



Funding
Ministerial
Formation



Funding Ministerial Formation

Introduction

When considering a call to accredited Baptist ministry, you will no doubt want to think through the implications of that calling. One of the implications will be financial. The period of initial formation can be particularly challenging, as you will be at best only part-time in a paid role and be expected to pay fees to your training college. Individual circumstances vary enormously of course, but you may feel daunted by the prospect of finding enough money to both live and train. This document seeks to outline some of the possibilities for funding your ministerial formation. Please read it carefully and prayerfully, and be assured that your regional minister and your chosen college are there to talk through your options and to pray for you. Our aim is that no-one called by God to accredited Baptist ministry will be prohibited because of finance.

Working out a budget

We recommend you begin by drawing up a basic household budget for your expected income and expenditure. Appendix 1 provides a template that you may find useful. There may be some fields that you initially cannot complete, and this will reveal where further thinking and research is needed. If you are unfamiliar with budgeting, you may wish to ask your church treasurer or another person you trust to help you. The budget should consider any household income you receive, including any support you have been promised for your training, and any expected stipend from your training placement if you are on a church-based track. Try to be realistic about your anticipated expenditure, including leisure and holiday costs. You should include any student fees. Remember that you may well be able to access student-related discounts, such as student rail cards, for council tax, or discounts with retailers.

College fees

The Baptist colleges, as higher education providers, charge university tuition fees. However, it is not as straightforward as assuming you will have to pay the usual full university annual fee for undergraduate study. You might be studying part-time rather than full-time. You might be studying for a master's degree rather than a diploma or bachelor's degree, with a different fee

structure. Your college might also charge fees for your study of ministerial and missional practice that are separate from those for your academic qualification. You might or might not be eligible for a student loan from the Government. Your college might or might not be able to offer you a bursary. In short, you should arrange a conversation with the college you hope to attend and they will help you to understand the costs involved. They will do all they can to make sure your ministerial formation is affordable.

Possible sources of support

The suggestions below outline some of the different sources of income and support on which ministers-in-training depend during their ministerial formation. Most ministers-in-training make use of a combination of these.

Stipend and housing from a placement church

If you are on a church-based track, you will spend roughly half of your working time in college or personal study, and half in a placement church. Where this is the case, our recommendation to churches is that they pay you half the Standard Stipend and provide you with manse accommodation. The current Standard Stipend can be found at www.baptist.org.uk/stipend. Along with the provision of accommodation, the church should also pay council tax, water and sewerage bills, and for a phone line. Some churches may also offer a contribution towards energy costs. This provision of accommodation for ministers-in-training does not usually give rise to a taxable benefit. Please refer to our [Guidance Leaflet X03](#) for more details on taxation for ministers.

If you are going to live in your own accommodation, the placement church may instead pay a cash housing allowance, but this would be taxed as if it were additional stipend. An alternative is that you lease your house to the church. They then 'provide' it back to you as a manse on the understanding that it becomes the base for your ministerial duties. As manses provided by a church to a minister do not usually give rise to a taxable benefit, this arrangement can save a considerable sum of money. If you wish to explore this option further, please contact financeoffice@baptist.org.uk for more details.



Personal income and savings

Some ministers-in-training train over a longer period of time and continue in other paid employment for part of each week. Though some do this for financial reasons alone, others choose it deliberately as preparation for bi-vocational ministry beyond training, in which they intend to mix church or pioneer ministry with other employment. Other ministers-in-training rely on other household income, often the salary of their spouse if they have one. Some ministers-in-training come with savings that they use to contribute towards student fees or living expenses. We recognise that some or all of these options are simply not open to many who wish to train for ministry.

Home church support

We recommend you approach your 'sending' church, if it is different from your placement church, to see if they can support you in any way. Not all churches are in a position to do this, but often home churches will help pay student fees, or provide a gift each year from their general funds, or appeal to church members to consider supporting you directly.

Government student loans

It is always worth exploring whether you are eligible for a government student loan to pay for some or all of your degree or master's course fees. In England this loan comes from the Student Loan Company. In Wales it comes from Student Finance Wales. Depending on your circumstances, you may also get a loan for living costs. Details can be found at www.gov.uk/student-finance for those studying in England or www.studentfinancewales.co.uk for those studying in Wales.

In addition you can also explore whether you are eligible for the [disabled students allowance](#), [parents learning allowance](#) and [adults dependant grant](#). These are separate to the student loan and can be investigated even if you are not eligible for a loan for fees.

Many ministerial students are not eligible for student loans from government, usually because they have already received a government loan or grant for a previous qualification at the same level. So, it is important you confirm your eligibility for this option.

Baptists Together 'Funding for Training' loan

If you cannot access student finance through the UK or Welsh Government, you may instead apply for a loan for student fees through Kingdom Bank, with whom the Baptist Union has entered an agreement. If your application is approved, payments for student fees will be made direct to your college. In addition, you can borrow up to £1,500 for resources that enable your study, such as a laptop, or books. You will have to make a nominal repayment of £5 per month during your training. After training, you are

expected to pay back the loan over ten years. The interest rate is favourable compared to a typical personal loan because the Baptist Union acts as the guarantor of the loan.

You are welcome to apply for a Funding for Training loan at any stage during your training at one of our colleges.

You can find further details of the Funding for Training loan option in Appendix 2.

Baptists Together/College bursaries

The colleges are given an amount each year from Baptists Together central funds so that they may offer bursaries to ministers-in-training who need more financial support. If you know that you will struggle to finance your training period, please speak to your college about this possibility.

Association grants

Some of our regional associations are in a position to offer grants to ministers-in-training. Please ask your regional minister if you want to explore this possibility.

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Ministries Team April 2025

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BUGB operates as a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO)
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Appendix 1

Budgeting help sheet

This sheet may be used to help you consider your anticipated annual income and expenditure during your years of ministerial formation at a Baptist college. By no means will all categories apply to everyone, and there may be additional categories that you want to add. However, it provides a starting point for your planning, and may help identify where you need to research further, where income could be sought, or where savings might be made.

| HOUSEHOLD INCOME | ANNUAL AMOUNT |
|--|---------------|
| Stipend from placement church | |
| Housing allowance from placement church, if no manse | |
| Salary from additional employment | |
| Spouse's salary | |
| Income from personal supporters | |
| Income from supporting organisations such as a home church | |
| Pension income | |
| Rental income | |
| Investment income | |
| Universal credit | |
| Child benefits | |
| Working tax credits | |
| Child tax credits | |
| Other State benefits | |
| Government student loan | |
| Baptists Together 'Funding for Training' loan | |
| Any other grants | |
| (Other) | |
| TOTAL ANNUAL AMOUNT | |
| TOTAL MONTHLY AMOUNT | |

| HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE | MONTHLY AMOUNT |
|---|----------------|
| Rent or mortgage | |
| Ground rent and service charge for leasehold properties | |
| House and contents insurance | |
| House repairs | |
| Hire purchase payments | |
| Car finance – loan, lease, or contract plan | |
| Other loans | |
| Maintenance payments for dependants | |
| Baptist college fees | |
| Council tax | |
| Water | |
| Energy – gas and electric | |
| Car servicing | |
| Car tax | |
| Car insurance | |
| Car breakdown cover | |
| Car petrol, diesel, or electricity | |
| Public transport fares or season tickets | |
| House telephone and broadband | |
| Mobile phone | |
| TV licence | |
| Media subscriptions | |
| Childcare | |

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Food | |
| Clothing | |
| Healthcare and medicines | |
| Life assurance | |
| Savings plan | |
| Charitable and church giving | |
| Birthdays and Christmas | |
| Entertainment and social events | |
| Sport and recreation | |
| Pets | |
| Holidays | |
| (Other) | |
| | |
| TOTAL MONTHLY AMOUNT | |

Appendix 2

Baptists Together 'Funding for Training' loan option

Overview

Baptists Together have developed a student loan offer which can be used by Baptists Together ministers-in-training to fund their ministerial training. The loan is an unsecured personal loan from Kingdom Bank to you as the student. The Baptist Union of Great Britain (the legal entity behind Baptists Together) acts as guarantor. This allows loans to be offered without being tied to your income during your training period and enables Kingdom Bank to charge a reduced rate of interest. Baptists Together also covers the cost of interest during the training period and life assurance to cover repayment of the loan should you die before it is repaid.

You may apply for a loan once you have been accepted for ministerial training by your regional Ministerial Recognition Committee, or at any point from then on until you conclude your training.

Key features are as follows:

Use of the loan

- The Loan is primarily intended to cover your student fees for study at a Baptist college. These are Bristol Baptist College, Cardiff Baptist College, Northern Baptist College, Regent's Park College, Spurgeon's College, or St Hild Centre for Baptist Ministry.
- Payments to cover your fees are made direct to a college against a fee invoice issued to you by the college.
- You may pay part of the fees from a Kingdom Bank loan and part from other resources if you wish.
- As well as fees, you may borrow up to £1,500 to cover expenditure resources needed for study, such as a laptop, books, and study aids. You pay for these resources yourself and request reimbursement from the loan by submitting to Kingdom Bank any receipts or invoices. You can only access this £1,500 after a first payment has been made to a college towards your student fees.
- The minimum amount you may borrow in any one year is £1,000. The maximum you may borrow in any one year is £10,000. The maximum you may borrow in total is £30,000.

Repayments

- As the borrower, you are responsible for repayment of the loan. You must therefore consider the affordability of the expected repayments.
- You are required to make a nominal repayment during your training period of £5 per month.
- Loans are repayable over a 10-year period starting on 1 September after completion of your training. Repayments will be set by Kingdom Bank at a level that enables you to

repay the loan over a ten-year period and which is based on the prevailing interest at the time.

- You may repay the loan early if you wish, without any penalties or administrative charges.
- Baptists Together, alongside Kingdom Bank, obtain life assurance to repay any outstanding loan in the event of your death. The cost of this will be paid by Baptists Together.

Interest

- Interest on the loan is set annually in June. It will take into account interest rate movements over the previous 12 months, and forecasts for interest rates in the coming 12 months. The rate is variable during the term of the loan and is payable on the outstanding balance.
- For the twelve months from 1 September 2024, the rate of interest is 7.5%.
- To maintain a modest rate of interest for an unsecured personal loan, the Baptist Union of Great Britain (the legal body behind Baptists Together) is acting as guarantor for the loan.
- During your training period, interest will be paid by the Baptist Union.
- After completing your training, you will be responsible for paying the interest, along with the outstanding loan balance, via monthly payments.

Application

Once you have been accepted for ministerial training by your regional Ministerial Recognition Committee (MRC), the MRC informs the Baptists Together Ministries Team. Ministries Team then sends you your ministerial training enrolment paperwork. This includes a draft application form for a Kingdom Bank loan, so that you may see what information will be required. If you do decide to apply, you should wait until your place at a college has been confirmed and then contact the Ministries Team. They will, with your permission, pass your details on to Kingdom Bank who will complete the form with you during a meeting. Kingdom Bank undertake credit checks.

If you have questions, please contact the Ministries Team on ministriesforms@baptist.org.uk.