

## Full-Time Residential Contextual Training

*with the College of the Resurrection and St Hild*

Full-time contextual training is the fastest-growing mode of ordination training in the Church of England. Over 60 people have trained with St. Hild College through this route.

Residential training with the College of the Resurrection offers a deeply rooted formational experience of community life at the home of the Community of the Resurrection in Mirfield.

*'Residing in Mirfield on a beautiful site hallowed by rhythms of monastic life for over a century while learning-in-practice in a local parish context really will be getting the best of both worlds: deep spiritual roots and breadth of missional experience.'*

*-Revd Dr Janet Williams*

### **Students on this pathway will be members of both Colleges:**

The College of the Resurrection (CoR) will be your primary home – literally, as you will live there, and metaphorically, in that your Diocese will count you as a 'CoR ordinand'; you will take a full part in the life of the CoR community, including worship and prayer. CoR staff will provide overall formational and tutorial support, including additional short-term placements.

St Hild will provide and oversee your contextual placement and your academic studies, which will normally include a programme of study towards a Durham University award in Theology, Ministry and Mission: the university will count you as a 'St Hild student'. Most of your classes will be with St Hild, including some weekend workshops and monthly meetings with other full-time contextual students to reflect together and share your learning.

This form of training is suitable for all ordinands who can be considered for residential training; it will be especially attractive for those seeking to combine the experience of the structured spiritual life of Mirfield, with the missional training available in a full-time context.

### **The Formation Experience:**

Term-time residence in Mirfield: CoR accommodation is provided, including

- The availability of family accommodation for married students;
- A rhythm of regular worship and prayer with other CoR students;
- Normally 16 hours per week in a missional placement context within convenient travelling distance from Mirfield ;
- Weekly study on a Wednesday night with St Hild in Mirfield, some Saturday study days (with additional time off in the week to compensate) and dedicated study time during the week.

## Key strengths of this pathway include:

- An active and practice-based approach, being formed as a fully active and empowered member of a community of missional learners, in a wide range of church contexts
- Be formed by a rhythm of learning and prayer, growing deep spiritual roots to sustain you through times of change and challenge
- Growing the character and skills that support future mission and ministry
- Learning in a way that is applied to local contexts, so you can make new connections and reach your academic potential
- Share in the unique breadth of Church traditions represented across our two Colleges, learning alongside those called to different patterns of lay and ordained ministry

## How does the process work?

Your first approach should be to the College of the Resurrection: arrange a visit and an interview conversation. [Book a visit here.](#) Let them know that you're considering the Joint Colleges Pathway, and they'll make sure you get a chance to meet with St Hild while you're in Mirfield. St Hild's Vice Principal will talk with you to identify the best programme of academic study, and St Hild's Contextual Tutor will be keen to talk with you to get a sense of the kind of placement context that will best suit you.

If it's practical for you, and you'd like to come along to a St Hild Open Day as well, you will be most welcome. This would enable you to get a sense of the St Hild community - *but this is not a necessity*. [More information here.](#) You will receive a formal offer of training from the College of the Resurrection, which will include the details agreed with both colleges. We can keep on talking with you about potential contextual placements, before you make a final choice about your training, so that you have as much information as possible when making your decision. This will usually include an initial conversation with a potential placement incumbent, facilitated by St Hild's Contextual Tutor.

Once you have accepted the offer of a place on the Joint Colleges Pathway (subject to recommendation by BAP), in conversation with you we will confirm details of your placement and training pathway.

## Practical Questions

*How will I manage the competing demands of belonging to two Colleges alongside a commitment to my placement context?*

In a typical week in term-time you will spend the equivalent of two full days in context, including Sunday services; you will the equivalent of two full days set aside for classes and private studies; the remainder of the week will afford space for worship, CoR community life, and rest and relaxation. Outside of term-time you will be free from commitment to your contextual placement, and may choose to return to your home base. Where appropriate and helpful to you, there may be one or more short-term placements for you to undertake outside term-time: these will be discussed with you and overseen by the CoR staff team.

This pathway will require you to be adept at moving between quite different cultures, but you will be treading a path pioneered by others, and supported by staff and peers in both colleges. We know that it can work well for the right candidates.

### *What exactly will I study?*

Your academic programme of study will be decided by St Hild in conversation with you. We do not have a 'one size fits all' study programme, but will work to identify the best route for you based on your prior study and experience, the nature of your vocation, and in response to any particular training needs identified at BAP. You might study towards an undergraduate, graduate or post-graduate award over two or three years, completing anything from the Common Awards suite which includes the Higher Education Diploma, BA, Graduate or Post-Graduate Diploma, or MA. [See Durham Common Awards here.](#)

Whatever your academic programme, a significant portion of it will relate to reflecting on what you are learning through experience, both in your placement/s and in the shared life of worship and prayer. More traditional academic studies will include modules in biblical study, church tradition (including worship and doctrine), and ministry and mission. Studies are organised in modules which carry ten or twenty credits; the typical programme of study is made up of between 80 and 120 credits per academic year. The majority of your classes will be with St Hild, but we aim to identify one or two modules a year that you can take alongside CoR students. For students requiring additional learning support, additional study time can be provided.

### *What support is there for me and my family?*

As a CoR student, you and any accompanying family will have access to all the pastoral and practical support of the Mirfield community. You will belong to a CoR tutorial and prayer group.

As a member of the St Hild Full-Time Contextual Pathway, you will be supported by our Mirfield Contextual Tutor who will oversee the arrangement and ongoing review of your context. You will also join a monthly peer-group meeting for reflection on contextual learning. In your context, you will have a placement supervisor who is responsible for ensuring that you are given opportunities for effective learning and growth, and regular theological reflection. The local context is also a place of community and support for ordinands and, where appropriate, their families. In our experience, full-time contextual students grow significantly in their capacity to manage complexity, connect with support structures, and flourish in a local context – all of this prepares them well for curacy and future ministry.

**'The College of The Resurrection is delighted to be working with St Hild College to offer a single ordination pathway that weaves together some of the distinctive strengths of the two colleges. Our rhythm of life and regular worship has a well established reputation for producing priests with a resilient commitment to community, prayer and service. We now welcome into this pattern of formation those who have also chosen to train through St Hild's established pattern of contextual learning.'** -Rt Revd Mark Sowerby

## Our Contextual Team



Rev Shona Shaw oversees ordinand formation in Mission and Evangelism at St Hild Mirfield and St Hild Online and in our cross-college ordinand residential programme. She trained for Baptist ministry at Regents Park College, Oxford whilst completing an MTh in Applied Theology. She has served rural and urban multi-cultural churches in Bradford, Oxford and Leeds, developing team ministry and congregational responses to mission.

Prior to ministry, Shona studied Music and English Literature at Durham, before moving to London to complete post grad studies in vocal performance and qualify as an occupational therapist. Shona currently divides her time between St Hild and a charity leading participatory research with neurodiverse young people and their families in West Yorkshire.



The Rt Revd Mark Sowerby has served a variety of parishes in the dioceses of Ripon (& Leeds), Blackburn, Southwark and Chichester, where he was Bishop of Horsham for ten years. He has also served as an ADDO, a Selection Secretary and as the National Vocations Officer. Bishop Mark has been Principal of The College of The Resurrection since 2019 and has overall responsibility for ordinands' formation for ministry. Bishop Mark has also served as Vice Chair of the National Safeguarding Panel, The National Safeguarding Steering Group and the first Seal of The Confessional Working Party. He chaired the Safeguarding Training Working Group and the PCR2 Project Management Board. He was Chair of the Chichester Diocesan Board of Education and a governor of Chichester University.

Bishop Mark read Theology at King's College, London and for his MA at The University of Lancaster.