



Diocese of York: Lifelong Learning
Supporting mission and ministry across the Diocese of York

Advanced Study Grant – Guidance

Testing the call

The Diocese of York recognises that in the context of your vocation to ministry and as a part of your Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD) it may be appropriate for you to pursue a course of advanced study, possibly leading to a higher degree. This discernment may arise from personal reflection, or in your Ministerial Development Review. In testing this call you are invited to consult with the Director of Lifelong Learning well in advance of the proposed start of a course.

The next stage is to discuss the possibility with your Archdeacon and Suffragan Bishop in the context of your ministerial development. There are many people with sufficient capability and interest to study successfully for a higher degree, but for whom the opportunity is not available for a variety of reasons, including the wider context of their vocation and ministry. Taking a higher degree is demanding of time and energy and so has consequences on your colleagues in your immediate and wider contexts. Within those discussions it is helpful to consider if the possibility of Extended Study Leave at some stage during the study, is appropriate.

The process outlined here is separate to the issue of funding; even if you are able to be self-funding you need to have the support of your Archdeacon and Suffragan Bishop to study for a higher degree.

Note for curates in the IME 2 programme:

There may be an option of starting the MA through St Hild College. This should be discussed with your training incumbent and the Start of Ordained Ministries Advisor. The diocese fully funds the first three modules; funding for the rest of the MA is subject to the arrangements described below.

Applying for diocesan funding

Grants to assist with the cost of a higher degree will not normally be given to people in the first two or last seven years of ministry, aside from the special local arrangements in IME 2 for the MA. Grants for more than one academic year will be dependent on a report on your progress (supported by evidence from your awarding institution) submitted each year to the CMD Grant's Panel. Grants will not normally be continued for more than three years in the case of a Masters degree and for five years in the case of a doctoral degree. Grants are for a maximum of 50% of tuition fees and 50% of required residential costs, up to a maximum of £1200 in any academic year. All Grants are subject to the current Diocesan financial situation and there are limited funds for this kind of grant and no guarantee can be made that funding will be awarded.

Application Forms

All applications should be in advance of the proposed event and retrospective grants will not normally be approved. The form should be accompanied by a letter of support from your Suffragan Bishop and the offer of a place from the appropriate educational institution. The Application Form is available for download from the Diocesan website. For Grant Funding a new application will need to be made each year of your study.

The CMD Grants Panel

The CMD Grants Panel currently comprises the Director of Lifelong learning, The Director of Mission and Ministry, The Start of Ordained Ministries Advisor, plus one appointed experienced priest. They meet four times a year (approx. early Jan/ April/ July and Oct). In order to ensure that an application can be processed in time, the completed form should be received at least two weeks before a Panel meeting.

The CMD Grants Panel administrator will confirm receipt of the application and advise the applicant of the decision of the Panel and organise payment of any grant. In cases of uncertainty, the Panel may consult the Bishop to reach a decision.

Payment

Where grants are approved for external events, the payment of funds from the Diocese is to the applicant, as the 'customer' of the provider, not directly to the provider. In practical terms, this normally means that the applicant may need sign up and potentially pay for the course in advance of receiving the CMD grant.

The Finance Department pays by BACS transfer to personal bank accounts on a fortnightly basis. Please ensure that the Diocese has your correct bank details on record. If there is any doubt about this, then please add them to the Advanced Study Application form.

Specific Matters

Travel

Advanced Study Grants are not available to cover travel expenses. These are primarily a parish/benefice responsibility or may need to be covered either personally or through other support.

Books

The Advanced grant may not be used for the purchase of books unless these are a required part of a course.

Lynn Comer
Director of Lifelong Learning