

# BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

## College Full Inspection

**NAME OF INSTITUTION:** Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland College

**ADDRESS:** 133 Woodlands Road  
Glasgow  
G3 6LE

**HEAD OF INSTITUTION:** Rev Dr James Tallach

**DATE OF INSPECTION:** 21-22 November 2018

**ACCREDITATION STATUS AT INSPECTION:** Accredited

**DECISION ON ACCREDITATION:**

- Accreditation awarded for the full four-year period
- Probation accreditation
- Decision on accreditation deferred
- Award of accreditation refused

DATE: 31 January 2019

## **PART A – INTRODUCTION**

### **1. Background to the institution**

The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland College (the FPCSC/the Institution) has been in operation since 1896, which is three years after the foundation of its parent organisation, the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland (FPCS/the Church). The aim of the Institution is to train ministers for the Church. The Institution is owned by the Church, which is a registered Scottish charity. The Church and Institution are funded from contributions from congregations, donations, legacies and the interest accruing from investments. The members of the Church Finance Committee are the trustees of the Church and the Institution.

The Institution is managed by the Church's Training of the Ministry Committee (TMC). The TMC is responsible for the Church's educational functions and for the Institution and its Divinity course. The TMC's authority to manage the Institution comes from the Church's Synod, which is the Church's governing body. The TMC is appointed annually by the Synod, although its members normally serve several terms. The TMC comprises the Convener or Chair of the TMC, who is the head of the Institution and the programme manager, the three tutors who deliver the course and some other ministers and/or elders of the Church. While the number of TMC members who are elders can vary, the TMC normally has a maximum of ten members. The TMC reports annually to the Synod.

The Divinity course is the Institution's sole course. It is a three-year course for those seeking to be licensed as ministers in the FPCS. Institution training is delivered on three Scottish sites, in the cities of Glasgow and Aberdeen and in Ness in the north of the Isle of Lewis in the Hebrides. Successful students are given a certificate from the TMC stating that they have passed their exit examinations. Successful completion of the course is an essential prerequisite for being licensed as a minister of the FPCS.

The Institution's administrative headquarters are in Glasgow, within the St Jude's Congregation's church building. The General Treasurer (GT) is the chief administrator and finance officer for the Church and the Institution and manages a secretarial assistant.

The Convener and three tutors are ministers of the Church. Their role in training ministers is therefore part of their broader role in the Church. The proportion of their overall Church activity that is devoted to the work of training students for the ministry varies according to the cyclical demands of the programme and the students' needs.

### **2. Brief description of the current provision**

After a gap since 2014 due to a lack of students, the Divinity course began again in September 2018. It consists of three years of study, of at least thirty weeks each, running from September to April each year. It has three distinct components, each delivered on a different site by a different tutor. The part of the course that looks at New Testament Greek and cognate subjects started in Ness in September 2018. Old Testament Hebrew and cognate subjects will be delivered in Aberdeen in the academic year 2019 to 2020 and Systematic Theology and cognate subjects will be delivered in Glasgow in the academic year 2020 to 2021. New Testament Greek and cognate subjects at the Ness site is, therefore, the only part of the course currently being taught.

Entrants are normally required to have a tertiary level qualification in a relevant subject, although each applicant is considered on an individual basis. Depending on an applicant's prior qualifications, the TMC may require them to undertake additional pre-entry tertiary level study in subjects relevant to the course. The TMC advises applicants on any additional pre-entry courses they require and if necessary, applicants are financially supported to undertake them.

All the current students have successfully completed tertiary level courses, two with advice and funding from the Church. While they were undertaking these courses, they had also attended FPCSC electronic tutorials to improve their Greek and Hebrew.

Delivery of each year of the programme is face-to-face for all students for six months. Students from outside the United Kingdom (UK), who are in the country on a short-term study visa, then complete the academic year in their home country using online meeting facilities. They then come back to the UK the following year for a further six months and undertake the next year of the programme. UK students are in face-to-face contact throughout the course.

The three current students based in Ness are all male as the Church requires. The minimum age for entry is 21 and current students are all mature, with one in their thirties and two in their forties. There are two UK students and one overseas student from Zimbabwe.

A fourth student is expected to join the course in September 2019.

### **3. Inspection process**

The inspection was carried out by one inspector over one and a half days on Ness, with a follow-up meeting with the General Treasurer held the following day. The inspector had meetings with the Ness tutor, the GT, all students on the Ness site, observed both teaching and learning sessions held during the inspection, and scrutinised relevant documentation. The inspector also had a tour of the facilities at Ness. The Institution's cooperation with the process was excellent, with the required information made available and clearly presented.

### **4. Inspection History**

<b>Inspection Type</b>	<b>Date</b>
Stage 2	2 May 2018

## PART B - JUDGMENT AND EVIDENCE

The following judgments and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector(s) during the inspection and from documentation provided by the institution.

### INSPECTION AREA - MANAGEMENT, STAFFING AND ADMINISTRATION

#### 1. The institution is effectively managed

- |     |  |   |                             |
|-----|--|---|-----------------------------|
| 1.1 | The management structure is clearly defined, documented and understood, including the role and extent of authority of any owners, trustees or governing body.                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.2 | The head of the institution and other senior managers are suitably qualified and experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying them out. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.3 | There are clear channels of communication between the management and staff.  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be:

Met     Partially Met     Not Met

#### Comments

The powers and duties of the trustees are set out in the Scheme of Financial Administration (1960). Finance Committee meetings include periodic training and development for trustees. As a result, their roles and responsibilities are well understood.

The Institution's structure and its relationship with the Church Synod are set out in a clear organisational chart and in the Regulations for the Reception and Training of Students for the Ministry (the Regulations) contained in the Church's Manual of Practice (the Manual).

All members of the TMC and Institution staff are well qualified for and experienced in their roles, with the TMC Convener having held that post since 2004. They are all knowledgeable about the governance framework, the responsibilities of the TMC and their own roles.

The TMC provides a clear formal channel of communication for the Convener, tutors and the GT. It normally meets twice a year, most recently in October 2018, and meetings are minuted. Meetings are an appropriate means of reporting on and monitoring the Institution and student progress. There is also regular informal telephone and e-mail interaction among staff about any course or student related issues that arise.

Channels of communication and information are therefore effective, with all staff aware of any management, staffing or administration issues that arise and able to take action themselves or via the TMC.

#### 2. The administration of the institution is effective

- |     |  |   |                             |
|-----|--|---|-----------------------------|
| 2.1 | Administrators are suitably qualified or experienced and understand their specific responsibilities and duties.  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2.2 | The size of the administrative team is sufficient to ensure the effective day-to-day running of the institution. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2.3 | The administrative support available to the management is clearly defined, documented and understood.            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2.4 | Policies, procedures and systems are well documented and effectively disseminated across the institution.        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

2.5 Data collection and collation systems are effective.  Yes  No

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

There are two part-time members of administrative staff, based in Glasgow. The GT is a qualified actuary who has been the head of administration and finance for the Church and the Institution since 2007. The secretarial assistant has worked for the Institution for 20 years. Both are experienced and understand their roles. The tutor undertakes day-to-day administration on the Ness site and is experienced in that.

This staff complement is appropriate for the number of current students and likely enrolments. As a result, the administrative support available is good.

Policies and procedures are contained in the Manual. The GT ensures that Institution staff and TMC members are aware of relevant policies developed by the Church or by the Institution's administration, either by contacting them directly or via the TMC. Data collection and collation is primarily paper based and this is satisfactory for a small organisation.

**3. The institution employs appropriate managerial and administrative staff**

3.1 There are appropriate policies and effective procedures for the recruitment and continuing employment of suitably qualified and experienced staff.  Yes  No

3.2 Experience and qualifications claimed are verified before employment.  Yes  No

3.3 There is an effective system for regularly reviewing the performance of staff.  Yes  No

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

The GT's key responsibility is to ensure that the finances and administration of the Church including the Institution are effectively managed so that the Church can fulfil its mission and objectives including training ministers. The GT is responsible to the Church's Finance Committee for the day-to-day financial operations of the Church and the Institution.

The GT is appointed by the Synod, with his assistant being appointed by the Church's Finance Committee. The post of GT requires qualifications, knowledge and experience in finance and administration, and the assistant is required to have secretarial skills. They are also required to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to the Church. The Finance Committee of the FPCS is responsible for setting the employment conditions for staff including the General Treasurer.

There has been no recent recruitment as the General Treasurer and his assistant are both longstanding members of staff but policies and procedures ensure staff are able to undertake their responsibilities and are appropriate and effective.

Their qualification and/or experience were verified before appointment by the Synod and Finance Committee.

The Church's annual report and financial accounts are considered each year by the Synod. As the Synod appoints the GT that is an effective method for reviewing performance. The fact that the TMC also reports to the Synod provides a mechanism enabling the TMC to flag with the Synod any concerns they have about the GT's performance in relation to the Institution.

**4. Publicity material, both printed and electronic, gives a comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate description of the institution and its curriculum**

4.1 Text and images provide an accurate depiction of the institution's location, premises, facilities and the range and nature of resources and services offered.  Yes  No

4.2 Information on the courses available is comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date.  Yes  No

**This standard is judged to be:**  Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

4.1 The Institution does not produce publicity material as students are referred by presbyteries and are not actively recruited. This key indicator is therefore not applicable.

Currently, information about the course is comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date and available in hard copy. The TMC intends to review the Church website and assess the possibility of adding training and Institution-related content, providing another means of obtaining relevant information.

**5. The institution takes reasonable care to recruit and enrol suitable students for its courses**

5.1 Entry requirements for each course are set at an appropriate level and clearly stated in the course descriptions seen by prospective students.  Yes  No

5.2 A formal application process ensures that students meet the entry requirements and any claimed qualifications are verified.  Yes  No

5.3 Students are properly briefed on the nature and requirements of the courses for which they apply, and all application enquiries responded to promptly and appropriately.  Yes  No

5.4 Any overseas recruitment agents are properly selected, briefed, monitored and evaluated.  Yes  No  NA

5.5 Students receive a proper initial assessment which includes language ability to confirm their capability to complete the courses on which they are enrolling.  Yes  No  NA

**This standard is judged to be:**  Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

There is a clear and rigorous application process. Church presbyteries refer suitable applicants to the TMC for interview. As well as passing assessments on any prescribed tertiary level courses, applicants must pass a FPCSC written entrance examination. These are held in July or August for September entry and test knowledge and understanding of scripture, catechism, Greek and Hebrew. This ensures that all students have the foundation knowledge necessary to undertake the course.

The enrolment process and requirements are set out in detail in the Regulations and the Manual. The Manual specifies that applicants for training must read the Regulations before applying, so they are familiar with the policies and processes.

Overseas students' pre-entry study may at the request of the student and the discretion of the TMC include an English language component. A current student was supported by the Institution to undertake an Open University module in English for Academic Purposes. Since successful completion of a prescribed pre-entry course and the entrance examinations is required, this ensures that overseas students are equipped with the language skills needed to undertake the course.

**6. There is an appropriate policy on student attendance and effective procedures and systems to enforce it**

6.1 There is an appropriate, clear and published policy on student attendance and punctuality.  Yes  No

6.2 Accurate and secure records of attendance and punctuality at each session are kept for all students, collated centrally and reviewed at least weekly.  Yes  No

6.3 Student absences are followed up promptly and appropriate action taken.  Yes  No

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

Registers are kept with 80 per cent attendance being mandatory and 100 per cent attendance expected. Students understand this. Any unexplained absence will be immediately followed up by the tutor, but attendance has so far been 100 per cent.

FPCSC intends to produce certificates at the end of each year of the course and these will specify whether the student has attended all classes.

Policies and procedures on student attendance are therefore effective.

**7. The institution regularly obtains and records feedback from students and other stakeholders and takes appropriate action where necessary**

7.1 The institution has effective mechanisms for obtaining feedback from students and other stakeholders (such as staff, partner institutions and employers) on all aspects of the institution's provision, including formal student representation where appropriate.  Yes  No

7.2 Feedback is obtained, recorded and analysed on a regular basis.  Yes  No

7.3 The feedback is reviewed by management and action is taken where necessary.  Yes  No

7.4 There is a mechanism for reporting on the institution's response to the feedback to the student body.  Yes  No

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

Students provide regular informal feedback to the tutor. Students cited an example of where a change had been made as a result of their feedback. The use of a particular text that the students felt to be too difficult had been modified in response to their views indicating that the feedback system is effective.

The TMC Convener, or another member of the TMC, has a confidential discussion with each student at least annually, where the student is encouraged to speak freely about any aspect of his Institution experience. Students are also advised to contact the Convener or other TMC member at any time if they wish to provide feedback to them. The students are aware of this.

Feedback from students is also considered at TMC meetings. The feedback, the TMC's response to it and any action taken are included in the TMC minutes, unless the feedback is of a confidential nature. Recent TMC minutes record action taken in response to a student's feedback, demonstrating that it is effective.

Amalgamated student feedback will be included in tutors' annual reports to the TMC. The TMC will take any appropriate action and report the feedback and its results to the annual Synod for information and any further action. The Convener of the TMC or tutor will inform the students about the response to their feedback.

Students' views are therefore sought via various mechanisms and action is taken as a result of feedback so systems are appropriate.

**8. The institution has effective systems to review its own standards and assess its own performance with a view to continuing improvement**

8.1	There are effective systems for monitoring and periodically reviewing all aspects of the institution's performance.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.2	Reports are compiled at least annually which present the results of the institution's reviews and incorporate action plans. Reports include analysis of year-on-year results on student satisfaction, retention, achievement, examination results and completion rates.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.3	Action plans are implemented and regularly reviewed, with outcomes reported to the management.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met     Partially Met     Not Met

**Comments**

Tutors deliver and monitor the implementation of their courses. The TMC oversees and monitors the delivery of the course on each site and the course as a whole. The TMC's annual report to the Synod sums up TMC's work during the year and any significant issues of which the Synod should be aware. The Synod then considers the TMC report and takes any necessary action.

The Church's Finance Committee which also reports to the Synod is responsible for the financial operations of the Church and the Institution. The Finance Committee draws up annual reports and accounts which review the Church's objectives, activities, achievements and performance, including in training, for the ministry.

This system is the main mechanism for monitoring and reviewing the work of the Institution and is effective.

Action points and plans are included in the Finance Committee and TMC minutes. A more formal FPCSC plan pulling these together would be a useful addition to the development and quality assurance process.

**INSPECTION AREA – TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT**

**9. Academic management is effective**

9.1	There is a suitably qualified and experienced academic manager or academic management team with responsibility for teaching, learning and assessment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
9.2	Classes are timetabled and rooms allocated appropriately for the courses offered.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
9.3	The allocation of teachers to classes provides for a consistent learning experience.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
9.4	There is an appropriate policy and effective procedures for the acquisition of academic resources.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met     Partially Met     Not Met

**Comments**

The Convener of the TMC, who is the programme manager, is responsible for academic management. He is qualified and experienced and has been Convener for 14 years. The tutors, as the academic management team, are also suitably qualified and experienced in their roles.

Timetabling is done by the tutor at site level to suit the local situation. This is appropriate for a small course delivered on three sites. Class timetables and the rooms allocated are appropriate.

The fact that there is one tutor for each of the three components of the course and that they normally serve multiple terms as a single tutor ensures continuity and consistency in the delivery of the curriculum and students' learning



experience.

Tutors identify any additional resources required and notify the TMC. Additional furniture and equipment were allocated to Ness in 2018 prior to the students' arrival, at the request of the tutor. Inspection confirmed that the tutor was satisfied with the resources that the TMC had allocated, indicating that policies and procedures are effective.

**10. The courses are planned and delivered in ways that enable students to succeed**

- |      |  |   |                             |
|------|--|---|-----------------------------|
| 10.1 | Courses are designed and delivered in ways that allow students to develop the knowledge and skills which will be required for final examinations or assessments. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10.2 | Lessons and assessments maintain an appropriate focus on any assessment objectives or statement of learning outcomes established by the awarding body.           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10.3 | Formative assessments appropriately reflect the nature and standards of summative examinations.  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10.4 | Students are encouraged and enabled to develop independent learning skills.  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10.5 | Any required coursework and revision periods are scheduled in advance.   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10.6 | The academic backgrounds and particular needs of students are taken into account in the classroom delivery of the course.  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met     Partially Met     Not Met

**Comments**

A suitable prospectus sets out the lesson plan for each day of the course for the whole of the academic year. It specifies the topic and the competencies, such as translation and presentation, that the student will be working on during each lesson. Prescribed and recommended texts, which are linked to each lesson, are specified. Assessments for the year are set out and appropriately reflect the curriculum.

The teaching at Ness focused on the development of the knowledge and skills specified and took into account the particular needs of students with different depths of knowledge in the subjects. This transparent and coherent structure and effective lesson delivery provides a firm foundation for effective learning, enabling students to develop the knowledge and skills required for formative assessment and final examinations.

Students spend the afternoon in independent research, allocated homework, and preparation for classes the next day. There are occasional field trips and guest speakers. There is practical work in the form of students' preaching to church congregations in the local area of Lewis and Harris.

As students have prior tertiary level qualifications, they are experienced learners with a good foundation knowledge of the course content as tested by the entrance examination. This and the teaching and support of the tutor equips them for this appropriate combination of formal teaching and self-directed learning.

Course work and revision periods have been scheduled and appropriate information is provided to the students in the prospectus. As a result, students are clear about these aspects, enabling them to plan effectively.

**11. Teachers are suitable for the courses to which they are allocated and effective in delivering them**

- |      |  |   |                             |
|------|--|---|-----------------------------|
| 11.1 | Teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced.  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 11.2 | Teachers have a level of subject knowledge, pedagogic and communicative skill which allows them to deliver the content of courses effectively. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

11.3	The appraisal procedures for teaching staff incorporate regular classroom observation.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
11.4	Teachers are supported in their continuing professional development and enabled to develop further pedagogic techniques to enhance the learning of students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
11.5	Teachers respond to different learning needs of students where appropriate, taking various learning styles into account in their planning and delivery of lessons.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
11.6	Teachers employ effective strategies to involve all students in active participation and to check their understanding of concepts and course content.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

**This standard is judged to be:**  Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

All tutors are practicing ministers and all are also academically qualified and experienced. The Ness tutor has a Doctor of Philosophy degree (PhD) in history.

Tutors report formally to the TMC at least once a year and are members who participate in TMC meetings. The TMC Convener as the programme manager is responsible for ensuring that tutors are effective in their role. The TMC reports annually to the Synod. TMC membership is for one year although members are normally reappointed for several years. This allows the Synod to terminate membership at the end of any year, May to May, if necessary, including if it is dissatisfied with the performance of the Convener or tutors.

Tutors generally attend the Church's annual theological conference, and the tutor stated that the TMC would consider any request for additional training that was identified. The Convener lives on Lewis and he observes teaching there. FPCSC should consider how it will implement this in future on the other two sites.

The teaching in Ness is impressive. There is enthusiastic participation and interaction by all students, with constant encouragement and feedback from the tutor. All students praised the high quality of the teaching. The course is therefore being effectively delivered.

**12. The institution provides students and teachers with access to appropriate resources and materials for study**

**This standard is judged to be:**  Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

Teaching and learning are largely based on textbooks and students generally purchase the core texts, which are suitable.

There is a small library on the Ness premises and Ness students can order textbooks from the larger library in Glasgow or at a discount from the Church bookshop. Study resources and materials are suitable for the course.

**13. Students receive appropriate assessment and feedback on their performance and progress, which are effectively monitored**

13.1	Courses are planned to include a schedule of assessments, the procedures and criteria for which are available in writing and in advance to students and teachers.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
13.2	Assessment outcomes are monitored to enable the identification of students who are not making satisfactory progress and prompt intervention where appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
13.3	Students are made aware of how their progress relates to their targeted level of achievement.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
13.4	The institution takes appropriate steps to identify and discourage cheating and other misdemeanours, and to penalise offenders.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

13.5	Additional support or advice on alternative courses is provided to students who are judged not to be making sufficient progress to succeed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
13.6	Oral and written feedback is given to individual students on a regular basis, tailored to meet their specific needs and constructive in its nature and delivery.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
13.7	Students have appropriate access outside class time to teachers or personal tutors for academic support.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met     Partially Met     Not Met

**Comments**

A schedule and all relevant information about assessments during the year is available before the start of the course. Students appreciate that detailed information is provided in advance.

There are examinations in three subjects at the end of the first semester and a formal exit examination in five subjects at the end of the year. Formal feedback is given. The results will be considered by the TMC and then reported to the Synod so that progress is monitored and any remedial measures necessary, for example, additional tuition can be provided.

The students reported that feedback on their performance and progress against expected targets so far had been informal but detailed. It included feedback about the regular presentations that they make. Effective real time feedback was observed by the inspector during lessons. Students were satisfied with the feedback and that the tutor was approachable and accessible outside class time. They were aware that any misdemeanour would result in notification to the TMC and subsequent action.

Assessment policies and processes are robust and appropriate. Monitoring of the implementation of such policies and processes, by tutors and by the TMC, would ensure that they are effectively delivered.

**14. The institution offers courses leading to accredited awards granted by recognised awarding bodies wherever appropriate**

14.1	For courses leading to the award of a UK degree, the institution has a formal agreement with a recognised UK degree-awarding body.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
14.2	For courses leading to other UK awards, the awarding body is recognised by the relevant regulator.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
14.3	For courses leading to the award of an overseas degree, the institution has a formal partnership agreement with the overseas degree-awarding body, which is itself accredited by a recognised national agency.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met     Partially Met     Not Met     NA

**Comments**

**15. There is a clear rationale for courses leading to unaccredited or internal awards**

15.1	There is a clear statement of the level claimed relative to the RQF and evidence that students who receive the award meet the stated requirements for that level.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
15.2	There is evidence of the extent to which the awards are accepted for the purposes of employment or further study.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA

15.3 External moderators are involved in the assessment process where appropriate.  Yes  No  NA

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met  Partially Met  Not Met  NA

**Comments**

The Institution's award is internal. The Manual specifies that obtaining the Divinity course certificate is a mandatory requirement for being a minister, and students understand this.

The three tutors and three members appointed by Synod constitute the Board of Examiners. The three members appointed by Synod are senior members of the Church with appropriate knowledge and experience who are not part of the staff or tutors of the Institution. They are responsible for the entrance and exit examinations. Given the specialised nature of the curriculum and assessments, examiners need to be active members of the Church with a clear understanding of its ethos and requirements so this is appropriate.

**16. There are satisfactory procedures for the administration of examinations and other means of assessment**

16.1 The institution complies with the requirements of the relevant awarding bodies in terms of examination security and administration.  Yes  No  NA

16.2 For internal awards, there are effective systems in place for examination security and administration, and clear procedures for students to appeal against their marks.  Yes  No  NA

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met  Partially Met  Not Met  NA

**Comments**

Tutors are responsible for the security and administration of examinations on their site and are experienced in that role. Any student appeals can be made to the Board of Examiners and, if unresolved, are heard by the TMC. Procedures are therefore satisfactory.

**17. There is appropriate provision of advice for students intending to proceed to employment or higher/further education**

17.1 Students have access to advice from an appropriate staff member on further study and career opportunities.  Yes  No

17.2 If the institution offers courses preparing students for higher education, they have access to prospectuses and to advice from a designated staff member both on selecting courses and institutions and on the application process.  Yes  No  NA

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

The intended outcome of the Divinity course is to produce graduates who can be licensed for the Ministry. The tutor and other TMC members are very well equipped to offer appropriate advice on the academic, spiritual and pastoral issues involved so provision is appropriate.

**INSPECTION AREA – STUDENT WELFARE**

**18. Students receive pastoral support appropriate to their age, background and circumstances**

18.1 There is at least one named staff member responsible for student welfare who is suitably trained, accessible to all students and available to provide advice and counselling.  Yes  No

18.2	Students receive appropriate advice before arrival.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
18.3	Students receive an appropriate induction and relevant information upon arrival.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
18.4	Students are issued with a contact number for out-of-hours and emergency support.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
18.5	The institution has policies in place to avoid discrimination and a published procedure for dealing with any abusive behaviour.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
18.6	Effective safeguarding arrangements are in place and are regularly reviewed to keep all students safe.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA
18.7	Effective arrangements are in place to protect students from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

Appropriate pastoral support is provided, primarily by the tutor from the relevant site. He contacts the student before admission to provide any advice or assistance and he remains the major source of ongoing pastoral support. Ness students have his out of hours contact details. The pastoral support is appropriate given students' maturity and their longstanding familiarity with Church practices.

All students are required to behave in accordance with the moral teachings of the Church and to be consistent with the student's professed call to the ministry and this prohibits any abusive behaviour or extremism. In addition, they have been vetted twice, once by their presbytery, then again at interview and deemed to be suitable for the ministry. They are also monitored as to their continued moral conduct. The tutor can take disciplinary action or refer the matter to the TMC or presbytery if he has concerns about a student's conduct.

18.7 However, the Institution does not currently have an explicit policy or training for tutors about identifying and mitigating risks related to radicalisation and extremism.

A student handbook is in final draft for approval by the TMC. The material which is currently available from various sources is available to students but it will be helpful to consolidate it to provide a reference point.

**19. International students are provided with specific advice and assistance**

19.1	International students receive appropriate advice before their arrival on travelling to and staying in the UK.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
19.2	International students receive an appropriate induction upon arrival covering issues specific to the local area.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
19.3	Information and advice specific to international students continues to be available throughout the course of study.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
19.4	Provision of support takes into account cultural and religious considerations.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met  Partially Met  Not Met  NA

**Comments**

Appropriate advice and assistance are provided. Students have already formed links with the Institution during their pre-entry studies and electronic tutorials. The Institution assists with obtaining a visa and the cost to the student is reimbursed by FPCSC. FPCSC also assists with information about daily life on Lewis and with travel. The tutor will help the students to find accommodation in the locality and to integrate into the local Church community. The overseas student at Ness praised the advice, information and support he had received from the Institution and the tutor which had helped him to acclimatise to FPCSC and island culture.

**20. The fair treatment of students is ensured**

- |      |   |   |                             |
|------|---|---|-----------------------------|
| 20.1 | Students apply for and are enrolled on courses under fair and transparent contractual terms and conditions.           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 20.2 | Students have access to a fair complaints procedure of which they are informed in writing at the start of the course. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met     Partially Met     Not Met

**Comments**

The contract is set out in the Regulations specifying the responsibilities of the Church, FPCC and students.

The TMC has produced an appropriate written complaints policy and students were aware that they could raise a complaint with the tutor, TMC and ultimately the Synod.

**21. Where residential accommodation is offered, it is fit for purpose, well maintained and appropriately supervised**

- |      |  |                              |                             |                             |
|------|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 21.1 | Any residential accommodation is clean, safe and of a standard which is adequate to the needs of students.                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |                             |
| 21.2 | Any residential accommodation is open to inspection by the appropriate authorities, including Ofsted where students under 18 are accommodated.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 21.3 | Clear rules and fire, health and safety procedures are in place, with appropriate precautions taken for security of students and their property. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |                             |
| 21.4 | A level of supervision is provided appropriate to the needs of students.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |                             |
| 21.5 | Separate accommodation blocks are provided for students under 18.  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met     Partially Met     Not Met     NA

**Comments**

**22. Where home-stay accommodation is organised, the welfare of students is ensured and the institution's relationship with hosts is properly managed**

- |      |  |                              |                             |
|------|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 22.1 | Due care is taken in selecting home-stay accommodation which both provides a safe and comfortable living environment for students and is appropriately located for travel to the institution and back. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 22.2 | Any home-stay accommodation is inspected before students are placed and is subject to regular re-inspection by a responsible representative or agent of the institution.                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 22.3 | The institution has appropriate contracts in place with any hosts, clearly setting out the rules, terms and conditions of the provision.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 22.4 | Appropriate advice and support are given to both hosts and students before and during the placement.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

22.5 Clear monitoring procedures are in place with opportunities for student feedback and prompt action taken in the event of problems.  Yes  No

**This standard is judged to be:**  Met  Partially Met  Not Met  NA

**Comments**

**23. The institution provides an appropriate social programme for students and information on leisure activities in the area**

23.1 Students are provided with appropriate information on opportunities for participation at events and other leisure activities which may be of interest.  Yes  No

23.2 The social programme is responsive to the needs and wishes of students.  Yes  No  NA

23.3 Any activities within the social programme have been chosen with consideration for their affordability by the majority of students.  Yes  No  NA

23.4 Any activities organised by the institution are supervised by a responsible representative with suitable qualifications and experience.  Yes  No  NA

**This standard is judged to be:**  Met  Partially Met  Not Met  NA

**Comments**

**INSPECTION AREA – PREMISES AND FACILITIES**

**24. The institution has secure possession of and access to its premises**

24.1 The institution has secure tenure on its premises.  Yes  No  NA

24.2 Where required, the institution has access to suitable external premises for academic or non-academic purposes of a temporary or occasional nature.  Yes  No  NA

**This standard is judged to be:**  Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

FPCS owns the three buildings the Institution occupies.

**25. The premises provide a safe, secure and clean environment for students and staff**

25.1 Access to the premises is appropriately restricted and secured.  Yes  No

25.2 The premises are maintained in an adequate state of repair, decoration and cleanliness.  Yes  No

25.3 There are specific safety rules in areas of particular hazard (e.g. science laboratories), made readily available to students, staff and visitors.  Yes  No  NA

25.4	General guidance on health and safety is made available to students, staff and visitors.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
25.5	There is adequate signage inside and outside of the premises and notice boards for the display of general information.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
25.6	There is adequate circulation space for the number of students and staff accommodated, and a suitable area in which to receive visitors.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
25.7	There are toilet facilities of an appropriate number and level of cleanliness.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
25.8	There is adequate heating and ventilation in all rooms.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

In both Glasgow and Ness the Institution's premises are locked when not in use and access is effectively secured. The state of repair, decoration, cleanliness, toilet facilities, heating and ventilation on both sites are satisfactory.

The Ness premises are small and students have the necessary information. However, displaying more information on notice boards when students are onsite may be beneficial for communication.

**26. Classrooms and other learning areas are appropriate for the courses offered**

26.1	Classrooms and other learning areas provide adequate accommodation in size and number for the classes allocated to them.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
26.2	Classrooms and/or any specialised learning areas (e.g. laboratories, workshops, studios) are equipped to a level which allows for the effective delivery of each course.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
26.3	There are facilities suitable for conducting the assessments required on each course.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

The main teaching and assessment space on Ness is a modern, purpose-built and appropriate to be used as a classroom. It is more than adequate for the three students currently on the course and could comfortably accommodate 15 students. The layout is flexible and is usually configured around a central table to foster student and tutor interaction. It is also suitable for assessments.

In Glasgow the library provides an appropriate multi-purpose teaching space, reference room and private study space. It can accommodate the number expected onsite in 2020 to 2021. It is suitable for assessments.

**27. There are appropriate additional facilities for students and staff**

27.1	Students have access to sufficient space and suitable facilities for private study, including library and IT resources.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
27.2	Teaching staff have access to sufficient personal space for preparing lessons, marking work and relaxation.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
27.3	Students and staff have access to space and facilities suitable for relaxation and the consumption of food and drink where appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
27.4	Students and staff have access to storage for personal possessions where appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
27.5	There are individual offices or rooms in which academic staff and senior management can hold private meetings and a room of sufficient size to hold staff meetings.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No



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27.6 Administrative offices are adequate in size and resources for the effective administration of the institution.  Yes  No

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**This standard is judged to be:**

Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

Students in Ness generally undertake private study at home in the afternoon. Teaching staff generally prepare lessons at home. There is a small private meeting room in the vestry, which is available if required. The classroom has tea and coffee making facilities and students can bring their own lunch. There is no administrator or dedicated administrative office on the Ness site, but the tutor undertakes local administration and liaises with the Glasgow-based administrator as required. Additional facilities are generally appropriate.

There is currently no wireless access on the Ness site. The course is almost exclusively reliant on textbooks so this does not currently adversely impact teaching and learning. The Institution is aware of the importance of ensuring wireless access because the overseas student will be reliant on electronic means to complete this academic year. Appropriate installation of this capability has been authorised by the TMC and this is expected to happen within the next few weeks.

In Glasgow, the library contains the religious texts which are the foundation of the course. There is an onsite Church bookshop with relevant texts. There is wireless access and students will use their own laptop computers to access any relevant online material. A library computer has also been provided as a contingency.

In Glasgow, the tutor, the GT and the secretarial assistant all have their own offices on site and these are sufficiently spacious to hold meetings with all students on the course. Glasgow has a modern and well-equipped kitchen and relaxation area for students' use.

**COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated  Yes  No

## PART C - SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

*Numbering of action points aligns with that of the minimum standards*

### MANAGEMENT, STAFFING AND ADMINISTRATION

#### Institution's Strengths

The Institution is a close-knit community with shared beliefs and a clear common goal that staff and students share.

Institution staff and tutors are active members or ministers of the Church and want an environment that produces good ministers. This is reflected in their strong commitment to the quality of Institutional provision.

The Manual and Regulations provide a clear governance framework for the delivery of the course and for staff and student reference and promote common understanding.

Actions Required	Priority H/M/L
None	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

### TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

#### Institution's Strengths

The quality of observed teaching was excellent, with an interactive approach that promotes effective learning.

Students are very positive about the teaching and enthusiastic about the course.

Students understand the curriculum and assessments for this year and for the course as a whole and can therefore plan their studies accordingly.

Actions Required	Priority H/M/L
None	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

### STUDENT WELFARE

#### Institution's Strengths

The advice and financial support for additional study provided to applicants prior to entry is exemplary. It is tailored to their academic background and personal needs.

The Institution continues to provide customised financial support throughout the course where necessary, enabling students to dedicate themselves to study.

All the students who had commenced the course on the Ness site praised the advice and support they received from their tutor, and the attention paid to their well-being. They felt that Institution's staff, the Convener and the TMC also took a keen interest in their spiritual, academic and personal welfare.

Actions Required	Priority H/M/L
18.7 The Institution must introduce an explicit policy and procedure and training regarding protecting students from radicalisation and extremism.	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low

## PREMISES AND FACILITIES

### Institution's Strengths

The premises in Ness are modern and the layout can be configured according to needs, for example, for small group tutorial teaching or assessments. The larger Glasgow premises include an impressive library. Both sites provide an appropriate learning environment.

Actions Required	Priority H/M/L
None	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

## RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

To be reviewed at the next inspection

It is recommended that the Institution develops a consolidated FPCSC action plan to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis to enhance quality assurance and monitoring.

It is recommended that FPCSC finalises arrangements for teaching observations on all sites as part of staff appraisal.

It is recommended that FPCSC monitors the implementation of its assessment policies and processes to ensure that they meet the needs of learners and the Institution.

It is recommended that the Institution finalises and distributes the consolidated student handbook.

The Institution should consider greater use of notice boards to disseminate information at each training site.

The Institution should ensure the installation of a wireless connection at the Ness site.

## COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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