

Theological Education in the Anglican Communion 2018-2022: Report to ACC17

Learning Together, Learning for All (TEAC 3) Summary

Approved by ACC Standing Committee (6 Sept 18)

Refined by the TEAC Reference Group November 2018

From all to all

In this current phase of its life TEAC has three main objectives which serve the strategic aims of the Anglican Communion Office (to foster intentional discipleship, promote peace, reconciliation and justice, and strengthen awareness of Anglican identity):

- (i) Building educational and training networks of mutual learning and friendship eg. through assisting theological college and seminary communities across the Communion, North and South, to put in place **companionship links**, modelled on the diocesan companionship link model. These will allow college-to-college contact so that students and staff learn about and appreciate differences, support and pray for each other, and so strengthen awareness of the Anglican Communion and Anglican identity.
- (ii) **Commissioning course frameworks for the ACO website**, for local learning groups to populate with their own material. These will be for the emerging paradigm of theological education, which is all about theological education by extension through local groups, at introductory/certificate level. These frameworks will be developed by regional consultations with partners from across the Communion. The first group of topics will include Anglican discipleship and history, doctrine, and gender justice, so fostering intentional discipleship, justice and Anglican identity.
- (iii) Promoting theological education for mission among the churches of the Communion as they prepare for Lambeth 2020, through three intercontinental **conferences** of global South theologians and related **book publications** on the Archbishop of Canterbury's three priorities of reconciliation, evangelism, and the renewal of prayer and the religious life. The first two books are launched at the Anglican Consultative Council in Hong Kong in April 2019.

This third phase of TEAC has received generous funding from St Augustine's Foundation, Canterbury, for five years (2018-2022).

Background

In *An Anglican Communion Approach to Theological Education: Report on Future Directions*, 2012, the TEAC Working Group highlighted a range of needs in the theological education sector (both for lay and ordination training) across the Anglican Communion, describing the current situation as serious because of a lack of staffing, library and financial resources in many parts of the Communion. But it then argued that 'care needs to be taken regarding expectations and capabilities. Anglican polity and structure emphasises local expressions of faith and mission. This means that theological education is fundamentally the responsibility of the various and diverse churches of the Anglican Communion.' Therefore the serious needs should be addressed firstly at local level rather than organised and determined centrally. (1.4.1) But to support this the report suggested three strategies:

- (a) Build networks that strengthen coherence and maximise shared learning through a variety of international and regional consultations (3.6.4)

- (b) Facilitate and develop resources that build capacity in local contexts. For the Anglican Communion this is not so much about producing resources as 'to facilitate and initiate resource development at local level' (3.6.3).
- (c) Co-ordination: 'From the perspective of the Communion it is a bottom line issue that the work of coordination, encouragement, connecting, oversight and advocacy receives a proper and adequate focus' (3.9)

Discussion of the 2012 report led to ACC-15 Resolution 15.25: Theological Education in the Anglican Communion. Included in the resolution was the clause, "noting that the recommendations relating to staff appointments at the Anglican Communion Office cannot be implemented within the present budget priorities of the Anglican Communion, recommends that, subject to external funding being found: (a) the working group TEAC2 be succeeded by a Commission on Theological Education; and (b) a Director of Theological Education be appointed to the staff at the Anglican Communion Office"

Following ACC-15 the Secretary General and other ACO staff sought funding from several sources. St Augustine's Foundation responded positively and have provided five years of funding for the post of Director of Theological Education at the Anglican Communion Office and administrative assistance and expenses. After some delays the Revd Canon Dr Stephen Spencer was appointed and took up the post in February 2018. Since then three streams of work have emerged, summarised above and described in more detail below, corresponding to the three strategies of the 2012 report:

Building Networks

- a. **Establishing the TEAC reference group** – of eight theological educators from the global South and North with experience of the AC across the globe. (Agreed membership as at 31 July 2018: Ven. Albert Walters from Malaysia and Iran, Dr Paulo Ueti from Brazil, Prof Joseph Galgalo from Kenya, Dr Robert Heaney from Ireland and the Anglican Studies Centre at VTS, Dr Will Lamb and Dr Cathy Ross from St Augustine's Foundation, Canon John Gibaut from ACO, and SS. The group meets twice a year, once face-to-face, once by tele conference.
- b. Facilitate the setting up of '**Companionship Links**' between theological colleges and courses, global North with South, and South with South, of mutual learning and teaching, underpinned by prayer, so that students may learn from their differences and grow in awareness of the AC ie. creating a self-sustaining network – linking people with people for mutual empowerment. Beginning with two or three pilot companionship links between colleges/courses, to provide actual examples of what could be rolled out across the AC. This has happened and will happen through initial visits to Sudanese/South Sudanese theological colleges (October 2018), Hong Kong, Australia and Southern Africa (2019), as well as British and Irish colleges. Links will normally be bi-lateral but could be widened to three-way or four-way links for the bigger institutions (eg. Queens Theological Federation, Birmingham, linking with institutions in Latin America, Asia and Africa). Timescale: establish three or four pilot links in time for Lambeth 2020.
- c. **Organise a consultation/conference** for principals and bishops interested in developing **TE leadership** across the AC, which will take place immediately prior to Lambeth 2020 when many key players in the sector will be in the country. (13-17th July 2020). Such a conference will look at ways of raising up new leaders and teachers (both lay and ordained) for TE across the Communion.

Facilitating Resources

- a. **Commissioning open access course frameworks for the ACO website** for local learning groups to populate with their own material. These will be for the emerging paradigm of theological

education (theological education by extension delivered through local groups – TEE^L), at introductory/ certificate level, developed by regional consultations with partners across the Communion. The first group of topics will include Anglican Discipleship, history and doctrine, and gender justice. In due course the TEE course frameworks will be made available in Spanish, Portuguese and French. This project will include the provision of local wireless ‘connectors’ – for transmitting reading and worksheets by local tutors to the mobile phones of their student groups without needing the internet (hence with no internet costs). These connectors are currently being developed by the Relay Trust (who are keen to work in partnership with ACO) and will be ready for launching by the time of Lambeth 2020. Furthermore, Moodle to be explored as a platform (in partnership Globethics Academy, Geneva) for the resourcing of local tutors, to gather together course frameworks, key texts, video clips and study guides which local tutors could download onto their connectors for onward transmission to their student groups.

- b. In connection with this there is an exciting opportunity to develop a partnership with **Globethics**, a digital library based at the WCC in Geneva with 2 million theological full texts (including in other languages), including 12,000 Anglican texts, and with a staff who are inviting partnership with member churches. This would allow developing an Anglican Communion section clearly demarcated within the library collection that seminaries and others could access directly and which would also allow access to the wider collection of the library.
- c. Work with Communication dept at ACO to develop relevant pages on the **AC website** to hold, promote and extend all of the above. Accessed through the Theology tab on the Home Page, the ‘Education’ section will include the TEAC team, college and seminary lists, a link to CUAC, course frameworks, TEMAC (see below III.f), a link to the Bible in the Life of the Church project, and a link to the episcopal development programme.

Co-ordination and Advocacy

- a. **Educationally resource the work of the Instruments of Communion**, specifically IASCUFO, ACC 17 in Hong Kong April 2019, and Lambeth 2020 including through publishing and distributing the TEMAC mission theology books (see below III.e)
- b. **Mapping of TE across the AC**, including the updating of the list of colleges serving more than one diocese for the ACO website. To assist this TEAC staff visit theological colleges, mission agencies, theological conferences and ecumenical partners to listen and learn about what is happening in TE and to promote the work of TEAC.
- c. Bringing the Mission Theology in the Anglian Communion project (MTAC) into the TE department at ACO (with the support of the trustees of the St Augustine’s Foundation and with permission of the Standing Committee of the ACC on 21 May 2018) and re-configuring it as ‘**Theological Education for Mission in the Anglican Communion**’ (**TEMAC**), focussed on (i) arranging the third of three MTAC conferences on the Archbishop of Canterbury’s priorities, this one on the renewal of prayer and the religious life, at Limuru May 2019; (ii) the publishing and distribution across the AC of the three conference books, with printing in Hong Kong, and in the US by Forward Movement, the first on reconciliation, the second on evangelism and witness, and the third on prayer and the religious life. Project management is provided by Dr Muthuraj Swamy on 0.2 basis (with funding already raised for the MTAC project). Aim of the Project: to help prepare bishops, dioceses and the people of the Anglican Communion for the next Lambeth Conference in 2020, and for the wider mission of the AC, through conferences by global South theologians with the dissemination of their insights across the AC through ACO publications.

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