



**Diocese
in Europe**

Ministry Experience Scheme

Interested in Anglican identity in Europe?

Looking to discern your vocation in the Church of England?

Explore the Ministry Experience Scheme (MES) in the Diocese in Europe!



Supported by



BENEFACT TRUST

March 2026

Introduction

The Ministry Experience Scheme (MES) in Europe is designed for young people who desire to discern their vocation in the Church of England. In this Scheme, the Church of England offers an opportunity to:

- explore and deepen your faith
- discern where and to what God might be calling you
- spend a year learning about yourself and your faith tradition with a caring support structure,
- acquire life-long skills and formative experiences which will enrich your life, discipleship, and faith

By investing in young people, the church seeks to encourage some to discern a vocation to ordained ministry and offer themselves for ordination. The scheme is thus intended to assist with a journey of discernment and prepare participants for the demands of the selection process. This preparation is comprised of three elements:

Chaplaincy work

Gain practical experience by working as a pastoral assistant with local chaplaincies that exercise a breadth of ministry. Serve the community and gain leadership skills. You will spend about 70% of your working time working directly in the chaplaincy, under the direction of the chaplain.

Pastoral mentoring

Seek personal development through regular meetings with a pastoral advisor. Benefit from reflective accompaniment with experienced mentors. This will take about 15% of your working time.

Theological training

Learn through regular tutorials with well qualified theological tutors. Meet regularly online with other MES participants to explore a range of topics, both practical and academic. Participate in a group study pilgrimage to Jerusalem and participate in the annual Diocesan Synod. Taking the year as a whole this educational element will absorb about 15% of your time.

Highlights of the scheme

Early September

Induction meeting

January

National MES meeting in London Group

Spring

Study pilgrimage

June

Diocesan Synod in Cologne, Germany (Additionally, you may be encouraged to attend an enquirers' weekend or equivalent in London or in your home diocese).



"The Ministry Experience Scheme has helped me to think about the ways that the church serves its very diverse members from many different traditions. I have seen how different styles of church are necessary to reach as many people as possible in such a multicultural area. In the last few months, I have seen how important the church is in the work with refugees and have even had the privilege of helping to prepare some for baptism and help them with their continued journey of faith."

Ali Speed, 2016-2017 MES participant at Holy Trinity Church, Geneva & La Côte, Switzerland

Particulars

Available locations

We work with new and existing chaplaincies across Europe each year. They may include chaplaincies such as Italy, Turkey, France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

Eligibility

To apply for the scheme you need to be between 18-29 and to have successfully completed 'A Levels' or equivalent educational qualifications. Most applicants to MES have already spent some time at university or in further education, but we are also interested to consider exceptional candidates who do not have a tertiary qualification.

Safeguarding

The diocese adheres to best practice in safeguarding of children young people and vulnerable adults and ensures that checks and training for its participants and supervisors are carried out. All candidates for appointment will be subject to Enhanced disclosure.

Outcomes and Accountability

The primary accountability is to the local Chaplain, and the formal responsibility for the wellbeing of the participants is with the local chaplaincy, overseen by the Chaplain. Progress is assessed through reports in January and July, with a view to helping participants reflect throughout the year and plan their next steps.

Grant

Participants are paid a grant for the ten months September 2026 to the end of June 2027 of £4500 in three termly installments, usually paid in sterling. The grant is not subject to tax or national insurance.

Accommodation

The chaplaincy covers all accommodation as part of the scheme.

Additional Expenses

The Chaplaincy covers all agreed expenses, particularly travel on chaplaincy business and for two return trips between the chaplaincy and the participant's home base. The post-Brexit relationship between the UK and continental Europe has meant that some additional arrangements may be necessary, depending on the nationality of the participants. We will seek to ensure that the cost of these does not fall directly on the participant. Health care arrangements are partly dependent on a participant's nationality and location. Participants based in their own home country are required to ensure that they are covered by their national scheme; participants based outside their home country are encouraged to use EHIC/GHIC cards as far as possible.

Work and leave expectations

The participants will have one full day off a week and study days as agreed by the chaplain and the local theological supervisor. There will be two weeks off after Christmas and a week off after Easter. Time will be authorised for necessary visits to Directors of Ordinands or College visits, and by agreement for other needs.



Jerusalem Pilgrimage



What sets MES within the Diocese in Europe apart from other dioceses is a study pilgrimage. Ideally this is to Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Political events since October 2023 has meant that this location has not been possible. Alternative destinations such as Cyprus and Rome both important in the New Testament, have been chosen.

Participants are accompanied by mentors, explore and reflect upon several dimensions of their time together. The pilgrimage forms a key formational experience, as one participant said, "The messiness of the incarnation has become more real for me," and another, "I find myself looking at the Bible in new and different ways."

Discernment

We invite you to explore the varied experience of Anglican chaplaincies in continental Europe as you discern! The formational hopes for MES in the Diocese in Europe are rooted in the criteria used as part of the process of selection for ordination.

We will seek to help you discern your Christian vocation and to form your faith within the context of contemporary Europe. Reflect on your vocation with the significant support from a well-tuned formational team consisting of chaplains, a pastoral advisor and an educational supervisor. You will benefit from learning about, experiencing and exercising a great variety of ministries expanding your vision of vocation in the church.

Develop experience in the Church of England through an appreciation of the Anglican experience abroad, a break from the norm and a chance to be formed as a disciple of Christ. The continental context provides a colourful ecumenical experience as all of our chaplaincies are part of a broader ecumenical scene, frequently acting as key ecumenical interlocutors with the host churches in Europe. Anglican churches that cater to all churchmanships under one roof are the norm in the Diocese in Europe, where the nearest alternative parish might be several hundred kilometres away! This provides a critical model of the Anglican way and a chance to participate in meaningful ecumenical dialogue. Meanwhile, for European participants seeking experience in the UK context, a placement opportunity in a lively London training parish will round out experience of the Church of England in the UK.

Spirituality forms the bedrock of the assignment. The daily office and regular Sunday and weekday Communion services provide the public framework of worship. You are encouraged to keep a private journal for reflection. Weekly supervision with your respective chaplain is necessary and enables you to reflect not only on parish business, but on the spiritual implications of the work you're participating in.

"Through MES I gained a realistic sense of the life God has called me to live. As a result, I have been able to confidently say "yes" to God and begin interviews with my DDO. It is exciting for me to have clear next steps for my discernment process post-MES, steps which might not have been laid out yet had it not been for this internship."

Annie Bolger, 2016-2017 MES participant at St Martha & St Mary's Church, Leuven

Faith, mission and evangelism and quality of mind are important criteria that will show how suited you might be for deployable ministry. The context of the Diocese in Europe chaplaincies is entirely missional: our churches are open and welcoming to all but not proselytising, and all our chaplaincies have large numbers of local members. Interpreting the unique Anglican ecclesial tradition in this context relies on having mature faith, with a careful and sensitive grasp of how to evangelise, and be evangelised to, in unexpected ways.

The regular supervisions with the chaplain and pastoral advisor will give you the occasion to reflect upon the development of personality and character. You will be given space for growth in self-awareness, brought about by community life and a challenging new context. The MES insistence on consistent reflective practice will sow the seeds a lifetime of careful self-evaluation and heightened self-knowledge. The scheme is also designed to help you learn how to forge excellent working relationships and to understand the issues of transference and projection that are part of pastoral relationships. Cross-cultural communication and friendships will call forth your relational skills and equip you for future work in diverse settings. Living abroad may be quite different from your previous experience, be that work or university, and engaging new ways of relating to others through cultural and linguistic barriers will be integral to the assignment. This will have an immediate impact on your ability to collaborate and exercise leadership. In the past, interns in Europe have been asked to lead home groups, work with youth, plan church retreats, observe parochial church council meetings, organise refugee relief and more, furnishing participants with abundant leadership experience.



Contact

To apply, please contact the scheme coordinator, Dr Clare Amos
E: Clare.amos@europe.anglican.org

Clare lives and works in both Geneva and in the United Kingdom so email is the easiest method of contact. If you wish to speak, send her an email and she will gladly arrange an online Zoom or Teams meeting.

Applications will be dealt with on a rolling basis. The application process involves an initial interview in London and then a second interview at the chaplaincy where it is suggested that the intern will be based.



For more information and stories from previous MES students visit:

www.europe.anglican.org/ministry-experience-scheme-mes

