

# THE CATHOLIC CERTIFICATE IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES (CCRS)



Archdiocese  
of Southwark



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## What our past students have to say

*“I loved it all! Really enjoyed the course. I have learnt so much and valued the opportunity of discussing my faith and Church teaching with others. Thank you!”*

*“What was covered gave me greater insight to why we do as we do at school.”*

*“The course was well delivered by an exciting range of people. I really enjoyed having guest lecturers in.”*

*“I am so glad I completed the CCRS, it’s so valuable for my work in the parish.”*



## Foreword

Since it was introduced in 1991 to replace its predecessors, The Catholic Teachers' Certificate and the Certificate in Religious Education, the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies has aimed to provide an introduction to Catholic theology and to enable every participant to grow in understanding as they live their faith.

The Church attaches great importance to 'lifelong learning in faith' and it is therefore, with great pleasure, that I commend to you the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies, or as it is commonly known, the CCRS.

Throughout the course, you will explore several basic and important areas of theology and develop the necessary skills to apply this in your Catholic school or parish. In particular you, as a participant, will seek to discern the Word of God in your own life and deepen your commitment to it, having measured it against the Scriptures and the teaching of the Church.

Wishing you all the very best in your studies,

The Most Reverend Peter Smith  
Archbishop of Southwark



## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the CCRS?

The Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS) offers an introduction to the central teaching and beliefs of the Catholic Church. The modules are taught through lectures and group discussions in a friendly environment. The course is managed and awarded nationally by the Board of Religious Studies on behalf of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. No prior knowledge is required for the course which encourages discussion and lively debate. Non-Catholics are very welcome.

### Who is it for?

The course is open to all wishing to deepen their understanding of the Catholic Faith including teachers, governors, parish catechists, chaplains and any other interested individuals.

The CCRS is important for all teachers in Catholic schools and can help them make the progress they want in their career as a leader in the Catholic sector. The key to a strong Catholic ethos and identity in our schools comes from the ability of the leadership and all staff to communicate the Catholic faith accurately and effectively in every aspect of school life.

In the parish and chaplaincy context, the effective communication of the Catholic faith helps to create vibrant, compassionate, creative, and stimulating communities of Christian welcome and witness.



## **What is covered on the CCRS?**

There are eight modules: six core modules & two specialist modules.

The core modules explore the Person of Jesus Christ, the Scriptures (the Old and New Testaments), the Church and its Sacramental life and Moral Teachings. See pages 8-9 for more on these modules. The specialist modules relate to a participant's area of interest, covering such topics as Religious Education in schools, Parish Catechesis and prayer. The certificate can be awarded after a minimum of one year and within a maximum of five years of study.

## **What is the structure of the course?**

The CCRS can be taken as a two-year course on Saturdays at either Tooting Bec or another location or as an intensive one-year course on Tuesdays (see our venue and dates leaflet or website for more information). An assignment tutorial can be offered at the Centre for Catholic Formation (CCF) in Tooting Bec after each module.

## **How much time are students expected to give?**

Each module requires ten hours contact time or equivalent (a module preparation task and an intensive day's teaching form the input for the one year course), guided reading, and an assignment of a 1500 word essay or an equivalent presentation. You are welcome to follow the course for personal interest without completing the assignments (known as auditing the course).



## What is the cost and who should pay for the course?

The course is subsidised by the diocese so that the cost to the schools, parishes or individuals is minimal. The cost of the course includes registration with the Board of Religious Studies and covers lecture costs, marking fees, course administration and student support on each step of the course. The course fee can be paid in the following ways:

- full course payment
- at the beginning of each year (two-year course only)
- at the beginning of each module

Current fee levels are available on request (020 8672 7684; [ccrs@ccftootingbec.org.uk](mailto:ccrs@ccftootingbec.org.uk)) or in the annually updated flyer. Applicants engaged in parish ministry or teaching may wish to apply to their parish or school for assistance with the payment of these fees.

## Who monitors the standards of the Southwark Centre?

The Bishops' Conference Board of Religious Studies carefully monitor individual CCRS Centres. The Centres in Southern England meet on a regular basis to discuss and refine the course. We also undertake a yearly review of our processes and make any necessary changes based on student feedback and our own experience and observations. We aim to make the CCRS course as useful and relevant to participants.

*The Board of Religious Studies is the body which awards the CCRS on behalf of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.*  
*website: [www.brs-ccrs.org.uk](http://www.brs-ccrs.org.uk)*





## How do I register for the course?

If you would like to register for the CCRS, either as a full-award student or to audit the course please get in touch on 020 8672 7684 or by emailing either [ccrs@ccftootingbec.org.uk](mailto:ccrs@ccftootingbec.org.uk).

- Contact us indicating your intention to join the course
- You will be sent an application form to complete (alternatively you can also register via the CCF website: [www.ccftootingbec.org.uk](http://www.ccftootingbec.org.uk))
- A starters' pack will then be sent to you which includes, a suggested reading list, a guide to essay writing and an assignment cover sheet
- If a full-award student, after your first module is completed, you will be issued with a CCRS number by the Board of Religious Studies

CCRS introductory evenings are offered each year providing opportunities for you to ask any questions you may have.

## How are assignments to be submitted?

Assignments can take different forms, for example: essays, multiple question assessment and presentations. There are three possible marks: distinction, pass and fail. Students who fail the module will be encouraged to resubmit the assignment taking into account the feedback they receive from the tutor.

Whatever its form each assignment should: demonstrate proof of learning and reflection on the theme, be correctly referenced, answer the question set and include a cover sheet. All assignments should be sent to [ccrs@ccftootingbec.org.uk](mailto:ccrs@ccftootingbec.org.uk) or by post to the address on page 10.



## **Core Modules**

### **1. Jesus Christ**

This module focuses on the centrality of Jesus Christ in the teaching and life of the Church, His relevance for our lives and the concept of the Kingdom of God.

### **2. Bible: Old Testament**

This module introduces participants to the writings in the Old Testament in order to help them to recognise God's revelation contained there and its continuing relevance to Christian life today.

### **3. Bible: New Testament**

The purpose of this module is to familiarise participants with the process through which the New Testament writings came into being and to help them interpret the material presented and to understand its significance for the life of a Christian today.

### **4. The Church**

The meaning and significance of the term 'Church', Vatican II, the mission of the Church in the world, and its relationships with others are explored in this module.

### **5. Sacraments**

The purpose of this module is to develop participants understanding and appreciation of Sacraments in the life of Catholics as a sign of Christ's continuing presence with the Church.



## 6. Christian Morality

The purpose of this module is to help participants develop the skills of moral decision making, to examine Christian teaching in its relation to the universal search for what constitutes 'human good', and to explore the application of Christian understanding.

## Specialist Modules

In order to receive the CCRS certificate, students must complete two specialist modules in addition to the six core modules. Students are very welcome to participate in additional specialist modules for interest's sake. Teachers are encouraged to complete the Education related specialist modules.

We have a wide selection of specialist modules. Once you have started the course we will provide more details on each topic to enable you to choose (or see our website). Our topics include:

- The Catholic school as a worshipping community;
- School Leadership - the impact of social change for faith-led education;
- Canon Law;
- Catechesis & the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA);
- Liturgy;
- Prayer & Spirituality;
- Chaplaincy in schools, hospitals and prisons;
- Lay roles in the parish community and the life of the Church.



## My CCRS

CCRS Number

Once you have selected the dates of the particular modules you are looking to attend (and your specialist modules) from the annual Venue and Date sheets provided, you may wish to put the information in the table below which also helps you to track your assessment for the CCRS course.

Module	Date(s)	Assessment submitted	Grade
Jesus Christ			
New Testament			
Old Testament			
Church			
Sacraments			
Christian Morality			
Specialist (1)			
Specialist (2)			
Other modules		NB these will not count towards the certificate	



## About the Southwark Centre

### The Centre for Catholic Formation, Tooting Bec

At the Centre for Catholic Formation you will find various resources for students including tutor advice, a bookshop and a lending library.

21 Tooting Bec Road, London, SW17 8BS

T: 020 8672 7684

E: [ccrs@ccftootingbec.org.uk](mailto:ccrs@ccftootingbec.org.uk)

### Resource and Lending Library

CCRS students are entitled to use the Centre's resource and lending library. On payment of a refundable deposit students may borrow a maximum of three books at any one time. Our volunteer librarians will be happy to answer any queries you may have. Students are encouraged to consider donating any course books they have purchased to the library so that future students may benefit.

*The Centre for Catholic Formation in the Archdiocese of Southwark is the diocesan agency for catechesis, adult formation and evangelization. For more on these aspects of our work please feel free to get in touch. [website: www.ccftootingbec.org.uk](http://www.ccftootingbec.org.uk)*



### And finally, what if I want to do the CCRS online?

Options for the CCRS by distance learning include: Life-light, postal correspondence (01926 810 798 and [lifelight@btinternet.com](mailto:lifelight@btinternet.com)) and online through Liverpool Hope [www.hope.ac.uk/nccce](http://www.hope.ac.uk/nccce) (click on the courses link).



**Centre for Catholic Formation**

21 Tooting Bec Road, London, SW17 8BS

020 8672 7684 - [www.ccftootingbec.org.uk](http://www.ccftootingbec.org.uk) - [ccrs@ccftootingbec.org.uk](mailto:ccrs@ccftootingbec.org.uk)