Introduction

I am an ordained minister in the Church of England, currently a parish priest in the Diocese of Derby. I have a PhD in Archaeology and a MTh in Theology. I have undertaken teaching in both of those areas, but my current context is as a Tutor for the All Saints Centre, responsible for teaching trainee Readers and ordinands. The All Saints Centre offers undergraduate and postgraduate courses validated by Durham University through the Church of England's Common Awards framework and delivers teaching across different centres with centrally set module outlines. I have taught the New Testament (NT) module in the Derby/Nottingham centre each year since 2012, and the Doctrine module in 2016. I also taught on the Selected Biblical Texts (SBT) residential weekend in 2015.

Evidencing A1: Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study

I was part of a small group who revised the design of the NT module in 2014. Based on my informal feedback from the students and my reflections on teaching the module, I ensured the rearrangement of sessions 1 and 2 to enable a introduction for the students that more effectively built on their pre-existing knowledge and experience (NT background), rather than starting with a methodological session, which students found too abstract. This was confirmed by student feedback in the subsequent year. Based on my own reading, I also suggested the use of a new book for use in one session (Hooker and Young 2010) and contributed teaching material for another session (on non-canonical early Christian writings). [A3, A5, K1, K6, V1, V3]

Alongside these more substantial changes, there are also yearly meetings between tutors and the core management team where it is encouraged to offer reflections on how modules have gone affects planning decisions on subsequent year's plan. [K1, K6, V4]

While All Saints sets the module outlines, including lesson objectives, and provides teaching resources, this still requires planning to deliver effectively. This is particularly the case for the NT module, which in the Derby/Nottingham centre is team-taught. I therefore plan this each week with my co-tutor, usually by email. We decide which parts of the session each will lead on, make suggestions and offer informal feedback. [A2, A3, K1, K5]

During 2016, as part of a new programme of study validated by All Saints and delivered by Derby Diocese, I was asked to design, plan and deliver 2 hours of teaching. This was part of the NT module, based on Holdsworth (2014). After reading the book, and in discussion with the programme leader, I identified the need to provide an overview on the socio-historical context within which the New Testament had been written, and an overview of the main themes found within the NT. This was congruent with the module aims and expected learning outcomes (which include: "identify the issues raised by scholarly study of the New Testament literature") and with the assessments, which require essays on different aspects of the NT. [A2, A3, K1, K2, V2, V4]

Having identified the material I wanted to cover, I subsequently needed to identify the best teaching approach. Taking a constructive alignment approach to teaching methods, Exley and Dennick (2009:4f) note the appropriateness of lectures when the primary desired learning outcome is that of factual and conceptual understanding. As most of the module was delivered by facilitated small-groups, this also appropriately differentiated the day from the weekly sessions. [A4, K2, K3, V3]

To enhance the learning environment it is also important to enrich a lecture by employing active learning techniques where appropriate (Exley and Denick 2009:119ff). I started the first lecture with a quiz, which I encouraged the learners to complete together. This also served as a way of introducing the learning outcomes, with the questions relating to the main areas that I was subsequently covering during the lecture (cf. Exley and Denick 2009:130).

I also included maps and photos, audio and audio-visual clips, and encouraged questions and times of small-group discussion. [A2, A4, K2, K3, K4, V3]

I also made explicit use of a few books, to encourage students to undertake further reading if they so desired. These included the recently published SPQR by Mary Beard (paperback edition 2016). I also played an audio clip from Beard (2014) and a short extract from *Monty Python and the Life of Brian*. This was informed by Burridge and Roberts (2014), who explored the history and theology of the film. [A2, A5, K1, K2, V3]

Evidencing A2: Teach and/or support learning

I take a constructivist approach to teaching and seek to encourage deep learning (Biggs and Tang 2011:22,26). This is important in the context of training Christian leaders where the critical analysis of new ideas and incorporation into pre-existing frameworks of knowledge also contains a faith dimension and where formation is an important goal (Stuebing 1999, Brown 2013). Formation is identified by the Church of England (2003 §4.3;4.9) as a crucial component of ministerial education and is therefore assessed (All Saints nd A and B) [A3, K3, K6, V1, V4]

Consequently, to encourage deep learning and integrate formational principles, I take an active learning approach, where students are encouraged to discuss, question and apply (Biggs and Tang 2011:27). The understanding of situated learning and creation of communities of practice is also helpful (Fry et al. 2009:21). For example, to encourage and model this practice, I make reference to my own and others' preaching. During the doctrine module we discussed different approaches to preaching the Trinity. During the NT module I mention different sermon illustrations and ways of illuminating and contextualising the NT narrative. This holistic, formational approach is an enacted way of engaging with the underlying concepts, and encourages the development of a reflective community of practice. This is further encouraged by incorporating worship into the learning programme, which is how we start each session. This is a significant theme in theological discourse, with Hauerwas talking of the importance of prayer as part of sustaining theology (O'Loughlin 2008). [K3, K6, V3, V4]

As discussed, lectures can be appropriate, but active learning needs to be achieved (Exley and Dennick (2009:4f). I therefore encourage questions during a lecture, and use techniques such as small group discussion to achieve this. For example, in my NT lecture, to encourage greater intellectual demand for at least the most able students, towards the end of the first half I moved from a level of comprehension and application to analysis (Butcher et al. 2006:47), through discussion of the socio-historical background, asking the learners to identify Jewish reactions to Roman occupation. I continued this in the second lecture, analysing particular biblical texts with regards to what I had previously discussed. Encouraging questions and discussion also helped me to informally assess the learners' level of comprehension and accordingly adjust my delivery. [K1, K2, K3, V2, V3]

Reflecting on my practice, I should have sought to enhance the analysis by stating some of the questions more clearly (including using slides) and encouraging group discussion. This could have helped learners to move to a more intellectually demanding level and encouraged co-learning. [A5, K3, K5, V3]

More of my teaching is delivered through seminar-style teaching and learner-centred activities, including small-group discussions, tasks, and student presentations. These encourage formation and deep learning, as the students have to integrate and apply their knowledge. For example, I sometimes begin sessions by asking the students to discuss what

questions their preparatory reading raised for them. I record these on a flip-chart to inform our subsequent discussions. I also make use of projected images when appropriate, refer regularly to the core text books and other books as appropriate. I am available for one-to-one discussion after the session and make available links and extra information over the forum on the VLE and via email to consolidate learning. [K3, K4, K5, V1, V2]

The NT module is usually co-taught, meaning that we can break up sessions, and offer feedback. I am flexible enough to change the planned order when necessary. For example, one session of Doctrine module on the Atonement was scheduled to begin with students exploring the theologies of atonement in hymns they had been asked to look at. However, the students struggled with knowing how to categorise the differences. I therefore moved onto the teaching and then we looked at the hymns at the end. This was far more productive and consolidated their learning. [A5, K1, K2, K3, K5, V1, V3]

Evidencing A3: Assess and give feedback to learners

As discussed in A4, below, my students are from diverse backgrounds. To encourage deep learning and formation, informal assessment and feedback is important (Brown 2013:16). During my teaching I will also frequently encourage questions from as well as ask questions of the learners. This gives me an opportunity to assess the level of understanding that they hold. I also offer one-to-one feedback after the student-lead worship at the start of the NT sessions. [A2, K2, K3, K5, V3]

As another method of enhancing learning and informally assessing students I have required each student to offer a tweet-length summary of a Biblical book (cf. Vacek 2016). I have done this twice over the last year, once for the Gospel of John and once for the Letter to the Hebrews. In both cases, students had done preparatory reading on the main points of the book. This activity, as Vacek (2016) notes "encourages deeper engagement with texts and prompts questions of significance". I required all the students to read out their tweets, both as a formational exercise and also as a way of assessing whether students had grasped the main points of their reading, what points needed addressing, and which students required further support. [K2, K3, K4, K5, V1, V3]

One student was negative about this approach, until I explained that this was a way of thinking about how to summarise the text. Subsequently I made sure that I broadened out my opening explanation, resulting in the student being more engaged. To encourage debate and model co-learning I also prepared my own version of a tweet-length summary, which I read out (and tweeted) after the students had offered their versions. This exercise was done at the start of the teaching session, meaning that the points raised could be subsequently explored, and engaged the students in the exploration of the book. [A4, K3, K4, V1, V2]

As well as informal feedback, I have also been responsible for summative assessment and feedback. I regularly mark essays from the NT course, in 2017 marking 32 scripts. The moderator's report commended my "consistent and rigorous" approach, my "helpfully developmental" in situ comments and "focused" summative comments. As part of my summative comments I attempt to offer two, or at the most three, specific areas for improvement, based on a constructive alignment understanding of the need for clarity and precision (Butcher et al. 2006:71f). However, the moderator also concluded that my marks were consistently too low and had to be revised upwards. This is therefore an area I have identified for future improvement. [A5, K2, K5, K6, V3]

As part of the SBT module I was responsible for orally examining the students. The sessions were recorded, whilst there was a moderator in the room for a number of the sessions. As I had not assessed oral exams before, we agreed that the moderator would sit in for the first couple of exams. This enabled me to get instant feedback on my technique and assessment level, which ensured that my marking was at the correct level. Gaudet (2015) argues that oral exams increase the level of student engagement with the material, raises the accountability level, test comprehension in some depth, are personalised, and can be evaluative. This

enables oral exams to assess and engage with students at a deeper level than can always be achieved through written work. It also enables students to meet their potential, who might struggle more to demonstrate their proficiency in a written assessment. [A5, K2, K3, K5, K6, V1, V2, V3]

As well as assessment for the specific modules, I also assess student more widely, evaluating to what extent they are meeting the formational standards set by the Church of England for authorised ministers (Church of England nd). This involves producing a short written report on the students to the Director of Studies, which informs her yearly report. [K6, V4]

Evidencing A4: Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance

I teach students with diverse educational and social backgrounds. For example, last year students included a GP, local government workers, administrators, a home-maker with no formal qualifications, a mechanic, and a legal clerk. The students are also diverse in terms of age-range, theological and ecclesiological background, meaning there are few shared assumptions. I therefore encourage students to draw upon their own experience while reflecting upon their assumptions and backgrounds. [K3, V1, V2]

Physical space has a significant impact on learning (van Note Chism 2006:2.1f). For the NT module, the room is a classroom in an old church school (now a parish centre), which constrains what can be done. We arrange the desks in a horseshoe shape, to decentralise, create a discussion-friendly space and encourage co-learning, whilst also enabling the students to see the flip-chart and projected images (Bickford and Wright 2006:4.12). [K2, K3, K4, K5, V1, V3]

Stopping for a drink halfway through the session is an important part of our practice. This enhances concentration and allows informal learning to take place (van Note Chism 2006:2.5). It also facilitates the creation of a learning community, which is especially important for formation and deep learning (Brown 2013; Bickford and Wright 2006:4.1). I therefore make myself available for informal discussion after the end of the session (Bickford and Wright 2006:4.13), which students find helpful, and enables me to assess what learning has taken place. [A3, K3, K4, K5, K6, V3]

Physical and visual aids are an important part of learning and so I make regular use of these in my teaching, including Powerpoint slides, flip charts, maps in books, and encourage students to take turns in reading out loud. [K2, K3, K4, V3]

I have observed there are two particular aspects of the course that often concern students, namely using All Saints' VLE (Moodle), and the assessed essays. I therefore offer proactive practical support in these areas. I provide guidance on the use of the VLE and encourage its use by regularly referring to material that is accessed through the VLE and by making use of the forum. I also signpost students to additional online material. [K2, K4, V1, V2]

For the essays I give time in the sessions to discussing them (in general terms) and offering advice on the aspects that my experience of marking tells me that students find most difficult, particularly effectively referencing and moving from description to analysis. [A3, K2, K3, V1, V2, V3]

It is also important to support students with specific needs that they have, and making reasonable adjustments for them. To give two examples, over the past year my co-tutor and I facilitating a student skyping into the majority of the sessions as she was unable to physically attend due to illness. I made sure that I included her when asking questions, checked she could see and hear and that she received handouts, while the small-group work enabled her to engage effectively with the material and with her peers. Also, in consultation with the

Director of Studies, I conducted a one-to-one session with a student who had been long-term ill in her home to enable her to catch up. [K2, K4, V1, V2]

I have also participated in outreach programmes, including teaching on the diocesan pre-Reader courses, *Journey in Faith*. I have been responsible for mentoring a tutor, meeting with her regularly, helping to prepare for and reflect on her teaching, and also co-teaching with her on occasion. I also encourage and enable congregation members to come on these courses and to successfully explore Reader and ordination training. [V2, V4]

Evidencing A5: Engage in continuing professional development in subjects/disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practices

I regularly meet with other tutors as part of All Saints' and Derby Diocese's CPD. These are opportunities to discuss our practice, as well as feedback information on the course and students. As discussed, I also seek informal and formal feedback from my teaching. Examples include the feedback from co-teaching the NT module, and the positive feedback I received from my NT lectures (from organisers and students) and from the SBT module. [K2, K5, K6, V3, V4]

Another example was the teaching of a large cohort for the NT module, which had certain dominant personalities. Discussions were therefore dominated by those few individuals, with limited opportunities for others to contribute effectively (cf. Jacques and Salmon 2007:25). Furthermore, the student-led worship was also taking longer than scheduled, while the required student feedback of this was being closed down by an unhelpful desire to only offer general platitudes. This was done with a desire to affirm group members, but meant there was little opportunity for development (cf. Fry et al. 2009:11). [K2, V1, V3]

When reflecting on this, two resources I found helpful were Jacques and Salmon (2007) and Elder (2013). Jacques and Salmon (2007:30) discuss the importance of setting and reminding group members of procedures. On feedback, Elder (2013) writes about making post-observation conversations effective and affirming by identifying "a specific area for development directly from the effective elements already in place" encapsulated in the phrase "More of This". Jacques and Salmon (2007:106) also reminded me of the importance of arranging large groups into smaller units through structured tasks. I therefore reaffirmed group expectations, set new ones for feedback, and moved to much more small group work and structured tasks. These changes enabled the sessions to run more effectively and a wider range of voices to be heard. [K2, K3, K5, V1, V3]

As part of developing my own professional practice and keeping up with relevant material, I blog about aspects of theology. To give two examples, I have blogged about Beard (2014) to contextualise Paul's NT letters about women speaking in church (Rutter 2014). I have also blogged about Hull (1985), particularly exploring his linking of pedagogy and theology (Rutter 2016). This encourages my professional development and enhances my teaching both directly and through being able to offer additional online resources. [A2, K1, K2, K3, K4, V3]

I also keep up with the latest news from the wider church, including through social media and specialist newspapers. This enables me to make contemporary links to the topics I am teaching. For example, in the week that I was teaching SBT, Archbishop Justin Welby gave a speech on inequality (Welby 2015), which was one of the topics under discussion. I was therefore able to read sections out and encouraged the students to critique it. This made the topic more relevant [A2, K1, K2, K6]

In 2015 I audited a taught module *Ecclesiastes and post-modern mission* at St John's

Nottingham which allowed me to engage with different ways of examining a Biblical text and also to observe teaching practices from an experienced practioner. This enabled me to reflect on my teaching practice (cf. Bickford and Wright 2006:4.17), which I was able to do more fully and formally through auditing in 2017 the Durham University course *Fundamentals of Learning & Teaching in Higher Education*. This allowed me to engage in a more structured way with pedagogical methods and best practice both generally and subject-specifically, including through the the discipline-specific resources on the HEA website. [K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, K6, V3, V4]

I found the understanding of Threshold Concepts a new and helpful approach to consider, especially Integrated Threshold Concept Knowledge (Meyer and Timmermans 2016). Gilmour's (2016) discussion on the application of this approach to biblical studies was helpful, as was the discussion of Meyer et al (2016) of the use of ITCK to analyse threshold concepts and embed these and responses to them into learning. Rymarz (2016) has identified the importance of identifying and embedding Threshold Concepts into the teaching of theology, a challenge I am currently exploring. [K1, K2, K3, V3]

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Appendix

Emails, photographs, screenshots, observation form.