of the universities were obtained directly from their websites and were then examined and any statements relating to the university's role as a church foundation were noted and extracted. These statements were then recorded by topic and by university.

The relevant quotations from the articles, along with summaries of them, are available as Appendix 2 by subject heading and in Appendix 3 by university. These summaries form the basis of this report. Inevitably there is a duplication of material as a result of presenting it both by generic heading and by individual university, but this is done so that readers can select what is most relevant to their interests and concerns. Given the length of these appendices, they have not been attached to this document but they can be obtained directly from the author.

Although the articles generally cover the same topics, as required by the Charity Commission, there is a considerable diversity in how they are expressed and the order in which they occur. For instance, whilst one might expect the sections relating to 'dissolution and winding up' to appear at the end of the articles, in half of the cases they are near the beginning. At the time of being drafted no doubt there was an internal logic to them, but it is not always one which is immediately apparent to an external reader.

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<sup>1</sup> The Institute for Fiscal Studies, *2020 annual report on education spending in England*, November 2020

<sup>2</sup> Times Higher Education, *Forty English universities in financial difficulty*, 10 December 2020 pp 6.

Of the fifteen universities in the Cathedrals Group, seven are directly accountable to the Charity Commission, seven are exempt charities accountable to the Office for Students and one has a royal charter. See Appendix 1 for further details. For the purpose of this analysis, the Cathedrals Group universities are grouped as follows:

Roman Catholic universities

- Leeds Trinity
- Newman Birmingham
- St Mary's Twickenham

Freestanding Church of England universities

- Bishop Grosseteste Lincoln
- Canterbury Christ Church
- Chester
- Plymouth Marjon
- Winchester
- York St John

Dual mode university [Roman Catholic and Church of England]

- Liverpool Hope

Dual/multi mode universities [church and secular]

- Chichester
- Cumbria
- Gloucestershire
- Roehampton and Whitelands College
- Wales, Trinity Saint David

Although the University of Wales, Trinity Saint David is a member of the Cathedrals Group, its context within Wales is significantly different, being linked educationally to the Welsh Assembly and historically to the Church in Wales. It has not, therefore, been included in the running analysis although there is a synopsis on page 30 of its relationship to the church given in its royal charter.

## **Analysis of the Articles by Subject Heading**

### **Charitable objects**

The objects are what the charity is set up to achieve. Normally these would not include the charity's motive or ethos unless it meant the charitable purpose would be carried out in a particular way. The example the Charity Commission gives of the purpose being carried out in a particular way is 'in accordance with Christian principles.'

### ***Roman Catholic universities***

All three universities make it clear in their objects that they are Roman Catholic universities.

### ***Freestanding Church of England universities***

The objects of the six freestanding Church of England universities range from strong statements about their Church of England identity to silence. Canterbury and Chester are the two Church of England universities which state that they were founded as Church of England institutions and that they continue to be so. Bishop Grosseteste Lincoln says it is designated as having 'a Church of England character' and Plymouth Marjon states it will operate 'in accordance with the principles of the Church of England' although in neither case are the principles or the character defined. Although York St John does not have any reference to its Church of England foundation in its objects, it does have a linked paragraph about furthering its objects through developing its Church of England character deriving from its predecessor institution and ensuring the position of Christian belief and worship within the university. There is virtually nothing in Winchester's objects to suggest it is a Church of England university.

### ***Dual mode universities***

As the only dual mode Roman Catholic and Church of England university it is not surprising that one of Liverpool Hope's three objects is a very strong statement about its aims as a Christian foundation.

The other three dual mode universities were mergers of Church of England colleges with secular ones and so the references to the Church of England in their objects are inevitably of a weaker and more general nature. Whilst there is nothing explicit in Chichester's objects, the first

power refers to having regard to the traditions of Bishop Otter College which was the Church of England college merged with the LEA Bognor College to form the West Sussex Institute of HE which subsequently became Chichester University.

When Cumbria was formed, it included within it one of the Church of England's two newest colleges, St Martin's Lancaster, and so the objects included reflecting the influence of the church on the activities and work of the university. Gloucestershire included the already merged two evangelical colleges of St Mary's and St Paul's Cheltenham and so its objects require it to reflect and show in its activities its evangelical Church of England foundation.

### **Charitable powers**

The section on charitable powers normally sets out what the university can do to achieve its purposes. There is considerable variation from a minimum of three to a maximum of forty-two in how many powers are listed and what they relate to but there is normally a statement which makes it clear that they can do anything else to promote the objects as long as it is lawful.

### **Company limited by guarantee**

As well as being charitable trusts, all the universities apart from Chester are also companies limited by guarantee. As such they have members of the company. In the cases of Bishop Grosseteste Lincoln, Chichester, Gloucestershire, Leeds Trinity, Newman Birmingham, Plymouth Marjon, Roehampton, Winchester and York St John all the governors of the university are also members of their company. Canterbury Christ Church, Cumbria, Liverpool Hope and St Mary's Twickenham have slightly different or more complex arrangements which are given below.

#### *Canterbury Christ Church*

The university governors are ex officio company members and the maximum number of members is twenty-two. There is a quorum for general or annual general meetings of eight of which at least four have to be Church of England governors. If there is a proposal to alter any of the Church of England provisions listed in article 127, then the quorum must include the authorised representative of the Archbishops' Council. If the representative opposes a change then the vote which s/he casts 'shall be deemed to be equal to the number of the aggregate of the votes cast in favour of such resolution'. The Archbishops' Council, therefore, is the custodian of the Church of England nature of the university.

### *Cumbria*

The members of the company are all the university directors along with the Archbishops' Council. There are specific requirements relating both to the role of the Archbishops' Council and to its so-called 'golden vote' which cannot be altered.

### *Liverpool Hope*

The core membership of the company are the Roman Catholic trustees of Christ's and Notre Dame and the Church of England Limited Company called Warrington Training College Incorporated. Other charitable bodies with similar objects can become members if the others agree. The Vice-Chancellor and University Secretary are invited to attend all meetings in a non-voting capacity. The Company Chair is the Chair of the University Governing Council who is also the Pro-Chancellor.

### *St Mary's Twickenham*

The membership of the company is different to most of the other universities in that it is small and essentially managed by the Archbishop and the Director of the Catholic Education Service who are the two core members. Each may nominate up to two members who can be but are not required to be individuals whom they have already nominated as university governors. Any member can be removed by special resolution if their continued membership 'is not beneficial to the university'. This does not apply to the two core members who cannot be removed. The articles can only be changed with the consent of the Privy Council, if such consent is required by law, and of the Catholic Education Council.

## **The Governing body**

It is the governing body that is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the objects, for which the university was established and within which it operates, are effectively carried out. Therefore, for a church foundation university it is important that the composition of the governing body is such that it is willing and able to undertake this responsibility.

### *Roman Catholic universities*

The membership of the governing bodies of the three Roman Catholic universities have been carefully structured to ensure that there will always be a majority of Roman Catholic members. Furthermore, all three governing bodies have a duty, which cannot be delegated, to preserve and develop the Roman Catholic character and mission of their university.

### *Freestanding Church of England universities*

At Bishop Grosseteste Lincoln, out of a Council size of between sixteen and twenty-two, there are six members who are specifically church ones – the bishop or representative, the Vice-Chancellor and four appointed by the Bishop’s Council of Diocesan Trustees. There are a further six to twelve members who are appointed by the council itself and two staff and two student representatives any of which might be highly supportive of the church foundation. The Council as a whole has an explicit responsibility for ‘preserving and developing the character of the institution as a Church of England University’ and they are exhorted to ‘conduct themselves in such a manner that will not prejudice or undermine the ethos and character of the institution as a Church of England foundation, whilst upholding the principles of academic freedom.’

The size of Canterbury Christ Church’s governing body is between eighteen and twenty-one members of whom at least ten have to be members of the Church of England. This will include the four nominative members and at least six of the co-opted ones. Any of these who subsequently cease to be a member of the Church of England are required to ‘vacate his office’ as a governor.

The majority of Chester’s twenty-three governors have to be practising Christians and of these the majority have to be communicant members of the Church of England. Should any cease to be such, they are required to cease being a council member. The Bishop and Dean of Chester are both ex officio members, although each can appoint a deputy to take their place. The Vice-Chancellor is also an ex officio member and is required to be a practising Christian.

Plymouth Marjon has a governing body of up to nineteen members. Of these two are nominated by the National Society and four by the Diocese of Exeter’s Board of Education. Even with the Vice-Chancellor, practising members of the church could well be in a minority on the governing body. There is also a slightly curious statement that ‘Governors shall have due regard to promoting and upholding the objects of the university’. The phrase ‘due regard’ may appear somewhat weak considering that as charity trustees it is their prime duty and responsibility to uphold and promote their charity’s objects.

Winchester’s governing body can range between eighteen and twenty-five members. Nine are appointed by the Winchester Diocesan Synod. These include the Bishop of Winchester and the other eight have to be communicant members of the Church of England or of a church in communion with it and six have to be lay people. There are further, but not mandatory, stipulations in relation to experience in church-related further and higher education and in commercial, industrial, employment work and work in the professions. Two of the academic governors are the Vice-Chancellor who has to be a practising Christian and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor who has to be in sympathy with the aims and objectives of an Anglican foundation. Whether or not the church-related governors would be in a majority would depend on the actual size of the governing body at any one point in time.

York St John has a governing body of up to seventeen members. Of these, five would be deemed church governors: the Archbishop of York or his representative, a diocesan nominee, a nominee from the National Society Council and two members, recommended by a governors' committee, who have to be members of the Church of England or a church in communion with it. There is no faith requirement for the Vice-Chancellor.

Whilst for most of the time it probably does not matter as to whether or not the church governors are in a majority, there could well be occasions in the future when it would make a difference. According to the numerical make up, only Chester would definitely have a majority, Canterbury Christ Church most probably would and Winchester might well. Bishop Grosseteste Lincoln, Plymouth Marjon and York St John would not.

### ***Dual Foundation universities***

With the Archbishop, Bishop and Vice-Chancellor as ex officio, ten Church foundation members and a member from the Churches Together in the Merseyside Region, the governing body of Liverpool Hope can always guarantee a church majority even with a full governing body of twenty-five members.

At *Chichester* at least a quarter of all the governors should be ones recommended by the Church of England acting through the Residual Trustees of the old Bishop Otter College. This can include the Bishop of Chichester.

*Cumbria's* board of directors has a maximum membership of fifteen of which five are church directors including the Bishop of Carlisle or his nominee and one each appointed by the Bishop of Blackburn, the National Society, the Archbishops' Council and the Carlisle Diocesan Board of Education. The Chair or Vice Chair of the board has to be drawn from among the church directors.

There is no formal provision for church or evangelical representatives on Gloucestershire's governing body. At Roehampton each of the four college providing bodies can nominate two governors.

### **The Chancellor**

Canterbury Christ Church has the Archbishop of Canterbury as its Chancellor and Cumbria has the Archbishop of York, both appointments being on account of their office. The Bishop of Exeter is Patron of Plymouth Marjon and they also have a Chancellor. At Liverpool Hope the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool and Church of England Bishop of Liverpool are the Presidents of their company and the Chancellor must be a practising Christian. The other universities either do not have a Chancellor or, if they do, there is no faith requirement attached.

## **The Vice-Chancellor**

### ***Roman Catholic universities***

The Vice-Chancellors of Newman Birmingham and St Mary's Twickenham have to be Roman Catholics but there is no such faith requirement for the Vice-Chancellor of Leeds Trinity.

### ***Freestanding Church of England Universities***

The Vice-Chancellor of Bishop Grosseteste Lincoln has to be a 'actual communicant member' of the Church of England or of a church in communion with it. There is also a clear requirement that the Vice-Chancellor must 'be committed to the upholding of the charitable objectives of the University and its foundation', to 'preserving and developing the character of the University as a Church of England foundation', and 'to ensuring that the belief and worship of the Church of England shall have a significant part in the life of the University'. This is the strongest explicit set of requirements directly attached to any of the Vice-Chancellorships.

At Plymouth Marjon and Winchester the Vice-Chancellor is required to be a practising member of the Church of England or of a church in communion with the Church of England or of a church which is a member of the Churches Together in England (for Winchester) or in Britain and Ireland (for Plymouth Marjon).

At Chester the Vice-Chancellor has to be a practising member of a Church which is a member of the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, or its successor body. At Canterbury Christ Church the Vice-Chancellor has to be a practising Christian which is defined as a practising member of a Christian Church which is a member of Churches Together in Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

There is no faith requirement attached to the Vice-Chancellor's post at York St John. However, the Vice-Chancellor is 'invited by the Board to preserve and develop the character of the University deriving from the Church of England Foundation of the Predecessor Institution and to ensure that Christian belief and worship continue to have a significant part in the life and work of the University'. Whether the 'invitation' is to be interpreted as a requirement or as something the Vice-Chancellor can decline to accept, is not made clear.

### ***Dual foundation universities***

The faith requirement for the Vice-Chancellor's post at Liverpool Hope is very clear – a practising Roman Catholic or a practising and communicant member of the Church of England. There are explicit instructions relating to the procedures for the appointment and also a stipulation that the Vice-Chancellor has to remain a practising member and that if there is any doubt about whether or not this is the case, the relevant local bishop will decide.

At Chichester, whilst there is no faith requirement for the post, the Vice-Chancellor is expected to preserve and develop the traditions of the University deriving from its dual origins, including its 'Church foundation with a mission to widen participation in education.'

There is nothing relating to the church aspects of the dual foundations in the post specifications for the Vice-Chancellors of Cumbria, Gloucestershire or Roehampton.

### **Chaplaincy, Religious Worship and Instruction**

#### ***Roman Catholic universities***

Religious worship and instruction at Leeds Trinity and Newman Birmingham is to be in accordance with the 'doctrines, rites and practices of the Roman Catholic Church' and at St Mary's Twickenham in 'accordance with the teaching of the Catholic Church'. In all three cases, the local bishop is the final arbiter of Roman Catholic orthodoxy. The religious needs of those from other church and faith backgrounds are also recognised.

#### ***Freestanding Church of England universities***

The articles of Bishop Grosseteste Lincoln, Canterbury Christ Church and Chester all require the university to appoint a chaplain who is an ordained priest of the Church of England. Plymouth Marjon requires an ordained member of the Church of England – who could presumably be in either deacon's or priest's orders. The chaplains at Canterbury Christ Church and Plymouth Marjon are appointed directly by the governing body which implies a level of direct accountability to the governors as well as to the Vice-Chancellor.

The position at Bishop Grosseteste Lincoln is interesting in that it is the Chaplain's responsibility to ensure that the university provides the facilities for worship but the Vice-Chancellor's role is to ensure that 'the belief and worship of the Church of England shall have a significant part in the life of the University'.

There is no requirement in the articles of either Winchester or York St John for the appointment of a chaplain although in both cases there have always been chaplains appointed.

At Bishop Grosseteste Lincoln, Canterbury Christ Church, Plymouth Marjon and Winchester there is a requirement that there should be Church of England worship whereas at York St John the wider term Christian is used. Chester does not specify.

### ***Dual foundation universities***

Liverpool Hope has clear specifications relating to the appointments of both the Roman Catholic and Church of England chaplains and that there should be worship according to both traditions.

Chichester appoints a principal chaplain who has to be a priest of the Church of England or a church in communion with it, as does Cumbria and also Gloucestershire where the title is 'Chaplain of the University'. The articles of all three universities also require the provision of religious worship according to the 'doctrines, rites and practices' of the Church of England. It would appear that at each of the three, the provision of a Church of England chaplain and associated worship is a primary way of expressing one half of their dual nature.

### **Dissolution and winding up**

#### ***Roman Catholic universities***

All three universities make provision for reimbursing their original sponsors at a current market rate for their earlier financial contributions to the buildings. In all three cases the Catholic Education Service is one of the sponsors. Additionally, at Leeds Trinity it is the Sisters of the Cross and Passion and at Newman Birmingham it is the Trustees of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Birmingham. The reimbursements so made must then be used for charitable purposes. Any resources still remaining must then be transferred to one or more bodies with the same or similar objects. If it was the same objects it would be for Roman Catholic higher education.

### *Freestanding Church of England universities*

The winding up provisions at Bishop Grosseteste Lincoln are unusual in that there is a clear geographical limitation to the Diocese of Lincoln and also that the priority is first for the education of poor children and only secondly for poor adults which is a reverse of their role as a student focussed higher education university. Canterbury Christ Church's provisions would also enable resources currently invested in higher education to be re-allocated to schools' work. By contrast, Plymouth Marjon, whilst transferring its assets to the central Church of England [the National Society], states that they should be applied in particular for further and higher education.

Winchester and York St John do not suggest that their assets might be used to further the Church of England's higher education work and Chester has no winding up clauses in its instruments or articles.

### *Dual mode universities*

At Cumbria there is a reverter clause in its winding up section relating to the site of the old Church of England St Martin's College at Lancaster and the decision as to how the realised assets are to be used rests with the Archbishops' Council. Although the Council is required to consult the Archbishop of York and the national Board of Education and that the assets have to be used for charitable purposes, there is no requirement that they are to be used for education purposes generally or for higher education in particular.

Whilst the winding up rubrics of Liverpool Hope are wide and do not specify any particular requirements relating to church higher education, given the membership of their Company it is likely that they would be used in that area. Chichester similarly has no particular requirements relating to the old Church of England Bishop Otter College. Unless the residual trustees of the college have a reverter document, it is unlikely that any residual assets would be used for Church of England higher education.

As Roehampton is a collegial university as far as site ownership is concerned, the Church of England assets within the university are safeguarded by the trustees of Whitelands College. Although a very significant part of Gloucestershire's physical plant is made up of the old Church of England colleges of St Mary's and St Paul's Colleges, Cheltenham, there is nothing in the winding up articles suggesting any transfer back of their residual assets to the Church of England.

## **Analysis of the Articles by University**

### **Roman Catholic universities**

There is a significant similarity in the articles of the following three universities relating to their status and modus operandi as Roman Catholic universities. This is not surprising given that the Catholic Education Council/Service and the local bishop/archbishop are involved in all three.

#### ***Leeds Trinity***

The university is clear in its objects that it is a Roman Catholic university. All the other elements of the articles are both secondary and dependent on this first order statement.

The objects of Leeds Trinity ‘shall be the establishment, conduct and development of a Roman Catholic institution for the advancement of education for the benefit of the public’.

The members of its company limited by guarantee are all the members of its governing body. The membership of the governing body has been carefully structured to ensure that there will always be a majority of Roman Catholic members. Furthermore, the governing body has a duty, which cannot be delegated, to preserve and develop the Roman Catholic character and mission of the university. However, there is no faith requirement for the Vice-Chancellor.

Religious worship and instruction is to be in accordance with the ‘doctrines, rites and practices of the Roman Catholic Church’. The local bishop is the final arbiter of Roman Catholic orthodoxy. The religious needs of those from other church and faith backgrounds are also recognised.

There are no specific details about the requirements for chaplaincy because this is usually provided by the diocese to the university through priests, members of religious orders and others who will not normally be employees of the university.

The dissolution and winding up sections make provision for reimbursing the original sponsors, the Catholic Education Council and the Sisters of the Cross and Passion, at a current market rate for their earlier financial contributions to the buildings. The reimbursements so made must then be used for charitable purposes. Any resources still remaining must then be transferred to one or more bodies with the same or similar objects. If it was the same objects it would be for Roman Catholic higher education.

### ***Newman Birmingham***

The university is clear in its objects that it is a Roman Catholic university. All the other elements of the articles are both secondary and dependent on this first order statement.

The University's objects are the conduct of a Roman Catholic university for the advancement of education, learning and research for the benefit of the public.

The membership of the governing body has been carefully structured to ensure that there will always be a majority of Roman Catholic members. Furthermore, the governing body has a duty, which cannot be delegated, to preserve and develop the Roman Catholic character and mission of the university. The members of its company limited by guarantee are all the members of its governing body. The Vice-Chancellor has to be a Roman Catholic.

Religious worship and instruction is to be in accordance with the 'doctrines, rites and practices of the Roman Catholic Church'. The local bishop is the final arbiter of Roman Catholic orthodoxy. The religious needs of those from other church and faith backgrounds are also recognised.

There are no specific details about the requirements for chaplaincy because this is usually be provided by the diocese to the university through priests, members of religious orders and others who will not normally be employees of the university.

The dissolution and winding up sections make provision for reimbursing the original sponsors, the Catholic Education Council and the Trustees of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Birmingham, at a current market rate for their earlier financial contributions to the buildings. The reimbursements so made must then be used for charitable purposes. Any resources still remaining must then be transferred to one or more bodies with the same or similar objects. If it was the same objects it would be for Roman Catholic higher education.

### ***St Mary's Twickenham***

The university is clear in its objects that it is a Roman Catholic university. All the other elements of the articles are both secondary and dependent on this first order statement.

'The objects are to advance education, in such manner as befits a Catholic foundation, by:  
4.1.1 the provision, development and conduct of a Catholic institution of higher education; and

4.1.2 the provision of training and continuing professional development for teachers in both religious and secular schools, with special provision for those intending to teach in Catholic and other Christian schools mainly, but not exclusively, within England and Wales. Provided that the arbiter of what befits a Catholic foundation shall be the Chair (as defined in Article 1.1) of Governors where the Chair is a Catholic Bishop nominated by the Archbishop (as defined in Articles 1.1) and otherwise shall be the Archbishop’.

The membership of the company is different to most of the other universities in that it is small and essentially managed by the Archbishop and the Director of the Catholic Education Service who are the two core members. Each may nominate up to two members who can be but are not required to be individuals whom they have already nominated as university governors. Any of members can be removed by special resolution if their continued membership ‘is not beneficial to the university’. This does not apply to the two core members who cannot be removed. The articles can only be changed with the consent of the Privy Council, if such consent is required by law, and of the Catholic Education Council.

The membership of the governing body has been carefully structured to ensure that there will always be a majority of Roman Catholic members. Furthermore, the governing body has a duty, which cannot be delegated, to preserve and develop the Roman Catholic character and mission of the university. The Vice-Chancellor has to be a Roman Catholic.

Religious worship and instruction is to be in ‘accordance with the teaching of the Catholic Church.’ The local bishop is the final arbiter of Roman Catholic orthodoxy. The religious needs of those from other church and faith backgrounds are also recognised.

There are no specific details about the requirements for chaplaincy, presumably because this is usually provided by the diocese to the university through priests, members of religious orders and others who will not normally be employees of the university.

The dissolution and winding up sections make provision for reimbursing the original sponsor, the Catholic Education Council, at a current market rate for their earlier financial contributions to the buildings. The reimbursements so made must then be used for charitable purposes. Any resources still remaining must then be transferred to one or more bodies with the same or similar objects. If it was the same objects it would be for Roman Catholic higher education.

## **Freestanding Church of England universities**

### ***Bishop Grosseteste Lincoln***

The object is clear that the university ‘is to be designated as having a Church of England character’ and the preamble states that it is to be a Church of England university.

Out of a Council size of between sixteen and twenty-two, there are six members who are specifically church ones – the bishop or representative, the Vice-Chancellor and four appointed by the Bishop’s Council of Diocesan Trustees. There are a further six to twelve members who are appointed by the council itself and two staff and two student representatives any of which might be highly supportive of the church foundation. The members of its company are all the members of its governing body.

The Council as a whole has an explicit responsibility for ‘preserving and developing the character of the institution as a Church of England University’ and they are exhorted to ‘conduct themselves in such a manner that will not prejudice or undermine the ethos and character of the institution as a Church of England foundation, whilst upholding the principles of academic freedom’.

The Vice-Chancellor has to be a ‘actual communicant member’ of the Church of England or of a church in communion with it. There is also a clear requirement that the Vice-Chancellor must ‘be committed to the upholding of the charitable objectives of the University and its foundation’ to ‘preserving and developing the character of the University as a Church of England foundation’, and ‘to ensuring that the belief and worship of the Church of England shall have a significant part in the life of the University.’ This is the strongest explicit set of requirements directly attached to any of the Vice-Chancellorships.

The articles require the university to appoint a chaplain who is an ordained priest of the Church of England. The position is interesting in that it is the Chaplain’s responsibility to ensure that the university provides the facilities for worship but the Vice-Chancellor’s role to ensure that ‘the belief and worship of the Church of England shall have a significant part in the life of the University’.

The dissolution and winding up provisions are unusual in that there is a clear geographical limitation for the use of residual funds to the Diocese of Lincoln and also that the priority is first for the education of poor children and only secondly for poor adults which is a reverse of the its role as a student focussed higher education university.

### *Canterbury Christ Church*

Whilst there is no reference in its objects to its Church of England foundation, there is a strong statement under the heading of ‘Conduct’ which states that it was founded as a Church of England university and that it continues to be so.

The university governors are ex officio company members and the maximum number of members is twenty-two. There is a quorum for general or annual general meetings of eight of which at least four have to be Church of England governors. If there is a proposal to alter any of the Church of England provisions listed in article 127, then the quorum must include the authorised representative of the Archbishops’ Council. If the representative opposes a change, then the vote which s/he casts ‘shall be deemed to be equal to the number of the aggregate of the votes cast in favour of such resolution’. The Archbishops’ Council therefore is the custodian of the Church of England nature of the university.

The size of its governing body is between eighteen and twenty-one members of whom at least ten have to be members of the Church of England. This will include the four nominative members and at least six of the co-opted ones. Any of these who subsequently cease to be a member of the Church of England are required to ‘vacate his office’ as a governor. The Archbishop of Canterbury is its Chancellor on account of his office. The Vice-Chancellor is required to be a practising Christian.

The articles require the university to appoint a chaplain who is an ordained priest of the Church of England. The chaplain is appointed directly by the governing body which implies a level of direct accountability to the governors as well as to the Vice-Chancellor. There is also a requirement that Church of England worship should be provided but there is no requirement for any staff or students to take part in it.

Its dissolution and winding up provisions require any residual assets to be applied to charitable objects connected with the educational work of the Church of England to be determined by the Archbishops’ Council after consultation with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Church of England’s Board of Education. This wider scope provision would enable resources currently invested in higher education to be re-allocated to schools’ work.

### *Chester*

The university is unusual in separating its governing documents into a set of Articles and an Instrument both dated 2020. Furthermore, the layout and content are such that a direct comparison with those of other church universities is somewhat difficult. In particular, there is no explicit objects section. Instead, the main statements relating to it as a Church of England university are in section 4 of the Instrument and section 6.2 of the Articles under the heading of ‘academic freedom’ and are given below. These statements are clear that it is a Church of England university in nature and not just in name.

#### 4. Appointment of members of the Council

The Council shall be composed of Foundation and Non-Foundation Members. The Foundation Members shall form the majority of the Members of the Council in order that the established character of the University so far as is practicable is preserved and developed in accordance with the Trust Deed made in respect of the Institution by the Lord Bishop of Chester, the Lord Bishop of Manchester and the Reverend Chancellor Thurlow drawn on the 29th October 1870 as modified by the Scheme.

#### Conduct of Staff

##### 6.2 Academic Freedom

The University was originally established by law as a Diocesan Training School for the training of schoolmasters of the Church of England. The Trust Deed of the Institution, made by the Lord Bishop of Chester, the Lord Bishop of Manchester and the Reverend Chancellor Thurlow dated the 29th October 1870 as modified by the Scheme states that the trust fund must be applied for the benefit of the purpose of the training of schoolmasters of the Church of England.

Staff and Students are, therefore, reminded that they must at all times be aware of the ethos of the University in that it was established as a Church of England Institution and continues to be so. Consequently, and subject to section 43 of the Education (No. 2) Act 1986 regarding the freedom of speech in universities and other institutions, they must not undermine this ethos or the code of conduct and social values which are based on that ethos’.

The university is the only one which does not have a company limited by guarantee. Also, there are no dissolution and winding up clauses in the documents.

The majority of Chester’s twenty-three governors have to be practising Christians and of these the majority have to be communicant members of the Church of England. Should any cease to be such, they are required to cease being a Council member. The Bishop and Dean of Chester are both ex officio members, although each can appoint a deputy to take their place. The Vice-Chancellor is also ex officio and is required to be a practising Christian which is defined as a practising member of a Church which is a member of the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, or its successor body.

The articles require the university to appoint a chaplain who is an ordained priest of the Church of England. There are no requirements in the documents for there to be any worship.

### *Plymouth Marjon*

The university is clear in its objects that it is to be run ‘in accordance with the principles of the Church of England’ although no definitions are given as to what these principles are nor how the university’s operations might be assessed in relation to the principles.

The members of its company limited by guarantee are all the members of its governing body which has up to nineteen members. Of these two are nominated by the National Society and four by the Diocese of Exeter’s Board of Education. Even with the Vice-Chancellor, practising members of the church could well be in a minority on the governing body. There is also a slightly curious statement that “Governors shall have due regard to promoting and upholding the objects of the university.” The phrase ‘due regard’ could seem somewhat weak considering that as charity trustees it is their prime duty and responsibility to uphold and promote the objects.

The Vice-Chancellor is required to be a practising Christian which is defined as either a practising member of the Church of England, of a church in communion with the Church of England or of the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. The Bishop of Exeter is their Patron and can also be their Chancellor.

A chaplain is required who has to be an ordained member of the Church of England – who could presumably be in either deacon’s or priest’s orders. The appointment is made directly by the governing body which implies a level of direct accountability to the governors as well as to the Vice-Chancellor. There is a requirement that Church of England worship should be provided but there is no requirement for any staff or students to take part in it.

The dissolution and winding up provisions state that any net assets should be transferred to the National Society and applied in particular for higher and further education. There are also insurance clauses in the event of the National Society ceasing to exist. All decisions are subject to the approval of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

### *Winchester*

There is nothing in the university’s objects to require it to be a Church of England university.

Winchester’s governing body can range between eighteen and twenty-five members. Nine are appointed by the Winchester Diocesan Synod. These include the Bishop of Winchester and the other eight have to be communicant members of the Church of England or of a church in communion with it and six have to be lay people. There are further, but not mandatory, stipulations in relation to experience in church-related further and higher education and in commercial, industrial or employment work and work in the professions. Two of the academic governors are

the Vice-Chancellor who has to be a practising Christian and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor who has to be in sympathy with the aims and objectives of an Anglican foundation. Whether or not the church-related governors would be in a majority would depend on the actual size of the governing body at any one point in time.

There is no requirement in the articles for the appointment of a chaplain although normally there has been a chaplain appointed. There is a requirement that Church of England worship should be provided but there is no requirement for any staff or students to take part in it.

In their dissolution and winding up clauses there is no explicit suggestion that any residual assets might be used to further the Church of England's work generally in education or specifically in higher education.

### ***York St John***

Although the university does not have any reference to its Church of England foundation in its objects, it does have a linked paragraph about furthering its objects through developing its Church of England character deriving from its predecessor institution and ensuring the position of Christian belief and worship within the university.

The members of its company limited by guarantee are all the members of its governing body which consists of up to seventeen members. Of these, five would be deemed church governors: the Archbishop of York or his representative, a diocesan nominee, a nominee from the National Society Council and two members, recommended by a governors' committee, who have to be members of the Church of England or a church in communion with it. The Vice-Chancellor may or may not be a member of the Church of England.

There is no faith requirement attached to the Vice-Chancellor's post. However, the Vice-Chancellor is 'invited by the Board to preserve and develop the character of the University deriving from the Church of England Foundation of the Predecessor Institution and to ensure that Christian belief and worship continue to have a significant part in the life and work of the University'. Whether the 'invitation' is to be interpreted as a requirement or as something the Vice-Chancellor can decline to accept, is not made clear.

There is no requirement in the articles for the appointment of a chaplain although normally there has been a chaplain appointed. There is a requirement that Christian worship should be provided but there is no requirement for any staff or students to take part in it.

In their dissolution and winding up clauses there is no explicit suggestion that any residual assets might be used to further the Church of England's work generally in education or specifically in higher education.

## **Dual mode universities**

### ***Liverpool Hope***

The university governors are ex officio company members and the maximum number of members is twenty-two. There is a quorum for general or annual general meetings of eight of which at least four have to be Church of England governors. If there is a proposal to alter any of the Church of England provisions listed in article 127, then the quorum must include the authorised representative of the Archbishops' Council. If the representative opposes a change, then the vote which s/he casts 'shall be deemed to be equal to the number of the aggregate of the votes cast in favour of such resolution'. The Archbishops' Council therefore is the custodian of the Church of England aspect of the university's nature.

With the Archbishop, Bishop and Vice-Chancellor as ex officio, ten Church foundation members and a member from the Churches Together in the Merseyside Region, the governing body can always guarantee a church majority even with a full governing body of twenty-five members. The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool and Church of England Bishop of Liverpool are the Presidents of the company and the Chancellor has to be a practising Christian.

The faith requirement for the Vice-Chancellor's post is very clear – a practising Roman Catholic or a practising and communicant member of the Church of England. There are explicit instructions relating to the procedures for the appointment and also a stipulation that the Vice-Chancellor has to remain a practising member and that if there is any doubt about whether or not this is the case, the relevant local bishop will decide.

There are clear specifications relating to the appointments of both the Roman Catholic and Church of England chaplains and that there should be worship according to both traditions.

The dissolution and winding up rubrics are wide and do not specify any particular requirements relating to church higher education. However, given the membership of the university's company, it is likely that they would be used in that area.

### ***Chichester***

Whilst there is nothing explicit in the university's objects, the first power refers to having regard to the traditions of Bishop Otter College which was the Church of England college merged with the LEA Bognor College to form the West Sussex Institute of HE which subsequently became Chichester University.

The members of its company limited by guarantee are all the members of its governing body. At least a quarter of all the governors should be ones recommended by the Church of England acting through the Residual Trustees of the old Bishop Otter College. This can include the Bishop of Chichester.

Whilst there is no faith requirement for the post, the Vice-Chancellor is expected to preserve and develop the traditions of the university deriving from its dual origins, including its ‘Church foundation with a mission to widen participation in education.’

A principal chaplain has to be appointed who has to be a priest of the Church of England or a church in communion with it. There is also a requirement for the provision of religious worship according to the ‘doctrines, rites and practices’ of the Church of England. It would appear that the provision of a Church of England chaplain and associated worship is a key method for expressing the Anglican aspect of the university’s dual nature.

In the dissolution and winding up section there are no particular requirements relating to the old Church of England Bishop Otter College. Unless the residual trustees of the college have a reverter document, it is unlikely that any residual assets would be transferred back to the Church of England for its educational work.

### *Cumbria*

When Cumbria was formed, it included within it one of the Church of England’s newest colleges, St Martin’s Lancaster, and so the objects included reflecting the influence of the church on the activities and work of the university.

The members of the company are all the university directors along with the Archbishops’ Council. There are specific requirements relating both to the role of the Archbishops’ Council and to its so-called ‘golden vote’ which cannot be altered. Its board of directors has a maximum membership of fifteen of which five are church directors including the Bishop of Carlisle or his nominee and one each appointed by the Bishop of Blackburn, the National Society, the Archbishops’ Council and the Carlisle Diocesan Board of Education. Either the Chair or the Vice Chair of the board has to be drawn from among the church directors.

There is nothing relating to the church aspects of the dual foundation in the post specifications for the Vice-Chancellor. The Archbishop of York is its Chancellor, the appointment being on account of his office.

A chaplain has to be appointed who has to be a priest of the Church of England or a church in communion with it. There is also a requirement for the provision of religious worship according to the ‘doctrines, rites and practices’ of the Church of England. It would appear that the provision of a Church of England chaplain and associated worship is a key method for expressing the university’s dual nature.

There is a reverter clause in its dissolution and winding up section relating to the site of the old Church of England St Martin’s College at Lancaster. It is made clear that the decision as to how the realised assets are to be used rests with the Archbishops’ Council. Although the Council is required to consult the Archbishop of York and the national Board of Education and that the assets have to be used for charitable purposes, there is no requirement that they are to be used for education purposes generally or for higher education in particular.

### *Gloucestershire*

When the university was formed, it included the already merged two evangelical colleges of St Mary’s and St Paul’s Cheltenham and so its objects require it to reflect and show in its activities and work its evangelical Church of England foundation.

The members of its company limited by guarantee are all the members of its governing body. There is no formal provision for church or evangelical representatives on its governing body and there is nothing relating to the church aspects of the dual foundation in the post specifications for the Vice-Chancellor.

A chaplain has to be appointed, who is titled ‘Chaplain of the University’ who has to be a priest of the Church of England or a church in communion with it. There is also a requirement for the provision of religious worship according to the ‘doctrines, rites and practices’ of the Church of England. It would appear that the provision of a Church of England chaplain and associated worship is a key method for expressing the university’s dual nature.

Although a significant part of the university’s physical plant is made up of the old Church of England colleges of St Mary’s and St Paul’s, Cheltenham, there is nothing in the dissolution and winding up articles to suggest any transfer back of the residual assets from the sites and buildings of the two colleges to the Church of England.

### ***Roehampton***

The Church of England's involvement in Roehampton is primarily through Whitelands being one of the four constituent colleges within the university each of which can nominate two members of the university's governing body. There is nothing relating to the church aspects of the dual foundation in the specifications for the post of Vice-Chancellor.

Whitelands College is a charitable trust, separate from the university itself, and so as far as dissolution and winding up issues are concerned, Church of England assets are safeguarded by the trustees of the college.

### ***University of Wales, Trinity Saint David***

The university's original Royal Charter of 2010 includes reference in its objects to the example and influence of its Anglican Christian tradition as being an operational factor in its overall life but the 2012 Royal Charter places the Anglican element firmly in the past by stating that the objects shall have regard to 'the Anglican heritage of historical entities.'

There are no ex officio or externally nominated Anglican members and therefore there is no guaranteed formal Church representation on the university's governing body.

The role of the Bishop of St David's as the Visitor [unless s/he nominates an alternative] is to provide clarification on matters relating to the Anglican heritage of the University but only if requested to offer such advice by the Council. The Visitor is not empowered to offer any views or advice unsolicited.

A separate trust holds the residuary ownership of the Carmarthen site and buildings. Two trustees are nominated by the National Society, the original providers of the college. However, the trust has been deemed by the Charity Commission to be controlled by the university.

## Two contextual issues

### *Recent historical context*

Whilst history should not be used to hold institutions in the past, there are nevertheless helpful lessons which can sometimes be learnt. One of those undoubtedly is the Church of England's response to an earlier reconfiguration of higher education.

During the 1970s, when the possibility of Church colleges federating or merging with others began to be discussed, the Church of England established criteria for judging the viability of such possibilities.<sup>3</sup> Few difficulties were envisaged if the college was to merge with another Church of England college but mergers or federations with other denominational or local authority colleges were seen as less straightforward. A proposal to create a new voluntary institution merging Bishop Lonsdale College with the Derby College of Art and Technology brought the issue to a head. Inevitably both colleges would lose their separate identity and so continuity of function was seen as the defining issue. Four markers of continuity were devised, namely:

- i. There should be equal numbers of representatives of the church and the local education authority on the new body of trustees and on the governing body.
- ii. The new college will
  - a) provide courses of training for teachers;
  - b) provide courses in Christian theology within the Department of Religious Studies;
  - c) maintain substantial residential provision;
  - d) make arrangements for a chaplaincy, including at least one chaplain who is a priest of the Church of England.
- iii. The principal-designate shall be required to make a solemn declaration that
  - a) he/she will in the exercise of his/her duties have regard to the dual origin of the institution.
  - b) he/she will respect the special relationship of the institution to the Church of England recognising that it must always include the expression of Christian belief and worship.

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<sup>3</sup> The Church of England Board of Education, *The Future of the Church Colleges: continuity of function in mergers and federations*, 1974

iv. The Head of Teacher Education and the Warden of the Residential Accommodation on the Church of England College site shall be communicant members of the Church of England or a church in full communion with it.

There was also the question of financial grants given to the colleges in the 1960s by the then Church Assembly. Where a college was going into a federation or merger the status and future of the grant needed to be resolved, for a condition had been attached to the grants, namely that the property acquired through the grant should be used for the purpose of a church training college. In deciding whether a grant might be retained, three requirements had to be met, namely:

1. A majority of the members of the governing body (or of the trustees, where this is a separate body) continues to be appointed by an Anglican foundation or to be required to be communicant members of the Church of England;
2. All other requirements of the trust deed (or other governing instrument) pertaining to the Anglican nature of the college (including the appointment of an Anglican chaplain) continue to be fulfilled;
3. The college continues to provide or to have a responsibility for the training of teachers, with government financial support.

There was also a prudent recognition that a merged institution might not work out as hoped and so a withdrawal clause should be written into any future agreements allowing for withdrawal either by mutual consent or, in certain carefully defined circumstances, by unilateral action. However, it seems that such a clause was never included in subsequent agreements.

It is somewhat ironic, therefore, that all these carefully formulated provisions which were triggered by the possibility of the merger in Derby, whilst they formed a backcloth for those merger discussions, never found their way into the legal documentation. Instead, the 1977 merger, which in 1992 morphed into the University of Derby, was based substantially on informal agreements and has become a cautionary tale. There were some written guidelines, but much was done in good faith and little was included in the written documentation. Verbal understandings, however, rarely survive a change of personnel. And, not surprisingly, when a former Bishop of Coventry was sent in later by the Board of Education to investigate what had happened to the Church of England's assets and to the original understandings, he could find little of either. In 2006, the Bishop Lonsdale site was sold by the University to a developer for £8.6 million and as there was no reverter clause on the site, nothing came back to the Church of England.

All that is left of the church side of the original partnership between the two colleges is the right of the Bishop of Derby to recommend for consideration by the University Council the appointment of at least one Independent Governor. However, the Council is not obliged to accept the

recommendation and can ask the Bishop to make further recommendations until one is made that is acceptable to the Council.<sup>4</sup> At £8.6 million this may seem a rather expensive right.

Whilst they may not have safeguarded the Church of England's assets in Derby, the Board of Education's guidelines were to play a vital role in protecting the Church of England's assets several years later. Despite an initial wave of optimism at the start of the 1970s symbolized by the White Paper *Education: A Framework for Expansion 1972*, the decade in practice became the one in which the teacher training system underwent a massive upheaval and cutback. In 1970 there were twenty-five Anglican teacher training colleges in England and two in Wales. By 1980 the number had fallen to twelve in England and one in Wales.

Where a church college merged, federated or amalgamated with another institution a decision had to be taken as to whether the key aims and objects of the trust deed which undergirded the original college could be continued through the new institution. It was at this point that the Board's 1974 guidelines played a critical role in helping governors to decide. In the case of the seven church colleges which amalgamated with secular institutions, the resultant institutions were judged not to be in sufficient accord with the guidelines and the original trust deeds of the church colleges to enable a direct transfer of assets to take place. For the four colleges which closed outright there was no question as to the transfer of resources anyway. So, these eleven colleges were to become the closed church college trusts.

Each of the colleges was reconstituted as a free-standing educational trust. In terms of what each could do, the Charity Commission was to be the final arbiter. Certain key elements were considered essential. First the Anglican nature of the trust had to be highlighted. As the old colleges were Anglican, the Charity Commission insisted that this should be a crucial feature of the trusts' future work patterns. The trusts were required to look Anglican. Also, as the colleges had been institutions of higher and further education, this too was to be a determinant.

In financial resource terms, these Anglican trusts together have at their disposal a current annual income of around £3.16 million generated from an endowment capital of £67 million and total funds of £76 million. Had it not been for the robust guidance offered by the Board in 1974 and for the clarity of the trust deeds in making it clear that the colleges were Church of England ones, much of this asset could well have been lost to the Church of England's work in education.

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<sup>4</sup> University of Derby *Articles of Association* Oct 2020:

15.1 In recognition of the historical contribution of the Church of England to the University, at least one Independent Governor will be appointed by the Council following consideration of a recommendation for appointment by the Lord Bishop of Derby.

### *The role of foundation governors in school and university*

Church of England schools are a very successful and popular brand. A quarter of all primary schools and over 200 secondary schools are Church of England ones and approximately one million children are educated in them. It is the legal responsibility of the whole governing body for ensuring that their school or academy is conducted according to its Church of England trust deed and constitutional documents. However, the foundation governors, of which there are 22,500 across the country as a whole, have a particular responsibility for being the representatives of the founding church and of the trustees.

A hard edge is given to the Church of England nature of its schools by a statutory inspection process carried out in addition to the Ofsted inspections. It has one major inspection question “how effective is the school’s distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?”

A recent report from the National Secular Society<sup>5</sup> argues that academisation and the development of mixed multi-academy trusts has enabled religious groups, and in particular the Church of England, to increase their influence over schools including over those with no religious character. Two of the key findings are;

1. Almost half of all non-faith academies in multi-academy trusts, are in trusts with religious governance.
2. Seven in ten former voluntary controlled schools now in multi-academy trusts are in trusts where the majority of trustees are appointed on religious grounds. Previously in those schools such trustees were in a minority.

Whilst it may be difficult to quantify the exact amount of influence and control that the Church of England has gained as a result of academisation, what is clear is that it has not lost ground. The same, however, cannot be said for its role in higher education.

By contrast to the size of its school system, there are only eleven Church of England universities of which only six are freestanding ones. There are about seventy foundation governors in these universities. Yet despite their small number, the expectations on the foundation governors within the governing bodies of the universities relating to their church foundations are somewhat unclear and ill defined.

Two of the recommendations arising out of the national Anglican Identity Project<sup>6</sup> undertaken between 2011 and 2014 were:

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<sup>5</sup> National Secular Society, *Power grab: academisation and the threat to secular education*, 2020

<sup>6</sup> The Church of England Education Division, *The Anglican Identity of Church of England Higher Education Institutions, end of year one report*, 2012

1. A thorough review should be undertaken of all foundation documents. A review was undertaken of all the Articles of Association in 2013 as a final part of the research but the submitted review was never made available.

2. A suite of training materials should be produced relating to Anglican identity for all relevant personnel, including governors. Although most of this recommendation was not enacted as it was felt to be too broad a brief, a very thorough and valuable guide for church governors was produced by the Church of England's Education Office, *Making the most of our church universities: the role of foundation governors*, 2016.

Throughout the guide a careful balance is maintained between a foundation governor's general role as a governor and the specific role as having a responsibility for safeguarding the university's foundational mission. Whilst all governors "need to understand their role as guardians of the institution's mission which stems from its foundational documents" (pg 7), a particular contribution of foundation governors is to "assist the governing body to observe obligations arising from trust deeds, charity law and incorporation, especially relating to fulfilment of the university's charitable objects." (pg 15)

"A Church of England higher education institution will be an Anglican foundation, with its original trust deeds and foundational documents embodying this, along with any remaining endowments, such as lands, buildings or trust income. It is therefore of great importance that governors understand the foundation and its embodiment, notably as set out in its current Articles and Instruments of Governance, and associated documentation." (pg 10).

## **Conclusions**

The purpose of this report is to examine the legal Articles of Association of the fifteen church universities in the Cathedrals Group in order to assess the extent to which their church foundations would be safeguarded in the event of any institutional reconfigurations on the higher education landscape. Essentially the picture is a mixed one.

All three Roman Catholic universities are clear in their articles about their Roman Catholic foundation. So, the majority of their governors must be Roman Catholics and their governing bodies must preserve and develop the university's Roman Catholic nature. If any were to close their church assets are protected.

The articles of the dual mode Roman Catholic and Church of England university includes a strong statement about its aims as a Christian foundation.

The six freestanding Church of England universities range from including strong statements in their articles about their Church identity to silence. Two state that they were founded as Church of England institutions and continue to be so. A third says it is designated as having a Church of England character, a fourth that it is developing such a character and a fifth that it will operate 'in accordance with the principles of the Church of England' although in none of these three cases are the character or the principles defined. The sixth is virtually silent.

In three of the four universities which were mergers of Church of England colleges with secular ones, references to the Church of England in their objects are of a weaker nature. In the fourth, which is collegiate, the Church of England college has its own statements.

In three of the six freestanding Church of England universities and in two of the five mixed mode ones, their dissolution and winding up clauses offer explicit protection for the church's assets. In the other six, there is no such protection.

Whether or not church governors are in a majority could well matter in the future. In only one of the freestanding Church of England universities would they definitely be so, in two they could be and in the other three they would not be. At the joint church university, the combined church governors would be in a clear majority, at three of the other four mixed mode ones they would be in a minority and at the fourth there are no church governors.

In the 1970s, when the Church of England lost half its colleges, the college trust deeds were strong enough to protect their historic assets. Today those assets of around £76 million underpin a wide range of educational work undertaken by the twelve Church College Trusts.

The Church of England, through its national and diocesan boards of education and foundation governors, has also been particularly successful in developing its schools and in protecting its educational assets there. If a church school closes its assets are recycled back into supporting other church schools. When church schools have been grouped with others into academies, the church's educational influence has rarely diminished and usually grown.

However, in the event of institutional changes in the higher education landscape, Church of England foundations and assets within the university sector are potentially vulnerable.

## Appendix 1. Governing documents of the Cathedrals Group universities

The documents listed below were downloaded from the websites of the universities and used for this analysis. They were the ones currently available in October 2021.

<b>Bishop Grosseteste Lincoln:</b>	(CC) Articles January 2019
<b>Canterbury Christ Church:</b>	(CC) Articles June 2013
<b>Chester:</b>	(CC) Instrument and Articles September 2021
<b>Chichester:</b>	(ExC) Articles July 2020
<b>Cumbria:</b>	(ExC) Articles February 2016
<b>Gloucestershire:</b>	(ExC) Articles July 2021
<b>Leeds Trinity:</b>	(CC). Articles January 2013
<b>Liverpool Hope:</b>	(CC) Memorandum and Articles April 2005
<b>Plymouth Marjon:</b>	(ExC) Articles April 2016
<b>Newman Birmingham:</b>	(CC) Articles October 2019
<b>Roehampton:</b>	(ExC) Articles May 2021
<b>St Mary's Twickenham:</b>	(CC) Articles July 2016
<b>Wales TSD:</b>	Royal Supplemental Charter October 2012 Statutes of the University based on the Royal Charter of October 2012 Ordinances of the University January 2020

**Winchester:** (ExC) Articles March 2011

**York St John:** (ExC) Articles July 2019

ExC = Exempt charity, principal regulator is the Office for Students.

CC = Principal regulator is the Charity Commission

**Appendix 2. Articles by subject heading: summary and quotations**

**Appendix 3. Articles by university: summary and quotations**

Appendices 2 and 3, which together run to 100 pages, are not reproduced here but a copy can be obtained by emailing the author at [john.gay@education.ox.ac.uk](mailto:john.gay@education.ox.ac.uk)

## **Paper 2: Rock of Ages or House of Cards? The future of the Cathedrals Group universities**

### **Introduction**

This research has been undertaken for a book on the English Churches in Higher Education. An earlier paper examined, from the perspective of their status as church-related institutions, the current articles of association of the Cathedrals Group (CG) universities. This paper focusses on their three bedrock activities of teacher training, academic learning, and theology and religious studies, using current statistics from the Higher Education Statistics Agency and the Office for Students.

The paper has been written for a limited audience associated with the CG universities in order to help inform planning for the future. As the research is restricted to England, the University of Wales Trinity St David, although a member of the CG, has been excluded from the analysis. The tables below present the picture both for the CG universities overall and for the individual universities within the Group. The statistics also formed a backcloth for a recent article written for the Church Times on the challenges ahead – see Appendix 2. The headline figures are:

#### ***Education:***

- *19% of all GC students are studying education - 13% training to be teachers and 6% following other courses in education.*
- There is a sharp contrast between the continuing strength in the CG universities of initial teacher education and an overall decline, which was steep in the last year, in the number of students taking other education courses.

#### ***Academic subjects***

- *50% of all the CG students are studying what are currently being deemed as the ten lowest value subjects.* The proportion varies considerably across the CG universities from 17% to 74%.

#### ***Implications for the CG universities***

- Any restructuring of teacher education which diminishes the role of universities will have very serious negative implications.
- A significant hole in student recruitment could arise if the current definition of subject value takes hold.
- A national challenge to the current definition of subject value is needed which the CG universities collectively could lead.

***Theology and religious studies [TRS]*** This section sets CG TRS within the wider national picture of TRS. Of particular note is the growth of the ‘alternative providers’ who account for 44% of all TRS undergraduates. These are mainly bible and other Christian colleges [see Appendix 1].

## **Historical background**

The history of the Cathedrals Group universities goes back nearly 200 years. Originally founded as teacher training colleges to provide teachers for the burgeoning church school system during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they expanded their remit to include the new board and local authority schools of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Teacher education was their *raison d'être*.

Alongside professional training, a significant part of the education they provided was an academic one. All students studied at least one academic subject from a range covering the sciences, humanities and latterly the social sciences. Being church colleges, their students were also required to take courses in divinity, attend chapel services and live within an institutional ethos that was an explicitly Christian one.

Teacher training, academic learning and Christianity were the three bedrocks of the church colleges for 140 years.

The 1970s were a turning point for the colleges. By the end of the decade half of them had closed or been merged and the rest were required to grow and diversify. The glimmer of university status grew in the eyes of the surviving college principals. But diversification was not going to be easy – at least not into the academic subjects traditionally taught in the colleges. The sciences, mathematics, humanities such as English and history, modern languages and geography were already strongly established in the existing universities. Therefore, the colleges had to look to subjects such as art and design, media studies, business studies and the social sciences, which attracted less attention from the academic gatekeepers in the existing universities and the Council for National Academic Awards.

The one exception was theology and religious studies. By the 1970s many of the colleges had well-staffed TRS departments in keeping with their role as church institutions. As the new institutions evolved from the 1980s onwards, keeping a thriving TRS department was seen as a significant marker of continuity and was occasionally written into their constitutions. It was in effect a protected subject.

## **Education including initial teacher education**

The subject of education is divided into two by the Higher Education Statistics Agency [HESA]: initial teacher education and education as a wider academic subject which, in this paper, is termed 'other education'.

Tables 1 – 4 present the HESA figures for all education, for initial teacher education and for other education.

Abbreviations used in the tables can be found in Appendix 3.

**Table 1 Cathedrals Group Universities: Students on all Education courses**

	2014 - 15	2018 – 19	2019-20	% change 2014-15 to 2019-20	% change 2018-19 to 2019-20	All students 2019-20	Education students as % of all 2019-20 students
Bishop Grosseteste	1905	1630	1520	-20.2	-6.7	2280	66.7
Canterbury CC	3650	3775	3345	-8.4	-11.4	13340	25.1
Chester	1500	1530	1365	-9.0	-10.8	13545	10.1
Chichester	1110	750	650	-41.4	-13.3	5545	11.7
Cumbria	2480	1385	1475	-40.5	+6.5	7945	18.6
Gloucestershire	1400	975	800	-42.9	-17.9	7915	10.1
Plymouth Marjon	940	740	765	-18.6	+3.4	2750	27.8
Roehampton	1680	1510	1200	-28.6	-20.5	12495	9.6
Winchester	2485	1770	1600	-35.6	-9.6	8000	20.0
York St John	1160	960	780	-32.8	-18.8	7000	11.1
Liverpool Hope	2375	1790	1470	-38.1	-17.9	4985	29.5
Newman	1190	1185	1105	-7.1	-6.8	2795	39.5
St Mary's	1710	1625	1455	-14.9	-10.5	5520	26.4
Leeds Trinity	1665	1210	1050	-36.9	-13.2	4985	21.1
<b>All CG unis</b>	<b>25250</b>	<b>20835</b>	<b>18500</b>	<b>-26.7</b>	<b>-11.2</b>	<b>99100</b>	<b>18.7</b>
<b>All universities</b>	<b>131905</b>	<b>112280</b>	<b>101655</b>	<b>-22.9</b>	<b>-9.5</b>	<b>2076465</b>	<b>4.9</b>

*Commentary:* Education includes both students on initial teacher education courses and also those taking the subject as an academic course. The final two columns give the education students as a percentage of the total student population at the university.

19% of all CG students are studying education as opposed to only 5% at English universities as a whole. The CG range is from 10% to 67%.

There has been an overall decline of over a quarter in the last 5 years varying by university from 7% to 43%. In the final year 2018-19 to 2019-20 the decline has been 11% suggesting an acceleration of the decline process but varying across institutions from a 6.5% rise to a 20% decline.

**Table 2 Cathedrals Group universities: Students on Initial Teacher Education courses**

	2014 - 15	2018 – 19	2019 – 20	% change. 2014-15 to 2019-20	% change 2018-19 to 2019-20	All Students. 2019-20	ITE students as % of all 2019-20 students
Bishop Grosseteste	1045	895	900	-13.9	+0.6	2280	39.5
Canterbury CC	2645	2110	2195	-17.0	+4.0	13340	16.5
Chester	905	700	935	+3.3	+33.6	13545	6.9
Chichester	680	480	535	-21.3	+11.5	5545	9.6
Cumbria	2035	1055	1130	-44.5	+7.1	7945	14.2
Gloucestershire	665	490	515	-22.6	+5.1	7915	6.5
Plymouth Marjon	630	560	470	-25.4	-16.1	2750	17.1
Roehampton	830	665	805	-3.0	+21.1	12495	6.4
Winchester	1720	1115	1170	-32.0	+4.9	8000	14.6
York St John	755	580	585	-22.5	+0.9	7000	8.4
Liverpool Hope	775	1020	940	+21.3	-7.8	4985	18.9
Newman	525	545	535	+1.9	-1.8	2795	19.1
St Mary's	1055	1045	1280	+21.3	+22.5	5520	23.2
Leeds Trinity	800	710	760	-5.0	+7.0	4985	15.2
<b>All English CG unis</b>	<b>15065</b>	<b>11970</b>	<b>12755</b>	<b>-15.3</b>	<b>+6.6</b>	<b>99100</b>	<b>12.9</b>
<b>All English unis</b>	<b>59160</b>	<b>51195</b>	<b>50050</b>	<b>-15.4</b>	<b>-2.2</b>	<b>2076465</b>	<b>2.4</b>

*Commentary:* 13% of all students at the CG universities are training to be teachers as opposed to only 2.4% at English universities as a whole. The highest CG university percentages are a fifth at Liverpool Hope, Newman and St Mary's and two fifths at Bishop Grosseteste.

Between 2014-15 and 2019-20 the overall percentage of trainees fell by 15%. However, in the final year 2018-19 to 2019-20, whilst English universities as a whole continued to record a decline [2.2%] the CG universities recorded an overall increase of 6.6% with Roehampton and St Mary's recording an increase of just over 20% and Chester of 34% .

**Table 3 Cathedrals Group universities: Students on Other Education courses 2019-20**

	<b>All education</b>	<b>ITE</b>	<b>Other education</b>	<b>All students</b>	<b>% other education</b>
Bishop Grosseteste	1520	900	620	2280	27.2
Canterbury CC	3345	2195	1150	13340	8.6
Chester	1365	935	430	13545	3.2
Chichester	650	535	115	5545	2.1
Cumbria	1475	1130	345	7945	4.3
Gloucestershire	800	515	285	7915	3.6
Plymouth Marjon	765	470	295	2750	10.7
Roehampton	1200	805	395	12495	3.2
Winchester	1600	1170	430	8000	5.4
York St John	780	585	195	7000	2.8
Liverpool Hope	1470	940	530	4985	10.6
Newman	1105	535	570	2795	20.4
St Mary's	1455	1280	175	5520	3.2
Leeds Trinity	1050	760	290	4985	5.8
<b><i>All English CG unis</i></b>	<b><i>18500</i></b>	<b><i>12755</i></b>	<b><i>5745</i></b>	<b><i>99100</i></b>	<b><i>5.8</i></b>
<b>All English universities</b>	<b>101655</b>	<b>50050</b>	<b>51605</b>	<b>2076465</b>	<b>2.5</b>

**Commentary:** This table presents the numbers of students studying education as an academic subject – referred to as ‘other education’. The overall percentage for all CG universities is 5.8% as opposed to 2.5% for all English universities. The highest individual CG university percentages are 10% at Liverpool Hope and Plymouth Marjon, 20% at Newman and 27% at Bishop Grosseteste.

**Table 4 Education summary table**

	<b>Student numbers</b>			<b>Percentage change</b>	
	2014-15	2018-19	2019-20	2014-15 to 2019-20	2018-19 to 2019-20
<i>All education</i>	25250	20835	18500	-26.7	-11.2
<i>Initial teacher education</i>	15065	11970	12755	-15.3	+6.6
<i>Other education</i>	10185	8865	5745	-43.6	-35.2

**Commentary:** This table reveals a sharp contrast between the continuing strength in the CG universities of initial teacher education and an overall decline, which was steep in the last year, in the number of students taking other education courses.

## **Theology and religious studies**

### **Introduction**

A wide-ranging review of the provision of theology and religious studies [TRS] degrees in UK higher education institutions was undertaken by the British Academy and published in May 2019. This review is more restricted in scope as it is limited to England and its focus is on the involvement of the church-related universities.

The higher education institutions within which TRS is being studied, for the purposes of this analysis, have been grouped as follows:

1. The CG universities.
2. Cambridge, Durham, King's London and Oxford, being the four oldest universities and the ones historically most associated with the Church of England.
3. The alternative providers from within the Christian tradition which are normally either theological or bible colleges. The term 'alternative providers' is the one used by HESA.
4. The three alternative providers within the Islamic tradition.
5. The other universities which submit TRS returns to HESA.

### **Methodology**

All the statistics are taken from the HESA tables for the academic year 2019-20. The shortcomings of these statistics, already identified in the British Academy publication, include the non-submission of statistical returns particularly by a few of the alternative providers and by the increasing number of institutions which have no TRS department but provide some TRS teaching on mixed courses, and the occasional double counting where both an alternative provider and its validating university submit the same figures. Also, in a report in January 2021, the British Association for the Study of Religions challenged the way theology and religious studies are put together as if they were one subject and argued for a much stronger differentiation between the two.

All the numbers quoted in the tables are for the full-time equivalent number of students rather than for the actual number of students. For further details see the definitional sections on the HESA website. All figures are given to the nearest 5 and so totals do not always match the sum of the parts.

None of the Islamic or other Christian colleges had the power to award their own degrees in 2019-20 and so all their degree level courses were validated by partner universities. An attempt was made to identify the validating university for each of these colleges through the websites of the colleges themselves. However, several of the colleges were either validated by two or more universities depending upon the courses being offered or the information was not readily discoverable and so the attempt has been left in the pending tray.

There is also a particular issue relating to the University of Durham's Common Awards Scheme which validates, in particular, the Church of England's ministerial training courses. Durham's website identifies 19 'theological education institutions' which are validated by this scheme including 14 which are not listed in the HESA statistics although three of these [Ripon College, St Stephen's House and Wycliffe Hall] are associated with the University of Oxford and one [Cranmer Hall] is part of the University of Durham itself. There is a further complication in that a number of students at these 4 colleges would be taking other TRS courses validated by their own university.

Disentangling which universities validate which courses at the alternative providers and at the theological education institutions and how many students are on each such course is a significant research task in its own right and was beyond the scope of this study. Such research does need undertaking in order to fully comprehend the current trends in TRS take-up and the resultant implications for the on-going institutional provision of TRS.

**Table 5 Number of TRS students**

	<b>All levels</b>	<b>Undergraduate</b>	<b>Postgraduate</b>	
			<b>Taught</b>	<b>Research</b>
Cathedrals Group	1530	995	335	195
Other Christian colleges	3240	2350	795	95
Islamic colleges	175	95	80	0
Oxbridge, Durham, King's	1540	930	270	335
Other English universities	1830	1010	320	515
<b>Total</b>	<b>8315</b>	<b>5380</b>	<b>1800</b>	<b>1140</b>

*Commentary:* Over 5000 students were studying for TRS undergraduate degrees in England during 2019-20, a further 1800 were taking taught postgraduate degree courses and 1140 were taking postgraduate research degrees.

**Table 6 Level of degree by Higher Education Institution Grouping**

	All levels	Undergraduate	Postgraduate	
			Taught	Research
Cathedrals Group	18.4	18.5	18.6	17.1
Other Christian colleges	39.0	43.7	44.2	8.3
Islamic colleges	2.1	1.8	4.4	-
Oxbridge, Durham, King's	18.5	17.3	15.0	29.4
Other English universities	22.0	18.8	17.8	45.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Commentary:** 44% of all *undergraduate* TRS students were studying at other Christian colleges, 19% at other English universities, 18.5% at CG universities, 17% at Cambridge, Durham, King's London and Oxford, and 2% at the three Islamic colleges.

44% of all students on *taught postgraduate degree courses* were studying at other Christian colleges, 19% at CG universities, 18% at other universities, 15% at Oxford, Cambridge, Durham and King's London, and 4.4% at the Islamic colleges.

45% of all *research degree* students were based at other English universities, 29% at Oxford, Cambridge, Durham and Kings London, 17% at CG universities and 8% at other Christian colleges.

**Table 7 Higher Education Institution Grouping by level of degree**

	All levels	Undergraduate	Postgraduate	
			Taught	Research
Cathedrals Group	100.0	65.2	22.0	12.8
Other Christian colleges	100.0	72.5	24.5	2.9
Islamic colleges	100.0	54.3	45.7	-
Oxbridge, Durham, King's	100.0	60.6	17.6	21.8
Other universities	100.0	54.7	17.3	27.9

**Commentary:** This table shows the proportion of each of the three levels of degree for the five college/university groupings. At least 50% of all students at each of the five groupings were following undergraduate TRS courses. The highest proportions of students on taught graduate courses were at the Islamic colleges [45.7%], the other Christian colleges [24.5%] and the Cathedrals Group [22.0%]. Research students were a higher proportion at the other universities [27.9%], and at Cambridge, Durham, King's and Oxford [21.8%].

**Table 8 Cathedrals Group Universities**

	<b>All Levels</b>	<b>Undergraduate</b>	<b>Postgraduate</b>	
			<b>Taught</b>	<b>Research</b>
Bishop Grosseteste	<b>35</b>	30	5	0
Canterbury CC	<b>120</b>	80	30	10
Chester	<b>295</b>	220	30	40
Chichester	<b>35</b>	15	15	5
Cumbria	<b>140</b>	105	35	0
Gloucestershire	<b>45</b>	35	0	10
Plymouth Marjon	<b>0</b>	0	0	0
Roehampton	<b>270</b>	155	60	55
Winchester	<b>105</b>	55	30	20
York St John	<b>90</b>	80	0	10
Liverpool Hope	<b>75</b>	40	25	10
Newman	<b>110</b>	80	30	0
St Mary's	<b>185</b>	75	75	35
Leeds Trinity	<b>25</b>	25	0	0
<b><i>Total Cathedrals Group</i></b>	<b>1530</b>	<b>995</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>195</b>

Similar figures for all universities and HEIs are given in Appendix 1.

## Conclusions and Implications

1. The HESA statistics provide a very useful overview of the state of TRS in England in 2019-20. Further analysis and research outlined above would give a finer meshed picture both of the current position especially as it relates to the alternative providers and of the numerical changes over the last few years.
2. For the Church of England, there were no doubt good reasons for its decision in 2013 to centralise the validation of its ministerial training through the University of Durham rather than continuing with the more dispersed system which included the involvement of some of its Cathedrals Group universities. However, it does appear that this decision to exclude these universities may well have had a negative effect on the continuing viability of some of their TRS courses, as predicted at the time.
3. The extent to which there is any scope for TRS collaboration amongst the Cathedrals Group universities, particularly in shared research projects and the provision of on-line course material, despite the competitive nature of higher education, could be well worth pursuing. The acquisition of external funding for such ventures might be an important driver.
4. The Office for Students published a consultation paper on 20 July 2021, entitled *Consultation on quality and standards conditions*, the outcomes of which are likely to drastically change the relationships between the alternative providers and their validating universities. In section 30 of the paper, the OfS proposes, for accountability purposes, to treat the students and staff of the alternative providers as if they were members of the validating university when they are undertaking a course validated by that university. The financial and accountability implications of this for the validating universities and the community and organisational implications for the alternative providers are likely to be substantial. The income benefits for the validating universities are likely to reduce or disappear completely whilst the responsibility and risk elements will increase very significantly. The changes are likely to encourage alternative providers, either individually or with others, to seek degree awarding powers of their own, with university status as a subsequent possibility.
5. The future TRS landscape could look very different. Pressure for religious studies to become a more clearly defined subject in its own right is likely to grow. Courses validated from within the burgeoning alternative provider sector, reflecting their aims and purposes, are likely to become more confessional. And so the divergence between theology and religious studies would widen.

## Office for Students: Proceed data on subject value

### Methodology

Two sets of data have been used:

1. The statistics published by the Office for Students [OfS] in its report *Projected Completion and Employment from Entrant Data (Proceed)* published May 2021. The statistics relate to full-time first degree level UK domiciled students registered at English higher education providers.

This new measure attempts to score universities and their courses on dropout rates and graduate outcomes in one metric - Proceed. In its report, the OfS is careful to stress that the data is still very much experimental work in progress and that there are no plans to use the current data for regulatory purposes. Its publication is “intended to allow the involvement of users and stakeholders at an early stage in assessment of their suitability for their intended purposes. We expect this methodology to be developed and refined over time, and we welcome feedback on these experimental statistics to inform this.”

However, the genie has been let out of the bottle and it is likely that a later revision of the Proceed metric could well be used by politicians both to justify their rhetoric and any subsequent actions against what are seen to be low value subjects.

2. The Higher Education Statistics Agency [HESA] statistics for student numbers (full-time equivalent) by subject classification and by university for 2018–19. The method of collecting and presenting the available statistics for the following year 2019-20 changed and so the OfS report above used the 2018-19 statistics in its analysis.

**In Table 9 below:**

- i. All the figures are percentages.
- ii. The subjects are rank ordered on the left according to their overall Proceed score with medicine being the highest and sociology the lowest.
- iii. The individual Proceed score for each subject at each CG university is given in the body of the table.
- iv. At the bottom of the table, the overall Proceed score for each university, and its rank order position within the 130 so ranked, is given.
- v. Subject numbers under 70 were excluded. This accounts for the instances where a university offers a subject, such as theology and religious studies, but the cohort size is too small for it to be included in the analysis. Also a few of the response rates to the graduate outcomes survey were less than 50% and so the related Proceed scores have been italicised in the table. In these instances, the OfS warns that the data should be treated with extra caution as there is an increased risk of response bias.
- vi. See Appendix 3 for the abbreviations used for the CG universities and also for the academic subjects.

**Table 9 Subject and Cathedrals Group rankings for the Proceed metric 2018 - 2019**

		BG	CCC	Che	Chi	Cum	Glo	Mar	Roe	Win	YSJ	Hope	New	St Mar	LeedsT
<b>National proceed score</b>															
Medicine + dentistry	<b>95.5</b>														
Veterinary	<b>86.4</b>														
Nursing +midwifery	<b>78.6</b>		71.8	81.7		71.2									
Pharmacology	<b>76.4</b>														
Economics	<b>75.2</b>														
Medical sciences	<b>75.1</b>														
Physics + astronomy	<b>74.2</b>														
Chemistry	<b>73.6</b>														
Allied health	<b>72.0</b>		69.2	80.0		81.9					80.7			75.1	
Maths	<b>70.7</b>														
Geography	<b>69.8</b>														
Architecture	<b>69.3</b>														
Engineering	<b>67.9</b>														
Politics	<b>65.9</b>														
Languages	<b>65.3</b>														

[The table is continued on the next page]

		BG	CCC	Che	Chi	Cum	Glo	Mar	Roe	Win	YSJ	Hope	New	St Mar	LeedsT
<b>National Proceed Score</b>															
Education+teaching.	<b>63.5</b>	65.9	63.9	66.0	84.5	73.4	64.0	67.7	68.6	75.5	71.9	56.8	-	77.3	62.8
Biosciences	<b>63.4</b>	-	46.2	-	-	-	-	-	48.9	-	-	-	-	-	-
Phil+RS	<b>63.1</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Law	<b>62.6</b>	-	-	39.8	50.3	-	-	-	-	-	55.6	-	-	-	-
English studies	<b>62.1</b>	-	51.5	50.8	-	-	-	-	67.2	52.7	47.5	-	-	-	-
History	<b>61.8</b>	-	56.5	39.6	-	-	-	-	-	47.3	41.2	-	-	-	-
Computing	<b>59.7</b>	-	41.8	-	-	-	52.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Comb+Gen Studies	<b>57.2</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
General Science	<b>56.1</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Art+Design	<b>56.1</b>	-	57.2	58.8	-	47.7	58.1	-	-	-	52.2	-	-	-	-
Materials+Tech.	<b>56.0</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Health+Social Care	<b>55.6</b>	-	50.1	-	60.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38.3	-	-
Performing Arts	<b>55.5</b>	-	50.1	60.9	59.5	-	49.5	39.3	48.3	52.4	-	50.5	-	62.5	-
Sport science	<b>54.8</b>	-	40.3	50.1	57.8	-	53.7	59.4	-	59.8	-	44.7	-	55.4	56.4
Media+comms.	<b>54.8</b>	-	63.0	-	-	-	46.8	-	-	44.4	-	-	-	-	48.7
Psychology	<b>54.0</b>	-	37.4	45.7	-	-	-	-	42.4	54.0	46.9	40.6	-	-	43.7
Business	<b>53.9</b>	-	40.4	49.2	56.4	-	54.5	-	40.7	55.4	-	48.9	-	41.7	54.2
Agriculture+food	<b>52.2</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sociology	<b>48.1</b>	-	43.6	41.0	-	-	39.5	-	40.2	39.5	-	40.5	-	-	-
<b>University Proceed score</b>	<b>60.9</b>	<b>52.8</b>	<b>53.9</b>	<b>59.6</b>	<b>60.0</b>	<b>53.5</b>	<b>56.0</b>	<b>48.7</b>	<b>55.4</b>	<b>55.8</b>	<b>50.9</b>	<b>46.5</b>	<b>60.3</b>	<b>53.6</b>	
<b>Ranked position</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>94</b>	

## *Commentary*

### *Table 9*

In order to accommodate the whole table, two landscape pages are used. This was fortuitous as it broke the table into two distinct halves. Page 1 presents the top 15 subjects according to their Proceed score. The CG universities feature in just two of these subjects. Canterbury, Chester and Cumbria have Proceed scores for both nursing and for allied health and York St John and Saint Mary's have such scores for allied health. Whilst two of the three Proceed scores for nursing are significantly under the national average score, four of the five for allied health are well over.

The second page gives the Proceed scores for the remaining 19 subjects. It begins with education which is ranked 16<sup>th</sup>. All but one of the CG universities have Proceed scores for education and of these the scores for all but one are either around the national average level of 63.5 or significantly above – in 4 cases in the 70s and in the case of Chichester at 84.5.

The next block of 6 subjects consists of biosciences, philosophy and religious studies, law, english, history and computing. None of the CG universities are ranked for philosophy and religious studies, presumably on account of the small size of their departmental student populations. In the 16 instances where one of these subjects is listed at a CG university in all but one case the Proceed score is under the national average and in 11 cases it is 10% or more under.

The final block of ten subjects are the ones most likely to be deemed the lowest value subjects according to the metric used. Included in this block are eight subjects in which the CG universities are disproportionately represented. In descending order the subjects are art and design, health and social care, performing arts, sport science, media and communications, psychology, business and sociology. Furthermore, in the 52 instances where CG universities have Proceed scores in these subjects, 33 of the scores are under the national average for that subject and in 12 cases the differential is more than 10%.

*The CG universities as a whole are disproportionately represented among the final block of the ten lowest ranking subjects.*

**Table 10 Cathedrals Group student numbers by Proceed subject ranking 2018 - 2019**

	BG	CCC	Che	Chi	Cum	Glo	Mar	Roe	Win	YSJ	Hope	New	StM	Lds T	Total
<b>Top 10 subjects</b>															
Nursing	10	2120	2030	-	1390	290	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5840
Allied to Medicine	30	950	1455	140	1475	35	185	440	60	550	60	240	500	35	6155
<b>Total 10 highest</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>3070</b>	<b>3485</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>2865</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>11995</b>
% of all students	1.8	21.6	23.9	2.6	37.7	3.9	6.7	3.5	0.8	8.3	1.2	8.6	9.1	1.0	12.1
<b>Education [16<sup>th</sup>]</b>	<b>1630</b>	<b>3775</b>	<b>1530</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>1385</b>	<b>975</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>1510</b>	<b>1770</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>1790</b>	<b>1185</b>	<b>1625</b>	<b>1210</b>	<b>20835</b>
% of all students	72.1	26.6	10.5	13.7	18.2	11.8	26.6	11.9	22.7	14.5	35.1	42.3	29.6	35.5	20.0
<b>Subjects 11-24<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>200</b>	<b>2280</b>	<b>3140</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>1640</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>2550</b>	<b>1590</b>	<b>1520</b>	<b>875</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>16535</b>
% of all students	8.8	16.1	21.5	9.4	10.6	19.9	4.0	20.1	33.4	22.9	17.1	11.1	13.2	8.1	16.9
<b>Lowest ten subjects [25-34<sup>th</sup>]</b>															
Arts + Design	50	895	880	1740	570	1485	545	880	835	820	460	50	315	70	9595
Sports Sci	40	450	430	1035	190	980	615	295	325	470	250	120	1430	270	6900
Media + Comms	-	365	270	140	80	435	220	350	515	350	115	-	155	340	3335
Psychology	105	795	900	130	185	320	105	1275	565	480	425	270	210	510	6275
Business	30	1085	2090	435	890	1310	130	4750	965	790	335	90	425	350	13675
Agriculture	-	95	550	-	150	10	-	-	65	-	-	-	-	-	870
Soc Sci	165	1375	1300	575	475	775	130	620	1075	685	795	535	105	355	8965
<b>Total 10 lowest</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>5060</b>	<b>6420</b>	<b>4055</b>	<b>2540</b>	<b>5315</b>	<b>1745</b>	<b>8170</b>	<b>4345</b>	<b>3595</b>	<b>2380</b>	<b>1065</b>	<b>2640</b>	<b>1890</b>	<b>49615</b>
% of all students	17.3	35.7	44.0	74.3	33.4	64.4	62.8	64.5	56.0	54.3	46.6	38.0	48.1	55.6	50.1
<b>Total all subjects</b>	<b>2260</b>	<b>14185</b>	<b>14575</b>	<b>5460</b>	<b>7595</b>	<b>8255</b>	<b>2780</b>	<b>12670</b>	<b>7765</b>	<b>6625</b>	<b>5105</b>	<b>2800</b>	<b>5490</b>	<b>3410</b>	<b>98975</b>

## *Commentary*

**Table 10** is based on the HESA returns for 2018-19 and presents the student number (fulltime equivalent) by university for each of the subject areas represented at each of the CG universities. The method of collecting and presenting the statistics for the following year 2019-20 was changed by HESA and so the OfS report used the 2018-19 statistics in its analysis.

The sub-division of subjects in this table has been done slightly differently to that in Table 9, as follows:

- i. Given that nursing and subjects allied to medicine are in the top ten, this has been highlighted.
- ii. Given the significance of education in the overall portfolios of the GC universities, this also has been highlighted.
- iii. The rest of the middle ranking Proceed subjects have been grouped into one sub-division: Subjects 11 – 24.
- iv. 7 of the 10 lowest Proceed scoring subjects are recorded individually. Performing arts and art and design have been amalgamated as arts and design; agriculture included as 5 CG universities had such courses although none were given Proceed scores; health and social care, although given Proceed scores for 3 CG universities, its student numbers were not separately recorded in HESA's summary tables; and materials and technology excluded as no CG universities registered students in this area.

Overall just 12% of all the students in the CG universities are studying one of the top 10 Proceed subjects, of which roughly half are on nursing courses and half on courses allied to medicine. The two largest universities, Canterbury Christ Church and Chester, also have the largest number of students in these two subjects accounting for just over 20% of their student bodies. For Cumbria, a similarly large total in the two subjects represents almost two fifths of their student body.

By contrast, half of all the CG students are studying what are deemed to be the lowest value subjects. The proportion of such students varies considerably across universities with a range varying from 17% at Bishop Grosseteste to 74% at Chichester.

## Appendix 1 Theology and Religious Studies: student numbers by institution

This table lists and give figures for each of the universities and colleges within each of the groupings. HESA does not identify and give separate figures for the Church of England's theological colleges and training schemes associated with Durham and Oxford, presumably on the grounds that they are already included within the figures for their respective universities. The two Cambridge Church of England theological colleges of Ridley Hall and Westcott House are part of the Cambridge Theological Federation and so are included within the Federation's figures as an alternative provider.

### 1. Cathedrals Group Universities

	All Levels	Undergraduate	Postgraduate	
			Taught	Research
Bishop Grosseteste	35	30	5	0
Canterbury CC	120	80	30	10
Chester	295	220	30	40
Chichester	35	15	15	5
Cumbria	140	105	35	0
Gloucestershire	45	35	0	10
Plymouth Marjon	0	0	0	0
Roehampton	270	155	60	55
Winchester	105	55	30	20
York St John	90	80	0	10
Liverpool Hope	75	40	25	10
Newman	110	80	30	0
St Mary's	185	75	75	35
Leeds Trinity	25	25	0	0
<b><i>Total Cathedrals Group</i></b>	<b>1530</b>	<b>995</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>195</b>

[Table continued on next page]

## 2. Other Christian colleges

	All levels	Undergraduate	Postgraduate	
			Taught	Research
Bristol Baptist	55	20	25	5
Bristol Trinity	155	115	35	5
Cambridge Theol Federation	110	110	0	0
Christ the Redeemer College	45	40	5	0
Cliff College	140	65	65	10
Queen's Birmingham	375	280	70	25
For Mission Ltd	120	90	30	0
London School of Theology	285	235	40	10
Luther King House Manchester	105	50	40	15
Mattersey Hall	65	35	30	0
St Mellitus	590	460	130	0
Moorlands	230	145	85	0
All Nations	65	50	15	0
Nazarene Theol College	145	95	40	10
Newbold College	80	15	60	0
Oak Hill	135	130	10	0
Regents Theol College	200	135	65	0
Salvation Army	40	40	0	0
Spurgeons	280	220	50	15
Waveley Abbey College	20	20	0	0
<b><i>Total other Christian colleges</i></b>	<b>3240</b>	<b>2350</b>	<b>795</b>	<b>95</b>

[Table continued on next page]

<b>3. Islamic colleges</b>	<b>All levels</b>	<b>Undergraduate</b>	<b>Postgraduate</b>	
			<b>Taught</b>	<b>Research</b>
Institute of Ismaili Studies	<b>45</b>	0	45	0
Islamic College	<b>40</b>	40	0	0
Markfield Institute	<b>90</b>	55	35	0
<b><i>Total Islamic colleges</i></b>	<b>175</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>0</b>
 <b>4. Other Church of England Foundations</b>				
Cambridge	<b>270</b>	160	40	65
Durham	<b>495</b>	275	80	140
King's London	<b>355</b>	275	40	40
Oxford	<b>420</b>	220	110	90
<b><i>Total other Church of England</i></b>	<b>1540</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>335</b>

[Table continued on the next page]

## 5. Other universities

	All levels	Undergraduate	Postgraduate	
			Taught	Research
Anglia Ruskin	70	0	15	55
Bath Spa	30	30	0	0
Birmingham	270	125	20	125
Bristol	125	105	10	10
Edge Hill	25	25	0	0
Exeter	155	120	10	25
Goldsmiths	5	0	0	5
Huddersfield	5	5	0	0
Hull	5	5	0	0
Kent	70	50	5	10
Lancaster	70	40	15	15
Leeds	145	115	15	15
Manchester	100	70	10	20
Manchester Metropolitan	35	35	0	0
Middlesex	140	0	0	140
Nottingham	185	110	45	30
Open University	60	50	0	5
Oxford Brookes	5	0	0	5
Sheffield	55	50	5	5
SOAS	175	35	105	35
Staffordshire	45	30	15	0
University of London	5	0	0	5
Warwick	20	0	20	0
Wolverhampton	30	25	5	0
<b><i>Total other universities</i></b>	<b>1830</b>	<b>1010</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>515</b>
<b>Total all HEIs</b>	<b>8315</b>	<b>5380</b>	<b>1800</b>	<b>1140</b>

## Hurdles for universities on the track ahead

*John Gay* runs through challenges facing the higher-education sector

UNIVERSITIES are facing challenges from all directions. They have been making Herculean efforts to provide for their students the best level of education possible within the constraints of Covid lockdowns. This has involved a significant shift away from face-to-face teaching towards an online experience and the provision of support systems to help students to cope with the changes — all having to be managed by staff who are mostly working remotely.

For students, studying all day at home through their laptops is a far cry from what they were expecting when they first applied to university. Nevertheless, most students are resilient.

For example, all new students arriving at the University of Winchester are asked to rate their expectations of their forthcoming university experience. The results show that they expect an interesting and challenging course; a friendly and supportive atmosphere, where students are known and treated as individuals and staff are approachable; and plenty of opportunities for making new friends.

Despite all the disruptions caused by the first Covid lockdown, more than four-fifths of the students returning in September felt that their initial expectations had been well realised. Not bad!

Interestingly, despite the talk of students' being customers and more demanding about value for money, fewer than seven per cent rated this as one of their highest concerns. There is no reason to think that these conclusions would not be reproduced at the other Cathedrals Group universities.

To the universities, some of the Government's recent reactions must feel like adding insult to injury. When encouragement and support was needed, what the universities received was criticism.

There are good political reasons for this. Post-Covid, the Government rightly plans to build up the long-neglected area of further education (FE). This will cost, and money will be short. The principle of making savings in HE to pay for expanding and improving FE — robbing Peter to pay Paul — is very attractive.

Public support for FE has been growing rapidly. A recent survey undertaken by the Social Market Foundation found that 48 per cent said that they would prefer their children to gain a vocational qualification over university or work. This support extended to university graduates and to middle-class respondents.

Among 18- to 24-year-olds, however, this preference was reversed: half favoured university over vocational education, and fewer than one third the reverse — this despite a barrage of press headlines such as “Apprentices can earn £7k more than graduates” (*The Times*, 5 June).

For some while now, ministers have been making generalised threats against so-called “low-value” courses. It appears that value is to be equated with the salary levels attained by past graduates in that discipline: a very utilitarian view of education. The Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson, was quoted in *The Sunday Times* in mid-May as saying: “Many students are already starting to pivot away from dead-end courses that leave young people with nothing but debt.”

Last month, the Office for Students published a report, *Projected Completion and Employment from Entrance Data (Proceed)*. This controversial new measure attempts to score universities and their courses on drop-out rates and graduate outcomes in one metric.

The report is careful to emphasise that it is still a work in progress, and that there are no plans to use the current data for regulatory purposes. But the genie has been let out of the bottle, and it is likely that a later revision of the metric will be used by politicians to reduce funding for courses that they don’t like.

The report ranks 34 subjects according to their perceived value. Not surprisingly, medicine and dentistry top the list and sociology is bottom. Other low-ranking subjects include business, psychology, media, sports science, health and social care, performing arts, and art and design.

The data is also available at an individual university level, enabling an analysis of the situation in each of the English Cathedrals Group universities. Nearly half of all their students are studying what are being deemed to be the ten lowest-value subjects.

The church universities are strong in the subject ranked 16th, however: education. It accounts for 21 per cent of their total student population, 11 per cent training as teachers. At five of the universities, one fifth of all their students are on teacher-training courses, and, at a sixth, it is two-fifths.

But even this long-established base in teacher education is under threat. The traditional arms-length relationship between universities and central Government is breaking down. University autonomy is seen as a hindrance to centralising plans, especially in teacher education.

Already, the Government has established a national Institute for teaching, which is likely to franchise a few big providers of teacher education at the expense of the rest. Also, the recommendations of a government review group are awaited with trepidation, especially at those universities with a large stake in teacher education.

A further difficulty is that tuition fees could well be cut from the current £9250 to a maximum of £7500. This would knock a big hole in the budgets of many of the Cathedrals Group. The more costly science courses would be topped up by extra government funding, but some arts and humanities subjects could well disappear.

On the principle that when one door closes, another one opens, there could be an opportunity for one or more of the Cathedrals Group universities to add a significant further education file to its portfolio. The recent Skills and Post-16 Education Bill encourages a collaboration between employers and education providers to meet local needs.

A local focus both in student recruitment and in linking to local issues has been a central plank in the modus vivendi of the church universities, and could well open a new door for them. Perhaps the biggest obstacle would be a presentational one; for adding FE could be seen as status downgrading. Equally, though, it could be an operational winner.

The origins of the church universities lay in the church training colleges established in the mid-19th century to provide teachers for the burgeoning church-school system. Their remit was extended subsequently to service other types of school, and so they continued until the 1970s, when two decisions were taken that radically altered the pattern. The number of colleges was reduced from 25 to 12, and the surviving ones were obliged to diversify and expand. One of the consequences was the gradual decoupling of the colleges from the Church.

In 2001, the Government's go-to chief fixit for education, Lord Dearing, chaired a review of church schools, published as *The Way Ahead: Church of England schools in the new millennium*. The Dearing report outlined a central place for the church colleges. While, however, the rest of the report was implemented, the attempt to recouple the colleges fell on deaf ears. There was little enthusiasm either within the colleges, which were about to become autonomous universities, or among the Church's educational Establishment, which remained focused on church schools.

The Church of England's decision in 2013 to centralise the validation of all its ministerial training through the University of Durham, and thus discontinue local schemes involving the church universities, drove a further wedge. It has also had negative consequences for some of their theology and religious-studies departments, such as at Chester (News, 23 April).

The Church of England's national Education Office, along with the Catholic Education Service, has been appointed one of the nine national providers for the roll-out of the revised suite of professional qualifications for teachers planning for leadership positions.

The Office has also teamed up with Teach First and the Chartered College of Teaching to run a rural-teaching partnership to tackle teacher-recruitment problems in countryside schools. On top of this, the Office is well placed to play a part in the Government's proposed national Institute of Teaching.

If the church universities could form a partnership with the Office in these national initiatives, therefore, it would also help promote a recoupling process. The Revd Professor Peter Neil, Vice-Chancellor of Bishop Grosseteste University in Lincoln, who chairs the Cathedrals Group, is clear that the church universities have a wealth of educational expertise and deep-rooted contacts with teachers and schools which they could bring to the national table.

[Pictures from the article have been omitted]

### **Appendix 3 Abbreviations used**

#### ***Cathedrals Group Universities***

BG	Bishop Grosseteste Lincoln
CCC	Canterbury Christ Church
Che	Chester
Chi	Chichester
Cum	Cumbria
Glo	Gloucestershire
Mar	Plymouth Marjon
Roe	Roehampton
Win	Winchester
YSJ	York St John
Hope	Liverpool Hope
New	Newman Birmingham
StM	St Mary's Twickenham
Lds T	Leeds Trinity

#### **Others**

CG	Cathedrals Group
HEI	Higher education institution
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
ITE	Initial teacher education
OfS	Office for Students
TRS	Theology and religious studies
Unis	Universities

## Subjects as defined in the Proceed analysis

Only those which have been abbreviated are given below and they are listed in their Proceed order

Pharm	Pharmacology, toxicology and pharmacy
Geography etc	Geography, earth and environmental studies
Architecture	Architecture, building and planning
Lang	Languages and area studies
Phil+RS	Philosophy and religious studies
History	History and archaeology
Comb+Gen Studies	Combined and general studies
General science	General, applied and forensic sciences
Art+design	Creative arts and design
Materials+tech	Materials and technology
Sport science	Sport and exercise science
Media+comms	Media, journalism and communications
Business	Business and management
Agriculture+food	Agriculture, food and related studies
Sociology	Sociology, social policy and anthropology

## **Paper 3: By design or default? The social inclusion of the church universities**

### **Introduction**

This is the third paper based on research being undertaken for a book on the English Churches in Higher Education. The first paper examined, from the perspective of their status as church-related institutions, the current articles of association of the Cathedrals Group (CG) universities. A second paper focussed on their three bedrock activities of teacher training, academic learning, and theology and religious studies, using current statistics from the Higher Education Statistics Agency and the Office for Students.

The papers have been written initially for a limited audience associated with the CG universities to help inform planning for their futures. Given that there is not a need in this paper to relate the statistics to the overall position within English universities, the University of Wales Trinity St David, as a member of the CG, has been included in the analysis. The tables below present the picture both for the CG universities overall and for the individual universities within the Group. All the figures in Tables 1 - 4 relate to 2020 or earlier even though the Guide is entitled 2021, the reason for which is that the Guide was aimed at those students planning to go to university in 2021. Tables 5 and 6 in the Appendix are based on the 2021 figures.

### **Methodology**

Providing potential students, and their parents and teachers, with statistics and other information about the 130 or so universities in the UK to help them decide and target their preferred choices, has become a growth industry. When this research was first undertaken using the published guides in 2013, there were three main ones - *the Sunday Times Good University Guide*, *the Guardian Guide* and *the Complete University Guide*.

All three could be accessed for free online and offered search facilities. Each used a variety of individual criteria which are then weighted and summed to give an overall rank order position. Each had a substantial section on the methodologies employed. Since then, other guides have been developed and offered. Originally, the decision was taken to use *the Sunday Times Guide* for the following two reasons:

i. *The Sunday Times Guide* was produced as a free supplement as part of the Sunday Times newspaper package which had a UK distribution of over 600,000. Its readership would therefore have included a general and parental one as well as a more specific potential student one and so very likely to have had a wider influence than the other two Guides which were purely online.

ii. As well as the criteria for overall ranking, the *Sunday Times Guide* provided additional information enabling rank orderings on various aspects of the student population, on two financial matters, and on issues relating to social inclusion. It was therefore more comprehensive than the other two Guides.

Reviewing the position for this paper, a decision was taken to use the *Sunday Times Guide* again, for the same reasons.

Much has been written on the fallibilities of the various criteria used and so of the overall results. A comprehensive critique was undertaken by Sally Turnbull and published in January 2018 by the Higher Education Policy Institute entitled *A Guide to UK League Tables in Higher Education*.

However fallible the various metrics might be, they form a critical part of the national drive to provide potential students and those who advise them with the necessary information to make informed consumer choices about which university to attend and course to undertake. Furthermore, university marketing managers avidly scour them for upbeat website headlines!

#### *The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2021*

The Sunday Times Guide uses a variety of measures with data sourced from the Higher Education Statistics Agency, the National Student Satisfaction Survey, the Research Excellence Framework 2014, the UK Funding Councils, and the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service. In building the overall university league table, scores for student satisfaction [covering both the teaching quality and student experience elements] and for research quality were weighted by 1.5 and the other indicators were weighted by 1.

The core database consists of 131 UK universities of which 1 is in Northern Ireland, 14 are in Scotland and 8 are in Wales. There are three additional HE institutions which have been included in some of the individual measures but not in the overall ranking. They are Birkbeck College, Hartpury University and the University of the Highlands and Islands.

One major drawback with much management data is that by the time the source institutions have collected it and submitted it centrally, and then it has been checked, processed, the results written up and published, the data and the conclusions based on it are already dated. This is especially

true of the data on research which was last collected in 2014. Much of the data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency is for the academic year 2018-19 with some going back earlier.

Naturally, universities which have improved their standing since the figures were collected are likely to feel somewhat aggrieved whilst those which have done less well subsequently are more likely to be content with their current portrayal. What is very likely though is that the end users of the tables will take the figures at face value and use them accordingly rather than spending time delving into the methodologies underpinning them and the time-lapse which has incurred.

Whilst none of the individual measures are without their weaknesses and key aspects of university life will have been overlooked simply because there are no metrics available for those aspects, nevertheless the overall sum of the measures used do give an overall picture which relates reasonably to university reality. However much league tables may fall short, in practice in so many areas they are now part of everyday life and influence our choices and decisions. So, it is on this basis that an attempt has been made to analyse the league positions of the CG universities within the overall context of British higher education.

Although a case can be made for designating Cambridge, Durham, King's London and Oxford as Church of England related foundations, they have not been included as their history, nature and standing are very different from the fifteen which were originally teacher training colleges emerging as universities from 2001 onwards.

## The tables

There are 4 tables and associated commentaries, as follows:

1. Overall university ranking and ranking by individual measures
2. Subject ranking by university
3. Education – ranking overall and by individual measures
4. Theology and Religious Studies - ranking overall and by individual measures

In some cases institutions are ranked as equal. When this happens an = sign has not been added as it does not affect the overall ranking position and inclusion of it would make the tables look too cluttered.

*Abbreviations* for the universities used in the tables and their foundation dates as full universities, are as follows:

BG	Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln	2012
CCC	Canterbury Christ Church University	2005
Che	Chester University	2005
Chi	Chichester University	2005
Cum	Cumbria University	2007
Glo	Gloucestershire University	2001
Mar	Plymouth Marjon University	2013
Roe	Roehampton University	2004
TSD	University of Wales, Trinity St David	2010
Win	Winchester University	2005
YSJ	York St John University	2006
Hope	Hope University Liverpool	2005
New	Newman University Birmingham	2012
St M	St Mary's University, Twickenham	2014
LeedsT	Leeds Trinity University	2012

The order above is the order used in the tables. The 11 Anglican-related universities are listed first, largely because the analysis was initially envisaged as of them only, but it was subsequently expanded to include the Roman Catholic universities and so they were added. Liverpool Hope, as the one ecumenical jointly managed Anglican/Roman Catholic university, has been symbolically located between the two groups.

**Table 1 Overall university ranking and ranking by individual measures - 2020**

	BG	CCC	Che	Chi	Cum	Glo	Mar	Roe	TSD	Win	YSJ	Hope	New	StM	LeedsT	Total	Avg
<b>Overall ranking 2020</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>93</b>
Ranking 2019	102	118	79	71	121	95	102	69	102	98	81	60	115	85	117	131	<b>94</b>
Ranking 2018	113	118	73	94	125	81	109	70	89	79	102	50	119	77	87	132	<b>92</b>
Teaching quality	8	73	26	14	44	40	22	76	7	64	10	18	10	33	55	129	<b>33</b>
Student experience	14	118	30	16	106	82	35	68	43	97	19	40	8	30	52	129	<b>51</b>
Research quality	120	97	101	81	124	108	127	50	116	83	101	62	115	104	121	127	<b>101</b>
Entry standards	117	124	97	80	87	97	102	127	126	113	127	102	113	113	126	131	<b>110</b>
Graduate prospects	83	85	103	96	57	113	88	123	128	109	106	118	117	91	100	131	<b>101</b>
Good honours	103	118	95	63	125	91	76	118	81	75	-	91	117	71	49	130	<b>91</b>
Facilities spend	67	109	29	107	119	100	126	14	112	115	86	90	117	108	103	131	<b>93</b>
Student-staff ratio	115	66	55	33	67	101	125	45	78	80	108	51	92	108	127	131	<b>83</b>
Completion rates	40	129	100	35	76	90	104	121	117	64	55	116	110	78	97	131	<b>89</b>
<b><i>Student population</i></b>																	
Best at sport	127	78	75	55	121	65	80	100	125	86	85	93	113	46	114	128	<b>91</b>
Most applications	132	92	78	113	121	105	126	106	124	95	101	99	128	119	108	134	<b>110</b>
Most competition	134	128	30	109	108	121	123	121	131	117	77	25	81	81	47	134	<b>96</b>
Most mature	29	27	43	62	16	50	21	12	8	93	97	72	31	55	45	133	<b>44</b>
Most EU students	132	95	126	117	99	123	119	84	115	120	-	111	131	69	128	133	<b>112</b>
Most overseas [non-EU]	130	120	97	125	122	103	128	97	112	108	-	124	-	112	130	132	<b>116</b>

Table continued on next page:

	BG	CCC	Che	Chi	Cum	Glo	Mar	Roe	TSD	Win	YSJ	Hope	New	StM	LeedsT	Total	Avg
<b>Overall ranking</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>Financial matters</b>																	
Univ accomm prices	25	84	25	84	4	96	40	46	7	25	-	-	69	126	48	129	<b>52</b>
<b>Social inclusion</b>																	
<b>Overall inclusion ranking</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>34</b>
Deprived area admissions	7	15	22	26	27	39	12	105	36	43	20	6	10	94	18	118	<b>32</b>
Deprived area dropouts	95	64	42	52	89	9	32	25	-	38	28	32	-	75	32	95	<b>47</b>
Black attainment gap	-	110	87	-	98	95	-	87	106	103	-	-	49	22	-	114	<b>84</b>
Disabled students	5	70	53	25	42	20	4	97	3	7	50	35	20	17	62	131	<b>34</b>
Ethnic minority students	129	54	110	118	86	97	125	16	115	91	121	83	29	45	43	131	<b>84</b>
Mature students	29	27	43	62	16	50	21	12	8	93	97	72	31	55	45	133	<b>44</b>
State school [not grammar]	31	60	50	47	37	57	22	31	7	60	42	82	8	53	24	131	<b>41</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> generation HE students	3	10	26	46	22	57	8	35	83	44	62	36	1	51	6	132	<b>33</b>
Independent schools	125	106	95	72	83	86	113	86	111	74	89	113	111	65	95	133	<b>95</b>
Grammar schools	73	46	63	90	101	61	95	110	127	63	77	31	123	87	112	130	<b>84</b>

### Notes

1. Totals vary slightly as information was not always available for every university.
2. In the Social Inclusion section, for the overall ranking and for the items on deprived areas and black attainment, the statistics collected relate to England and Wales only. For all other items, the information includes Scotland as well as England and Wales.
3. Avg = average position for CG universities as a group.

### Definitions

1. Mature student = 21 year olds and over
2. Black attainment gap – is the difference between the proportion of 1st and 2.1 degrees attained by white as opposed to black students. The lower the ranking the lower is the proportion of top class degrees obtained by black students relative to white students.

### *Commentary on Table 1*

The overall ranking is given based on 9 measures each of which has been rank ordered separately. A second section rank orders additional aspects relating specifically to the student population. A third single item section on financial matters looks at university accommodation prices. The final section is concerned with social inclusion and as well as giving an overall rating it also rank orders each of the 10 contributory aspects.

In terms of overall ranking out of 131 universities, Chichester [46] and Bishop Grosseteste [64] are in the top half, Chester is 69<sup>th</sup>, Roehampton is 78<sup>th</sup>, three are in the 80s [Liverpool Hope, York St John and St Mary's], Winchester is 96<sup>th</sup>, and the remaining 7 are between 101<sup>st</sup> and 127<sup>th</sup> [in descending order they are Trinity St David, Gloucestershire, Leeds Trinity, Newman, Cumbria, Plymouth Marjon and Canterbury Christ Church].

Of the three constituent components of teaching quality, student experience and research quality which are given the higher and so more significant weighting of 1.5, 13 of the 15 universities are in the top half for teaching quality and 10 of the 15 are in the top half for the student experience. Only Canterbury Christ Church and Roehampton are in the lower half in both areas. But it is their now historical research quality measured in 2014 which pulls the universities down the overall ranking for only Roehampton and Liverpool Hope are in the top half whereas 11 are in the last 30.

Entry standards are generally low with none being in the top half and 11 being in the final 30. This is reflected both in the number of applications received with none in the top half and 10 in final 30 and also reflected in the level of competition for places with only Liverpool Hope, Chester and Leeds Trinity in the top half and 9 amongst the lowest 30.

A separate section is concerned with social inclusion and the overall ranking here is based on 11 discrete elements. 14 of the 15 universities are in the top half overall and 6 of them are in the top 30.

Twelve of the universities are in the top half for the percentage of mature students admitted. Five are in the top half for their admission of ethnic minority students - Roehampton, Newman, Leeds Trinity, St Mary's, and Canterbury Christ Church. Despite their recruitment restraints they still manage to do well in attracting students from deprived areas with all but the two London universities in the top half and 10 in the top 30. They particularly excel in the area of disabled student admissions with 4 being in the top ten and a further 9 in the top half.

Apart from Cumbria which is in the top half for graduate prospects, all the others are in the lower half. Five universities are in the top 10 for the proportion of first generation HE students they admitted – Newman, Bishop Grosseteste, Leeds Trinity, Plymouth Marjon and Canterbury Christ

Church, and only Trinity St David is in the lower half. 14 of the 15 universities are also in the top half for the number of state school pupils admitted – this statistic excludes grammar schools within the State system.

In the final column, Table 1 also summarises the position of the 15 universities as a CG group on the basis of average rankings. Three aspects stand out. First, whilst there has been a certain snakes and ladders effect at an individual university level over the last three years, the average CG ranking has been very consistent [93, 94 and 92].

Second, they are recruiting significantly from a small pool of students [most applications 110] with modest entry standards [110] and so there is less competition for their places [96]. More of their students are from deprived areas [32], are mature students [44], are first generation HE students [33] and are from non-selective state schools [41]. A higher percentage are classed as disabled [34]. As a result, the sector's overall inclusion ranking is 34.

Third, given their overall student intake level, their resources for producing a value-added element are limited, with a student-staff ratio ranking of 83 and a facilities spend of 93. Even though their graduate prospects are ranked at 101, a likely reflection of their intake, location and the nature of the occupations they plan to enter such as the public services, their completion rate is 89, their student experience is 51 and the quality of the teaching their students receive is ranked at 33.

**Table 2 Subject ranking by university - 2020**

	All courses	BG	CCC	Che	Chi	Cum	Glo	Mar	Roe	TSD	Win	YSJ	Hope	New	St Mar	Leeds T	Ch univ courses
Accountancy+Finance	<b>96</b>		96	57			91		67		63						<b>5</b>
Agriculture+Forestry	<b>11</b>					11											<b>1</b>
American Studies	<b>14</b>		14														<b>1</b>
Animal Science	<b>16</b>			14													<b>1</b>
Anthropology	<b>25</b>								15	25							<b>2</b>
Archaeology+Forensic Sci	<b>53</b>		53	41		28				30	51						<b>5</b>
Art	<b>83</b>		59	62	83	63	77			<b>12</b>	63	73	82				<b>9</b>
Biological Science	<b>99</b>		91	82			52		85			<b>46</b>					<b>5</b>
Business Studies	<b>120</b>		119	78	66	<b>43</b>	93		116	90	110	115	68		107	100	<b>12</b>
Chemical Engineering	<b>30</b>			26													<b>1</b>
Classics+ Ancient History	<b>22</b>								22								<b>1</b>
Comms + Media Studies	<b>95</b>		50	93	72		68	<b>38</b>	59		72	86	79		91	70	<b>11</b>
Computer Science	<b>108</b>		108	<b>39</b>			92			<b>48</b>			<b>45</b>				<b>5</b>
Creative Writing	<b>48</b>		45	34	<b>20</b>		41		26		42	39	<b>22</b>		47		<b>9</b>
Criminology	<b>70</b>		45	58			64		69		66		59				<b>6</b>
Drama,Dance,Cinematics	<b>93</b>		84	<b>42</b>	<b>40</b>	90	66		<b>42</b>	79	69	86	91	78	<b>39</b>		<b>12</b>
Education	<b>84</b>	63	65	<b>38</b>	58	52	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	49	<b>39</b>	<b>18</b>	43	<b>35</b>	59	<b>14</b>	71	<b>15</b>
Electrical Eng	<b>62</b>			59													<b>1</b>
English	<b>101</b>	<b>22</b>	94	73	89		96		56		87	70	55	81	101	76	<b>12</b>
Food Science	<b>33</b>			<b>14</b>					25						31		<b>3</b>
French	<b>42</b>			41													<b>1</b>
Geog+Environ Sci	<b>66</b>			35		59	42				66		60				<b>5</b>
History	<b>90</b>	77	64	84	69		87		49	<b>41</b>	75	82	57	<b>40</b>	61	90	<b>13</b>

[Table continued on next page]

	All courses	BG	CCC	Che	Chi	Cum	Glo	Mar	Roe	TSD	Win	YSJ	Hope	New	St Mar	LeedsT	Ch univ courses
Hospitality etc	<b>56</b>		<b>5</b>	33	47		35			42		53	<b>27</b>		32	46	<b>9</b>
Iberian Languages	<b>44</b>			33													<b>1</b>
Law	<b>101</b>		94	58			76		<b>39</b>		88		101		81		<b>7</b>
Librarianship	<b>19</b>						10										<b>1</b>
Linguistics	<b>31</b>								24			20					<b>2</b>
Mathematics	<b>71</b>			64									65				<b>2</b>
Mech Eng	<b>67</b>			56						49							<b>2</b>
Music	<b>76</b>		60	46	42	76	71	75			39	61	56				<b>9</b>
Nursing	<b>72</b>		50	42		63											<b>3</b>
Pharmacology	<b>49</b>			41													<b>1</b>
Philosophy	<b>44</b>						34								37		<b>2</b>
Physiotherapy	<b>36</b>		32			34						28					<b>3</b>
Politics	<b>80</b>		51	72	43						65		70				<b>5</b>
Psychology	<b>115</b>	115	114	60	<b>34</b>	82	92		94	<b>55</b>	83	86	103	104	79	101	<b>14</b>
Radiography	<b>25</b>		23			<b>11</b>											<b>2</b>
Social Policy	<b>33</b>			17						19			20				<b>3</b>
Social Work	<b>78</b>	77	78	67	52	63	62	71			45		44	73			<b>10</b>
Sociology	<b>92</b>		54	<b>42</b>			75		59		84		74	<b>44</b>	83		<b>8</b>
Sport Science	<b>80</b>		47	<b>25</b>	<b>30</b>	44	54	43	64	74	50	<b>39</b>	49	54	70	63	<b>14</b>
Subjects Med related	<b>77</b>		70	66		<b>37</b>		73	61			50			67		<b>7</b>
T&C Planning	<b>24</b>						19										<b>1</b>
Theology & RS	<b>31</b>		29	23			23		26	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	28	19	22	21	27	<b>11</b>
Subjects offered by each university		<b>5</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>253</b>
Number ranked over halfway		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>38</b>

### *Notes to Table 2*

1. Where the ranking for a subject at a university is at least halfway up the leader-board it has been entered in bold and italics.

### ***2. Subject Abbreviations***

Comms = Communications

Electrical Eng = Electrical and electronic engineering

Geog+Environ Sci = Geography and Environmental Science

Hospitality etc = Hospitality, Leisure, Recreation and Tourism

Librarianship = Librarianship +Information Management

Mech Eng = Mechanical Engineering

RS = Religious Studies

Sci = Science

Subjects Med related = Subjects allied to Medicine

T&C Planning = Town and Country Planning and Landscape

### ***3. The following subjects were not available at any of the Church-related universities:***

Aeronautical and Manufacturing Engineering

Anatomy and Physiology

Architecture and Design

Celtic Studies

Chemistry

Civil Engineering

Dentistry

East and Southeast Asian Studies

Economics

General Engineering

Geology

History of Art, Architecture and Design

Italian

Land and Property Management  
Materials Technology  
Medicine  
Middle Eastern and African Studies  
Physics and Astronomy  
Russian and East European Languages  
Veterinary Medicine

### *Commentary on Table 2*

There were altogether 67 subjects and subject areas recognised nationally by HESA of which 45 are taught at one or more of the Church universities. Table 2 gives first the total number of universities at which the course is taught and then under each of the Church universities a rank order is given if the course is offered there. Where the rank order position is above the half-way point the figure is in bold and italicised. The bottom line of the table gives the number of the courses offered by each university and the number which are ranked over halfway. The right-hand column gives the number of Church universities offering each course. The remaining subject areas not offered at any of the Church universities are listed in note 3 of the table.

Of the 15 Church universities, all offer courses in education and 14 additionally offer psychology and sport science. 13 offer history; 12 offer business studies, English, and drama dance and cinematics; 11 offer communication and media studies, and theology and religious studies; Over half of the universities have courses in art; creative writing; music; sociology; social work; and in hospitality, leisure, recreation and tourism.

By contrast, the core STEM subjects of science, technology, engineering and mathematics are sparsely represented. Only Chester offers mathematics, chemical engineering, electrical engineering and mechanical engineering. Liverpool Hope offers mathematics and Trinity St David offers mechanical engineering.

There are seven other subjects described as sciences, namely animal science [1], archaeological and forensic science [5], biological science [5], computer science [5], food science [3], geography and environmental science [5], and sport science [14]. Additionally, there are the medical-related courses of nursing [3], physiotherapy [3], radiography [2], pharmacology [1] and a further category of other subjects related to medicine [7].

However there are no courses listed as available in some of the more mainstream STEM areas of aeronautical and manufacturing engineering, chemistry, civil engineering, general engineering, materials technology or physics and astronomy. Likewise in the medical areas there are no courses in anatomy and physiology, dentistry, medicine, and veterinary medicine.

Language courses are sparsely represented with only classics [1], French [1], and Iberian languages [1] along with linguistics [2] being available.

The Church universities frequently highlight their role in preparing students for the public services. Whilst students can and do enter these services irrespective of the degree they have taken, courses in education [15], social work [10] and nursing [3] are particularly relevant to public service areas of work.

The smallest range of subjects are offered by Bishop Grosseteste [5], Plymouth Marjon [6], Newman and Leeds Trinity [9 each]. By contrast Chester offers the largest number [35] followed by Canterbury Christ Church [27], Gloucestershire [24], Liverpool Hope [22], and Roehampton and Winchester [20 each]. Institutional size is a key determinant of the number of subjects which can be offered.

Those subjects ranked halfway and above in the overall total are highlighted in bold and italicised. Leeds Trinity has none; Bishop Grosseteste, Canterbury Christ Church, and Gloucestershire each have one; Plymouth Marjon, Roehampton, Winchester, York St John, Newman and St Mary's each have 2; Cumbria has 3; Chichester, and Liverpool Hope each have 4: and Chester and Trinity St David each have 6. Out of a total of 253 subjects taught in the Church universities, only 38 of them are ranked in the top half.

**Table 3 Education – ranking overall and by individual measures - 2020**

	BG	CCC	Che	Chi	Cum	Glo	Mar	Roe	TSD	Win	YSJ	Hope	New	StM	LeedsT	Avg
<b>Overall ranking [84]</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>44</b>
Ranking 2020 [84]	74	60	46	39	45	24	48	36	79	29	46	32	63	20	58	<b>47</b>
Ranking 2019 [82]	65	52	34	55	56	31	46	36	70	20	49	28	67	18	52	<b>45</b>
<b>Teaching quality [84]</b>	43	49	80	77	33	27	8	67	22	23	44	10	31	5	55	<b>38</b>
<b>Ofsted rating [60]</b>	3.0	3.0	3.7	3.0	3.0	3.7	3.3	3.0	-	4.0	3.3	3.0	3.0	4.0	3.0	<b>3.3</b>
<b>Student experience [84]</b>	45	57	61	67	47	18	6	55	34	21	25	7	23	5	50	<b>35</b>
<b>Research quality [68]</b>	61	48	61	-	67	-	-	22	-	52	60	35	53	56	-	<b>52</b>
<b>Entry points [84]</b>	66	70	38	35	61	35	39	78	13	39	78	48	62	70	66	<b>53</b>
<b>Graduate prospects [83]</b>	33	26	20	11	22	40	29	20	61	29	22	52	82	15	33	<b>33</b>

1. All figures are rankings, except for the Ofsted ratings, with the total number in brackets after each aspect. The low total number of Ofsted ratings was because not all departments had been Ofsted inspected and so the universities were not rank ordered on this item and instead the actual Ofsted score is given, which ranged between 2.7 and 4.0.
2. The figure in brackets after each criterion is the total number of universities which were rank ordered.
3. Avg = Average position for those CG universities as a group for which returns were recorded.

**Table 4 Theology and Religious Studies - ranking overall and by individual measures - 2020**

	BG	CCC	Che	Chi	Glo	Roe	TSD	Win	YSJ	Hope	New	StM	LeedsT	Avg
<b>Overall ranking [31]</b>	-	<b>29</b>	<b>23</b>	-	<b>23</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>22</b>
Ranking 2020 [36]	30	25	24	36	34	16	32	21	33	15	26	23	34	<b>27</b>
Ranking 2019 [36]	30	29	19	27	33	25	35	23	31	15	28	24	36	<b>27</b>
<b>Teaching quality [30]</b>	-	6	1	-	3	9	8	13	10	2	17	21	5	<b>9</b>
<b>Student experience [30]</b>	-	15	1	-	2	3	10	11	6	8	18	20	9	<b>9</b>
<b>Research quality [30]</b>	-	23	24	-	28	19	16	21	29	22	30	26	25	<b>24</b>
<b>Entry points [31]</b>	-	31	20	-	27	26	20	27	30	22	23	23	29	<b>25</b>
<b>Graduate prospects [21]</b>	-	19	18	-	-	20	-	4	17	-	6	3	-	<b>12</b>

1. The figure in brackets after each criterion is the total number of universities which were rank ordered.
2. There have been no degree courses in Theology and Religious Studies recorded at either Cumbria or Plymouth Marjon over the last three years and no such courses at Bishop Grosseteste or Chichester in the current year's Guide.
3. No information was available for Graduate Prospects at 10 of the 31 universities running TRS courses.
4. Avg = Average position for those CG universities as a group for which returns were recorded.

### *Commentary on Tables 3 and 4*

Given their origins as Church teacher training colleges, it is not surprising that education and theology and religious studies have remained as two of their core subjects.

The specific elements making up the overall rankings in the Guide are given for education in Table 3. 7 of the universities are ranked above halfway overall – St Mary’s [14], Winchester [18], Gloucestershire [26], Plymouth Marjon [27], Liverpool Hope [35], Chester [38], and Trinity St David [39]. At 11 of the 15 universities graduate prospects in education are ranked higher than entry points – the variance being between 10 and 58 positions. At 7 of the universities the variance is over 30 positions - indicative of a value-added dimension being present.

For theology and religious studies, only two of the church universities, Trinity St David and Winchester, are ranked overall above the halfway point. However, 9 are ranked above halfway for teaching quality and in 7 instances the ranking is in single figures. Furthermore, 9 are similarly ranked halfway or above for the student experience of which 6 are in single figures. At all the 7 universities for which graduate prospects are given, the ranking for their prospects is higher than that for their entry points suggesting, as in the case of education, that a value-added dimension could well be present.

It is the areas of research quality and entry points which pull down both education and theology and religious studies in the overall rankings.

### **Conclusions**

Although there has been a gradual evolution of the church colleges of education from the mid 1970s onwards into colleges of higher education and then into university colleges, none of them were full universities before the turn of the millennium. The first became a university in its own right in 2001 followed by a further 8 in the mid 2000s and the remaining 6 in the 2010s. Therefore, the time they have had to acquire the full range of university features has been very short.

The range and the numbers of courses currently offered at the church universities reflect their origins as teacher training colleges which, since the 1970s onwards, have had to expand into new course areas. Sometimes this has been achieved through amalgamation with or absorption of other institutions but more frequently through a more organic and incremental growth into related areas. Hence it is not surprising that there is a dearth of high-tech physics laboratories and heavy engineering equipment to be found on their campuses and that the current ‘feel’ is more like that of a liberal arts university. The extent to which this could change is unclear.

Nowhere has the adjustment to full university status been more apparent than in the area of research. Many staff who had been recruited originally for their teaching expertise, frequently acquired in a school context, were now being expected to acquire doctorates and add research and publication outputs to their portfolios. As the mechanisms for funding research have operated significantly on the principle of “unto those who hath shall be given”, it is little wonder that the Church universities have found this a hard area in which to compete.

The financial and time resourcing needed for a respectable REF submission could well drain resources away from other areas where the universities are stronger. Interestingly the Guardian Guide did not include research scores “because these are of limited relevance to students”. Indeed, if this is the case and if the issue of the percentage of the student fee being used to subsidise research costs becomes more prominent, then the oft quoted mantra that research and teaching are in a mutually beneficial symbiotic relationship could well be challenged. For a low research ranking university which scores well on teaching quality and on the student experience, as the Church universities as a whole do, the benefits of the relationship might not be so obvious.

Social inclusion is also a strong feature of the Church universities reflecting their foundations and values. They are recruiting significantly from a relatively small pool of students many of whom have modest entry standards. Many are also from deprived areas, are mature students, have a working-class background, are from state schools and are the first generation of their family to attend university. The universities also score particularly well on their admissions of students with disabilities. As a result, the sector’s overall social inclusion ranking is high. However, there is a downside to being socially inclusive in that it has negatively affected rankings for entry standards, application levels, completion rates and graduate prospects as measured by salary levels.

The extent to which the church universities can maintain their strong level of social inclusion and teaching quality will depend on the extent to which government is prepared to recognise the value of diversity within the university sector and not to differentiate university standing largely on the basis of criteria which are more appropriate for those high tariff research intensive universities within the Russell Group.

Whilst being socially inclusive reflects the foundations and values of the church universities, the extent to which it is a conscious operational choice is not clear. Are the universities socially inclusive by design? Or is it a default position resulting from them entering the university sector at the eleventh hour and so having little choice as to which subjects to expand into and which so-called tariff-levels of students they can recruit?

## **Appendix 1 - Tables 5 and 6 based on the 2021 figures**

As the main purpose of the research was to provide statistical material relating to the church universities as they were immediately prior to the onset and subsequent impact of Covid19, the report above, along with the previous two reports, fulfils that purpose. Whilst that point in time is the cut-off point for the history, a postscript might be added to the book and so in anticipation of this possibility, Table 1 above has been updated using the latest statistics from *The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2022* published in September 2021 and presented below as Table 5.

The *2022 Guide* also includes a separate table on the impact of the pandemic based on 9 measures from the National Student Survey 2021. These figures have been extracted for the CG universities and are presented below as Table 6.

**Table 5 Overall university ranking and ranking by individual measures - 2021**

	BG	CCC	Che	Chi	Cum	Glo	Mar	Roe	TSD	Win	YSJ	Hope	New	StM	LeedsT	Total	Avg
<b>Ranking 2021</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>91</b>
Average ranking 2018-20	93	121	74	70	120	95	109	72	97	91	87	63	115	83	105	132	<b>93</b>
Ranking 2020	64	127	69	46	114	109	115	78	101	96	83	80	112	86	110	131	<b>93</b>
Ranking 2019	102	118	79	71	121	95	102	69	102	98	81	60	115	85	117	131	<b>94</b>
Ranking 2018	113	118	73	94	125	81	109	70	89	79	102	50	119	77	87	132	<b>92</b>
<b>Individual measures 2021</b>																	
<b><i>For overall ranking</i></b>																	
Teaching quality	56	84	58	7	84	53	4	86	13	95	31	58	25	8	113	132	<b>52</b>
Student experience	90	122	94	9	100	62	8	80	60	108	48	90	34	5	118	132	<b>69</b>
Research quality	120	97	101	81	124	108	127	50	116	83	101	62	115	104	121	127	<b>101</b>
Entry standards	116	131	85	72	77	85	85	129	46	113	113	102	126	121	126	132	<b>102</b>
Graduate prospects	42	67	64	108	73	106	111	119	118	103	98	116	102	89	111	132	<b>95</b>
Good honours	110	120	95	63	127	88	70	111	96	79	85	96	121	60	41	132	<b>91</b>
Facilities spend	91	89	33	119	123	111	132	12	95	122	90	93	112	116	105	132	<b>96</b>
Student-staff ratio	116	74	40	47	79	91	74	53	112	94	105	43	100	103	131	132	<b>84</b>
Completion rates	48	116	92	55	87	96	109	113	107	68	65	81	122	92	91	131	<b>89</b>
<b><i>Student population</i></b>																	
Best at sport	127	78	75	55	121	65	80	100	125	86	85	93	113	46	114	128	<b>91</b>
Most applications	132	92	79	108	122	104	129	107	127	93	100	96	126	117	111	134	<b>110</b>
Most competition	134	127	42	105	114	124	130	93	130	110	78	42	42	85	54	134	<b>94</b>
Most mature	38	22	31	59	13	38	21	17	8	60	57	58	18	48	10	116	<b>33</b>
Most EU students	132	88	123	112	114	115	128	92	98	115	119	104	130	-	117	133	<b>113</b>
Most overseas [non-EU]	128	126	94	115	118	106	127	94	121	100	110	122	-	-	131	132	<b>115</b>

[Table continued on next page]

	BG	CCC	Che	Chi	Cum	Glo	Mar	Roe	TSD	Win	YSJ	Hope	New	StM	LeedsT	Total	Avg
<b>Ranking 2021</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>91</b>
<b><i>Financial matters</i></b>																	
Univ accomm prices	79	85	25	63	1	82	39	46	8	96	58	25	65	-	46	129	51
<b><i>Social inclusion</i></b>																	
<b><i>Overall inclusion ranking</i></b>	<b>2</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>39</b>
Low participation areas	4	26	13	18	24	49	20	106	48	40	15	7	22	91	15	116	33
Deprived area dropout gap	15	71	64	95	93	25	15	8	-	34	92	96	66	80	80	96	60
Black achievement gap	-	118	50	110	90	58	107	90	20	100	120	103	111	31	49	121	83
Disabled students	4	53	66	20	39	17	5	84	6	9	50	22	13	64	111	131	38
Ethnic minority students	114	58	102	107	86	101	110	12	109	93	108	90	33	49	31	116	80
Mature students	38	22	31	59	13	38	21	17	8	60	57	58	18	48	10	116	33
State school [not grammar]	28	40	47	39	25	54	11	18	6	42	35	71	3	59	23	116	33
1 <sup>st</sup> generation HE students	5	10	24	51	20	55	12	45	62	44	52	43	1	68	7	116	33
Independent schools	116	109	89	72	107	83	99	100	113	73	82	116	131	55	111	133	97
Grammar schools	72	62	62	100	84	53	124	102	124	82	93	34	107	84	86	130	85

### ***Notes***

1. Totals vary slightly as information was not always available for every university.
2. In the Social Inclusion section, for the overall ranking and for the items on deprived areas and black achievement, the statistics collected relate to England and Wales only. For all other items, the information includes Scotland as well as England and Wales.
3. Avg = average position for CG universities as a group.

### ***Definitions***

4. Mature student = 21 year olds and over
5. Black achievement gap – is the difference between the proportion of 1st and 2.1 degrees attained by white as opposed to black students. The lower the ranking the lower is the proportion of top-class degrees obtained by black students relative to white students.

### *Commentary on Table 5*

For the CG as a whole, there is very little difference between the 2021 figures and those for the three previous years – overall rankings varying between 91<sup>st</sup> and 94<sup>th</sup>. In terms of the nine individual measures making up the overall rankings, the biggest difference is the drop in the overall ranking for teaching quality between the 2021 and 2022 Guides from 33<sup>rd</sup> to 52<sup>nd</sup> and for the student experience from 51<sup>st</sup> to 69<sup>th</sup>, as reflected in the National Student Survey. It is not proposed to make any further observations on the figures either at an item or at an institutional level, as those currently in the universities are in a much better position to do so. Having done the construction of the table for book research purposes, it is simply offered as a possible resource for future planning.

**Table 6: The Pandemic Impact - 2021**

	BG	CCC	Che	Chi	Cum	Glo	Mar	Roe	TSD	Win	YSJ	Hope	New	StM	LeedsT	Total	Avg
<b>Overall Ranking 2021</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>Overall Pandemic Impact</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>79</b>
Course teaching	66	96	80	7	106	77	5	93	37	104	55	72	61	10	117	130	<b>66</b>
Learning opportunities	89	86	79	20	71	62	3	108	12	84	45	81	7	4	117	130	<b>58</b>
Assessment + feedback	14	46	24	15	63	35	8	65	7	91	20	32	15	19	75	130	<b>35</b>
Academic support	86	119	70	4	96	45	4	93	26	103	33	66	49	14	120	130	<b>62</b>
Organisation/management	101	125	101	54	120	75	24	49	53	104	59	86	41	7	96	130	<b>73</b>
Learning resources	108	82	114	12	65	57	46	55	124	119	70	123	27	13	125	130	<b>76</b>
Learning community	63	108	90	4	46	44	2	116	14	97	45	54	23	5	106	130	<b>54</b>
Student voice	58	113	43	13	104	78	3	89	24	67	27	78	19	6	83	130	<b>54</b>
Overall satisfaction	94	121	79	20	109	67	15	78	60	105	46	75	60	17	120	130	<b>71</b>

### *Commentary on Table 6*

The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2022 compared the results from the National Student Survey 2021 with those from the 2020 survey and found that only two universities [Imperial College London and the University of Surrey] improved their scores year on year. All the rest saw their ratings fall. The Guide concluded “there has never been an NSS like it since the survey was first published in 2005, as students delivered an often damning verdict on the past year and how the pandemic impacted on their university experience”.

“The views of 332,500 final year students were submitted between January and April this year [2021] across nine areas of student life. ....The sheer volume of responses - amounting to more than 69% of the year group - make the results impossible to ignore and sobering reading for many institutions”.

The Guide is clear that “the findings... will matter to prospective students applying for entry next year, especially where universities have indicated that “blended learning” is likely to continue, with lectures online in the longer term and face masks still required”.

The table above sets out the ranking positions of the Church universities for each of the 9 areas of student life which have gone to make up what has been termed ‘the overall pandemic impact’. Three of the universities are in the top 30 overall of which two are in the top 10 [Chichester 25, St Mary’s 7 and Plymouth Marjon 5]. Five are in the lowest 30.

Six of the universities register a substantial positive difference between their overall ranking and their pandemic impact ranking – Plymouth Marjon 96; St Mary’s 60; Newman 41; Gloucestershire 35; Cumbria 34; and Chichester 25.

Taking the average ranking score of the 15 CG universities for each of the 9 areas of student life, assessment and feedback comes out highest at 35, followed by the learning community and the student voice each at 54 and learning opportunities at 58. Conversely the lowest are learning resources at 76, organisation and management at 73 and overall satisfaction at 71.

## Appendix 2

**Table 7: English Cathedrals Group University enrolments by gender 2019-20** [source HESA]

	Female	Male	Other	Total	Percentage Female
Bishop Grosseteste	1820	455	5	2280	81.1
Canterbury CC	9210	4125	5	13340	69.0
Chester	9285	4255	5	13545	68.5
Chichester	3415	2125	0	5545	61.6
Cumbria	5230	2695	20	7945	65.8
Gloucestershire	4735	3150	30	7915	59.8
Plymouth Marjon	1410	1335	0	2750	51.3
Roehampton	7970	4510	15	12495	63.8
Winchester	5350	2660	35	8000	66.3
York St John	4490	2505	5	7000	64.1
Liverpool Hope	3370	1595	15	4985	67.6
Newman	2110	680	0	2795	75.5
St Mary's	2905	2610	5	5520	52.6
Leeds Trinity	3045	1940	0	4985	61.1
<b>All English CG unis</b>	<b>64300</b>	<b>34640</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>99100</b>	<b>64.9</b>
<b>All English universities</b>	<b>1175140</b>	<b>898475</b>	<b>2850</b>	<b>2076465</b>	<b>56.6</b>

*Commentary:* The student population of the English CG universities overall contains a higher proportion of females than found in the English universities as a whole. The difference is 8.3%. Only two of the CG universities have a lower proportion - Plymouth Marjon and St Mary's. Explanations for the differential could include the perceived nature of the CG universities as small, safe places, their focus on ITE and especially early years and primary, and their course portfolios majoring on the humanities and social sciences.

## Paper 4: Cathedrals Group universities in the 2021 Research Excellence Framework

**Table 1: Cathedrals Group Universities – Overall REF Ranking 2021**

	Overall REF ranking			REF subject ranking	
	2008	2014	2021	Education	TRS
Bishop Grosseteste	131	125	<b>127</b>	76	30
Canterbury CC	111	98	<b>92</b>	<b>41</b>	25
Chester	114	117	<b>112</b>	71	<b>14</b>
Chichester	96	95	<b>118</b>	80	28
Cumbria	130	113	<b>120</b>	70	-
Gloucestershire	116	98	<b>116</b>	58	26
Plymouth Marjon	-	-	<b>114</b>	59	-
Roehampton	72	60	<b>51</b>	<b>19</b>	21
Trinity St David	-	97	<b>112</b>	68	23
Winchester	78	104	<b>109</b>	46	20
York St John	128	120	<b>116</b>	59	27
Liverpool Hope	127	107	<b>110</b>	50	22
Newman	123	113	<b>126</b>	77	29
St Mary's	115	124	<b>92</b>	-	24
Leeds Trinity	104	123	<b>125</b>	78	31
Average all CG universities	<b>111</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>109</b>		
<b>Total Universities</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>31</b>

### Commentary

1. In terms of overall ranking 2021, Roehampton at 51<sup>st</sup> is in the second quartile, Canterbury and St Mary's Twickenham at joint 92nd are in the third quartile and the other 12 are in the fourth quartile.

2. There are the two subjects historically most associated with the church universities. In education, Roehampton is in the first quartile at 19<sup>th</sup>, Canterbury is in the second at 41<sup>st</sup>, 5 are in the third quartile and 6 in the fourth quartile. In theology and religious studies, Chester is the second quartile at 14<sup>th</sup>, 4 are in the third quartile and 8 in the fourth quartile.
3. The overall rankings from the 2008 and 2014 REF are given for comparison purposes. The average ranking for the CG universities as a group has hardly changed in the 13 year period from 2008 to 2021.

**Table 2. Cathedrals Group Universities: Subject REF Ranking- 2021**

	All	BG	CCC	Che	Chi	Cum	Glo	Mar	Roe	TSD	Win	YSJ	Hope	New	St Mar	Leeds T	Ch uni
Clinical medicine	<b>31</b>																<b>0</b>
Public health	<b>33</b>																<b>0</b>
Allied health	<b>91</b>		63	65		82			<b>43</b>			88					<b>5</b>
Psychology	<b>93</b>	87	64	75	85		90		47	91	79	60	47	93		88	<b>12</b>
Biological sciences	<b>44</b>		41	44													<b>2</b>
Agriculture	<b>25</b>												25				<b>1</b>
Earth + environ	<b>40</b>																<b>0</b>
Chemistry	<b>41</b>			41													<b>1</b>
Physics	<b>44</b>																<b>0</b>
Maths	<b>54</b>			52													<b>1</b>
Computer	<b>90</b>			86								84					<b>2</b>
Engineering	<b>89</b>			86	85		89										<b>3</b>
Architecture	<b>38</b>						34										<b>1</b>
Geography+environ	<b>56</b>			55		49	43					56	54				<b>5</b>
Archaeology	<b>24</b>			23							24						<b>2</b>
Economics	<b>25</b>																<b>0</b>
Business+management	<b>108</b>			90	107	106	103		59		85	101					<b>7</b>
Law	<b>69</b>		58								68						<b>2</b>
Politics	<b>56</b>		53								54		56				<b>3</b>
Social work	<b>76</b>			69	76	75					66		61	72	71		<b>7</b>
Sociology	<b>37</b>						32		24			35					<b>3</b>
Anthropology	<b>26</b>																<b>0</b>
Education	<b>83</b>	76	<b>41</b>	71	80	70	58	59	<b>19</b>	68	46	59	50	77		78	<b>14</b>
Sport	<b>61</b>		<b>30</b>	51	34		44	45			48	41	61	57	<b>22</b>	59	<b>11</b>

	All courses	BG	CCC	Che	Chi	Cum	Glo	Mar	Roe	TSD	Win	YSJ	Hope	New	St Mar	LeedsT	Ch univ courses
Area studies	<b>23</b>			23													<b>1</b>
Modern languages	<b>47</b>									40		46					<b>2</b>
English land+lit	<b>81</b>	92	47	82	75		87		48		89	90	76	77	80	71	<b>12</b>
History	<b>81</b>	80	65	60	55		81		45		65	76	68	79			<b>10</b>
Classics	<b>17</b>																<b>0</b>
Philosophy	<b>35</b>																<b>0</b>
Theol+RS	<b>31</b>	30	25	<b>14</b>	28		26		21	23	20	27	22	29	24	31	<b>13</b>
Art+design	<b>86</b>			65		74	44			76		83	84				<b>6</b>
Music etc	<b>84</b>		52	71	78				<b>8</b>		56	58	67			80	<b>8</b>
Communication	<b>58</b>		35				50		<b>21</b>		45						<b>4</b>
Subjects offered by each university		<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>138</b>
Number ranked over halfway		<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>

### Commentary

1. Of the total 138 subject submissions made to the REF by the 15 Cathedrals Group universities, 2 (1.5%) such submissions were ranked in the first quartile of the relevant subject area, 6 (4.5%) in the second, 32 (23%) in the third and 98 (71%) in the fourth quartile.

2. There are questions as to the level of significance which the research rankings should be accorded by the Church universities and the amount of human and financial resourcing which should be given to enhancing research standing. For instance, the Guardian says it focuses its student guides “on the things that matter most to students, such as good teaching and job prospects, rather than basing them on academic research”.

### **1. Notes to Tables**

1. On the grounds of visual clarity, It was decided not to use the = sign where more than one institution had the same ranking.
2. Where the ranking for a subject at a university was at least halfway up the leader-board it has been entered in bold and italics.

### **2. Institutional abbreviations used in table 2**

BG	Bishop Grosseteste
CCC	Canterbury Christ Church
Che	Chester
Chi	Chichester
Cum	Cumbria
Glo	Gloucestershire
Mar	Plymouth Marjon
Roe	Roehampton
TSD	Trinity St David Wales
YSJ	York St John
Hope	Liverpool Hope
New	Newman Birmingham
St Mar	St Mary's Twickenham
Leeds T	Leeds Trinity

### **3. Subject titles in full**

Clinical medicine  
Public health, health services and primary care  
Allied health professions, dentistry, nursing and pharmacy  
Psychology, psychiatry and neuroscience  
Biological sciences  
Agriculture, food and veterinary sciences

Earth systems and environmental sciences

Chemistry

Physics

Mathematical sciences

Computer science and informatics

Engineering

Architecture, built environment and planning

Geography and environmental studies

Archaeology

Economics and econometrics

Business and management studies

Law

Politics and international studies

Social work and social policy

Sociology

Anthropology and development studies

Education

Sport and exercise sciences, leisure and tourism

Area studies

Modern languages and linguistics

English language and literature

History

Classics

Philosophy

Theology and religious studies

Art and design: history, practice and theory

Music, drama, dance, performing arts, film and screen studies

Communication, cultural and media studies, library and information management