



WALES  
EVANGELICAL  
SCHOOL OF  
THEOLOGY

*Fast-track Training for Long-haul Ministry*

A glowing red spiral graphic with a bright yellow-orange center, set against a black background.

the  
binary  
course

*2 years 2 bases 2 awards*

# the binary course

has been devised in collaboration with many UK church leaders as a radical alternative to a conventional seminary education. Its prime purpose is to help address the chronic shortage, and often inadequate preparation, of men entering pastor-teacher and church-planting ministries within the independent sector of Reformed evangelicalism.

In these days of shifting doctrines and general uncertainty, there is a desperate need for godly leaders who have learned how to think theologically and act strategically. Recognising and accommodating the complementary strengths of campus and church-based training, *The Binary Course* not only provides a unique, express route to a master's degree in theology, but also aims to nurture growth in personal holiness and to develop essential ministry skills.

## Who is it for?

Because of its necessarily intensive nature, *The Binary Course* is not a suitable pathway for all. Candidates must already possess a good honours degree in any subject, appropriate service experience in a church context, and evidence of clear gifting and potential – especially in preaching and teaching. Maybe they will have completed something along the lines of FIEC's *Prepared for Service* programme or Proclamation Trust's *Cornhill Training Course*. They might well be keeping in touch with future possibilities via the 9:38 network, or seeking the next step as they approach the end of a church apprenticeship scheme.

While the traditional route into pastoral ministry provided by our three-year BA (Hons) in Theology remains the best option for many, *The Binary Course* recognises the needs of men who sense the call of God on their lives, know they must be properly equipped, but cannot face (or afford) the prospect of returning to a further three or four years of cloistered, college existence!

## Who teaches it?

Details of the faculty at WEST are available on the website, and it is not possible to profile them all here. *The Binary Course* will be largely in the hands of those who have themselves successfully led churches for many years – a fairly obvious prerequisite not always met in theological colleges. Our systematic and historical theologian, Bob Letham, continues to serve as visiting professor at some of the world's leading seminaries. WEST is one of the UK's foremost centres of evangelical, theological research, and Tom Holland's groundbreaking work in Pauline Studies has attracted a cluster of PhD students who are exploring some of its implications. As Principal, Jonathan Stephen maintains a comprehensive, watching brief on the current evangelical church scene. His passion for preaching and for the preparation of sound, Christlike leaders who 'understand the times' is well known, and underlies the whole concept of *The Binary Course*.



*The Binary Course* is the best of both worlds for some – intensive theological study and church based ministry experience. An ideal preparation and stepping stone into set-apart, lifelong, gospel ministry.

**Matt Morgan, Administrator, 9:38**

# Year 1

The first year is campus-based for the two semesters (September-December and February-May) and the *Summer Season* (late May-June). We believe that even this minimal exposure to a collegiate experience can pay tremendous dividends. Quite apart from the obvious advantages of the instant access to expert human and material resources afforded by a seminary environment, there is immense and lasting value in the relationships forged between faculty and fellow-students as they worship and work together. Despite this, we will still do our best to assist those who are forced to live at a long distance and need to minimise their time on campus.

Year 1 is mostly spent working towards the Graduate Diploma in Theology, a one-year, full-time, vocational 'conversion' course. We have filled the Graduate Diploma with the sort of theological and other content we believe Reformed church leaders of the 21st century require. Academically, it is pitched and assessed at the level of a final year BA (Hons) course. Regular lectures and seminars are reinforced by creative workshops, enabling subjects to be investigated in greater depth. Course members take *all* Core Modules and *any two* Option Modules. Assessment is by essay and/or examination:

## GDip Programme Structure

### Core Modules

Studies in Biblical and Historical Theology  
Studies in Systematic Theology  
(or Studies in Christology and Redemption)  
Studies in Preaching and Pastoral Theology  
Greek or Hebrew Grammar

### Option Modules

The Church in the Modern World  
Theology and Culture  
Church and Context  
Female Spirituality  
Islam  
Independent Study

(Module requirements and availability may vary)

Year 1 reaches its climax with the *Summer Season* – up to six consecutive weeks in late May and June – where various specialist ministries take it in turns to showpiece their particular contribution to the church scene. During part of this time, course members will benefit from the teaching and mentoring of a resident guest theologian or preacher of international standing.

During Year 1, *Binary Course* members are permitted to audit any WEST lectures they wish at BA (Hons) level.



This is just what many church leaders have been crying out for – a route into pastoral ministry that is rigorous yet accessible. If we are going to close the training gap that threatens many independent churches and release an army of new gospel workers to re-evangelise our nation we need this new fast-track approach that will take students where they are and launch them into a lifetime of sustainable service for the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Richard Underwood**, Director for Churches' and Pastors' Support,  
Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches

# Year 2

On successful completion of the GDip, course members proceed to Year 2 – where everything changes! They are now based primarily in their training churches for a ‘super-apprenticeship’, which will concentrate on the promotion of preaching, pastoring and other leadership skills. This will last from September to at least the following May, and will be subject to a contractual agreement drawn up between WEST and the training church. This could well be the course member’s home church but it must be able to supply the right quantity and quality of ministry opportunity and supervision. This placement will be assessed and count substantially towards the second degree component of *The Binary Course*.

The MA in Contemporary Church Leadership has been developed at WEST with *The Binary Course* primarily in mind. The Church Placement aside, it is delivered by the block teaching method, generally in two week periods in September, January and March. Each module is covered in one week of twenty contact hours. The only exceptions are the Greek and Hebrew Exegesis, which are taught in a less concentrated manner:

## MA in Contemporary Church Leadership Programme Structure

### PART ONE

#### Core Modules

Church Placement  
Leadership  
Biblical Exegesis (English, Greek or Hebrew Text)

#### Option Modules

Research Methods  
Popular Culture and the Christian Worldview  
Contemporary Missiology  
Ministry in an Urban World  
Contemporary Pastoral Practice

(Module requirements and availability may vary)

Course members take *all* Core Modules and *any two* Option Modules. The Church Placement is worth twice the credits of any other module. If Research Methods is not selected as an accredited option, then it must be taken as an additional, unaccredited module, for which no charge will be made to the student. Assessment of Part One is normally by coursework.

### PART TWO

Part Two of the MA in Contemporary Church Leadership consists of a 20,000 word dissertation on a subject which engages with issues relevant to today’s church. The dissertation carries one third of the credits required for the degree.

During Year 2, *Binary Course* members are permitted to audit any WEST lectures they wish at Masters level or below.



The need to offer strong, practical and accessible training for the pastor-teachers of the future is more urgent than ever. At Proclamation Trust we warmly welcome this creative initiative which combines formal theological training with supervised ministry experience. I am glad to commend this and wish you God’s rich blessings.

**Christopher Ash, Director, Cornhill Training Course**

## How much does it cost?

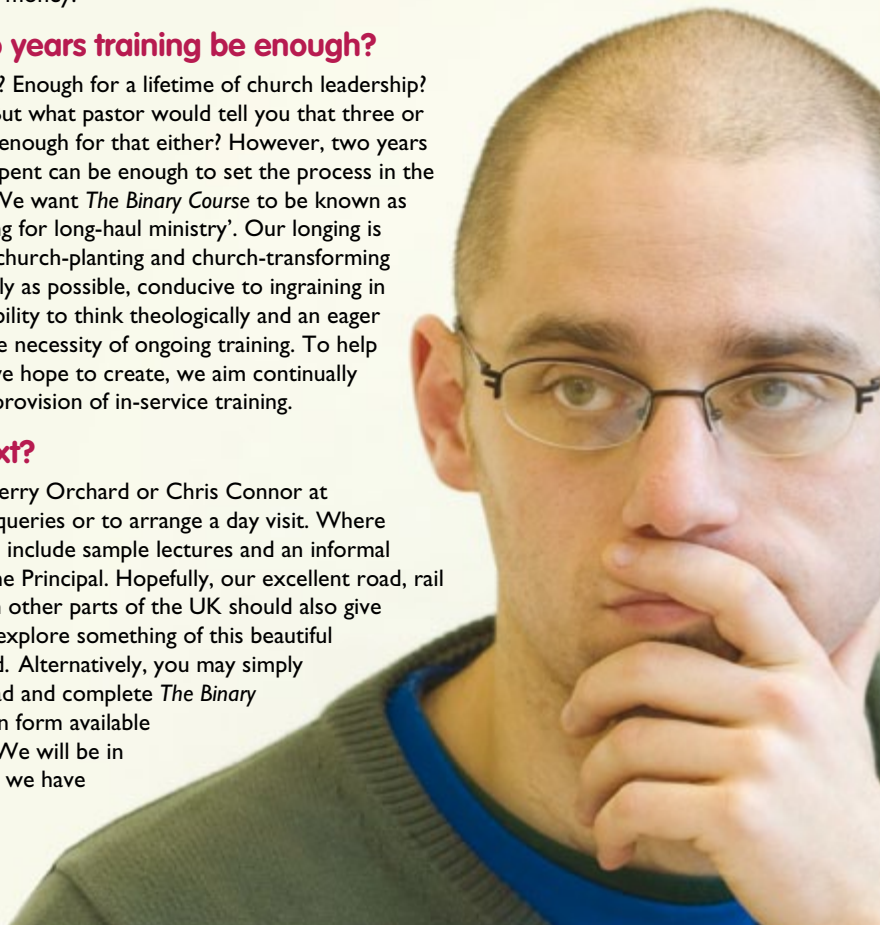
We have been determined to ensure cost-effectiveness in every aspect of our course design, with students having the option of paying upfront for both years at the starting rate. For latest details of our fees and our extremely reasonable, on-site, term-time accommodation, please see the website. Relatively low-cost rental property is also readily available locally. We invite you to make appropriate comparisons in terms of the return you are getting for the investment of your time and money.

## But can two years training be enough?

Enough for what? Enough for a lifetime of church leadership? Of course not! But what pastor would tell you that three or four years were enough for that either? However, two years fully and wisely spent can be enough to set the process in the right direction. We want *The Binary Course* to be known as 'fast-track training for long-haul ministry'. Our longing is to get men into church-planting and church-transforming ministry as quickly as possible, conducive to ingraining in them both the ability to think theologically and an eager acceptance of the necessity of ongoing training. To help meet the need we hope to create, we aim continually to increase our provision of in-service training.

## So what next?

Please contact Kerry Orchard or Chris Connor at WEST with any queries or to arrange a day visit. Where possible, this will include sample lectures and an informal interview with the Principal. Hopefully, our excellent road, rail and air links with other parts of the UK should also give you the time to explore something of this beautiful part of the world. Alternatively, you may simply want to download and complete *The Binary Course* application form available on the website. We will be in touch as soon as we have heard from you.



The spiritual and academic integrity of WEST is well established, and I am pleased to recommend *The Binary Course* for prospective pastors and church planters. It helps supply us with the godly hands-on thinkers that we so much need in Christian leadership today.

**Stuart Olyott**, Pastoral Director, Evangelical Movement of Wales



WEST combines high academic standards with practical training for Christian ministry, and all in the context of warm Christian fellowship between students and lecturers. It is a joy to study theology here and *The Binary Course* is proving a very attractive option.

**Mike Partridge**



If you are looking to be stretched theologically in a way that directly prepares you for church ministry then *The Binary Course* is for you. It combines the best of academic theology with a great model of reflective learning. I have found this partnership to be an ideal grounding in pastoral ministry.

**Andrew McKenna**



There are undoubtedly some very good seminaries in the UK. But for intensive and thorough theological training, the opportunity for relevant and practical church leadership, and access to some of the warmest and most gifted theological teachers, *The Binary Course* at WEST clearly sets the standard.

**Kofi Boaf**



Reconstructive surgery if you like! *The Binary Course* at WEST is fresh, stretching and hugely practical. I've had to ask myself big questions as I rethink and assess how to practise out God's Word in his church and world today. This is 2 years worth investing your future in.

**Paul Daniel**

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