

half module', wm means whole module'; a module is 40 hours contact time.

This process led us to make a number of commitments of principle concerning the process of integration. These are summarised under eight headings.

Ecumenical: at the level of inter-church collaboration few problems were raised since the group planning the Course was ecumenical in composition. Only at one point in the whole Course, for half of the 'Understanding Our Tradition' half module, are Participants separated into denominational groups. That is when they look specifically at their own traditions but separation takes place only after they have explored their histories together (common history is also the subject of other modules). By 'ecumenical' we refer not only to ecclesiology but to the oikoumene. The Participants are a small part of the world church and an even smaller part of the whole human family, a significant proportion of whom live in hunger and poverty. We cannot avoid issues of politics and international finance and as members of a rich society have to face up to the implications of being both oppressors and the oppressed.

Experience: we committed ourselves to taking seriously the experience of the learners. By experience we mean all that Participants bring with them from their homes, previous learning and working life and their experience of the faith and the church. To this is added their experience on the Course and in their placements. In order that Participants can contribute from their experience, the style of teaching has to be informal and participative and owes more to methods of adult education than to a traditional university. Most evidence of experience being taken seriously is found in work submitted for assessment.

study. In the diagram, hm means

Placements: all participants - whether full- or part-time - spend some time each week in a church or community placement. Our aim is that there will be a dialogue in the minds of the Participants and tutors between work done in the classroom and work done in placements. To facilitate this tutors have to be alert to the likely demands of placement work in their teaching. We expect all written work to take seriously placement experience. A piece which shows evidence of wide reading which does not also relate to personal and placement experience receives a lower mark than a piece which shows evidence of less reading but which is well related to a context.

Contextual: our approach is contextual. The first Course all Participants take, social analysis, requires them to undertake field work research in their locality. This emphasis on local context resonates in all our theological, biblical and historical work. Students from overseas are expected to ground their work as far as possible in their home context. This means that actual contexts and classroom work are also continually in dialogue. To clarify, by 'context' we mean, all that is included in the human environment -social, political, religious and physical- understood from both contemporary and historical perspectives. In addition, the world view, cognitive processes, linguistic forms, behavioural patterns, social structure, communication means and motivation of the people concerned have to be taken into account.

Collaboration: we work collaboratively. Often Participants are asked to work in twos or threes to prepare seminar presentations. Occasionally a whole class has worked together on one jointly assessment project. This is a very considerable discipline for some

Participants. Questions about leadership, how people can respect each others' strengths and cope with their own weaknesses and sometimes about the conflicting claims of

It is our view that theological education for ministry and for developing discipleship and mission is based on the critically open exploration of a cocktail of subjects and on appropriate adult education methods, which together form a distinctive discipline.

their will to achieve personally or as a group are raised. Participants know that people as well as books are resources.

Collaborative working is an essential part of preparation for team ministry. Working collaboratively means that there is no competition on the Course. Participants learn that doing their best as an offering of praise to God also implies helping others to do their best.

Lay and Ordained: in opening all courses for lay people and ordinands and in some instances for ordained people as well, to learn together, we are implementing the policies of two member denominations. But experi-

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ence has shown over several years that the learning process is enlivened by the dialogue between Participants who bring