

Margaret Beaufort Institute (MBI)

Institutional Strategy 2024-2029

RATIONALE

Thirty years after its founding the Margaret Beaufort Institute is setting out to articulate a Strategic Vision. This vision is in continuity with the Institute's origins, but it also seeks to equip it to respond more effectively to a new and challenging moment in church and world. We believe that there is even more need now for what the Institute seeks to be and to do than there was at the time of its foundation. That is the fundamental 'why' of what is, in effect, a new beginning; it also underpins the 'what' and the 'how' that the strategic vision seeks to articulate.

The problems that society faces today have intensified since the Institute's early days, and the needs of an increasingly challenged church and an ever more fragile world are greater than they were. The key purpose of the Margaret Beaufort Institute at this time is, through God's grace, to empower lay people, especially women, so that they can empower others and work alongside them to make the world a better place. There is an urgent need for opportunities that address the human quest for meaning and that offer hope and purpose.

The Margaret Beaufort Institute exists to open the riches of theology and its allied disciplines (especially, philosophy, ethics and spirituality) as a way of engaging with the challenges of people in our day. These challenges impact everyone: a Catholic parish facing decline or closure; a diocese in need of formational theology for the 'synodal church'; professionals seeking contemplative spaces for developing in their role; a church or healthcare leader looking for ethical coaching; and anyone for whom formational education, religious and theological literacy as well as life-long learning and personal enrichment matter.

We recognise that church and world urgently need healing, and a more inclusive and respectful dialogue to create a more just and generous church and society. We believe that, by God's grace, we can provide spaces for discussion, study, formation, contemplation, prayer and personal enrichment that can make a difference. In this way we can help address theological and pastoral impoverishment in the church, and we can respond to spiritual and ethical needs in our world.

The Strategic Vision of the Institute focuses on identity, values, priorities and goals in the three strands of work: teaching, research and practice (TRP). It aims to develop a framework to shape and drive new and ongoing provision in these areas. The framework is set in line with the founding purpose of the Institute which is to provide transformative experiences for women, the community and the church through theological education, professional pastoral practice and personal formation and with the goals of the Cambridge Theological Federation of which the Institute is a full member, especially Goal A: 'to ensure a high quality student experience across the range of our learning activities'

(https://hedwig.theofed.cam.ac.uk/pluginfile.php/37403/mod_resource/content/0/Strategic%20Plan%202017-2022%20-%20reviewed%20June%202018.pdf).

This Institutional Strategy will be underpinned by sub strategies guiding particular elements of the Institute's activities.

INTRODUCTION (What Margaret Beaufort Institute Cambridge is and what it does)

The Margaret Beaufort Institute, founded in 1993, is an academic community, shaped by a Catholic ethos and grounded in the vision of the Second Vatican Council with its emphasis on the importance of formation in the Catholic faith, commitment to the common good and openness to dialogue with the world. In this spirit, the Institute reflects 'whole church', embracing the entire breadth of Catholic theological tradition. It is open-minded, practice-oriented and outward-looking, working with people and institutions from all backgrounds and faiths, through dialogue and deep listening.

As a member of the Cambridge Theological Federation (CTF), the Institute is associated with the University of Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin University. Together with other Houses of the CTF, it provides unique opportunities for ecumenical and inter-faith encounters. The Institute's educational offer, while prioritising women, is available to all, worldwide, through in person and online teaching, with courses ranging from unaccredited short courses, to postgraduate diplomas, taught master's degrees and research degrees. The Institute is also a contemplative community, with a rich tradition of retreats, quiet days, liturgical services and pilgrimages, frequently with the support of the MBA.

The Institute's theological profile is grounded in inter-disciplinary engagements and relevance to personal and professional contexts of all kinds. The teaching staff, research fellows, associates and students, individually and collectively, contribute to different contexts - academy, church and wider society.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide formative and transformative experiences to all, especially women in three strands of the Institute's work: teaching, research and practice. With the same dedication as our namesake Margaret Beaufort who used her knowledge and wealth to expand education, the Institute aims to offer high quality learning opportunities, nurture outstanding research and foster theologically grounded pastoral practice. Ultimately, our mission is to make a difference in church and wider world.

OUR VISION 2030

- To nurture and support transformative learning at all levels for all members of the Institute's community
- To promote the feminine experience and presence in theology and the education of women for leadership in ministry
- To engage actively in theological, ethical and spiritual formation as a full member of the Cambridge Theological Federation
- To provide leadership support, mentorship, ethical coaching and pastoral supervision, both in the church and the wider world
- To develop partnerships and collaborations so that together we can respond attentively, imaginatively and constructively to the needs of church and world
- To foster sustainable development; to be a careful steward of human, natural and financial resources
- To cultivate synergies between teaching, research and practice in all our activities

OUR VALUES (OPERATIONAL BELIEFS)

Faith is the bedrock and founding principle of the institute. Our teaching and research are rooted in the theistic worldview and expressed in faith in humanity, ecumenism and inter-faith encounters as well as in our life of communal prayer and contemplation.

Inclusion - we welcome people and are nourished by diverse voices; we welcome challenges and the challenged; we have a particular attention to the voices less heard. For us, inclusion is synonymous with hospitality and openness in the search for truth

Innovation - we have the confidence to be imaginative; to combine intellectual pursuits with practicality; we foster shifts and movements and aim at transformation

Continuity - we engage with the past to draw on wisdom to deal with the present and prepare for the future

OUR DISTINCTIVE TRIADS

- Women-Church-World
- Teaching-Research-Practice
- Catholic + / Women + /Theology +
- Interpersonal / Interdisciplinary / Interfaith

OUR MOTTO

Transformation through teaching, research and pastoral practice

OUR STRATEGIC INTENT

To enhance the provision of transformative experiences through teaching, research and practice.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- A. Providing access to the Institute's educational opportunities at all levels, particularly to women
- B. Supporting research and innovative pastoral practice
- C. Providing enrichment opportunities for leaders in Church and world

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

1. To sustain a high-quality formational theological education, spiritual and ethical resourcing for individuals and groups through innovative non-degree courses, postgraduate diplomas, taught master's degrees and research degrees, seminars, study days, retreats, pilgrimages, and other enrichment opportunities
2. To connect the programmatic offer with financial affordability in order to foster a sustainable operational model of the Institute
3. To facilitate exchange with culture, art, professional practice, and common good initiatives to inform teaching, research and practice
4. To build effective institutional (local and international) collaborations to enhance the Institute's programmes and increase its profile within the wider (global) Catholic Church community and society in general

PRIORITIES	GOALS	ACTIONS
<p>A.</p> <p>Providing access to the Institute’s educational opportunities at all levels, particularly to women</p>	<p>GOAL 1</p> <p>To sustain a high-quality formational theological education, spiritual and ethical resourcing for individuals and groups through innovative non-degree courses, postgraduate diplomas, taught master’s degrees and research degrees, seminars, study days, retreats, pilgrimages, and other enrichment opportunities</p>	<div data-bbox="874 192 1307 394" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> (T) teaching (R) Research (PO) Pastoral Outreach (CEE) Centre for Ecclesial Ethics (RLI) Religious Life Institute </div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Diversify student and participant body: reach out to less represented ethnic groups, especially women in these groups 2) Identify, introduce and evaluate innovative pilot projects in all three strands 3) (T) Introduce certification of short courses 4) Continue to appoint outstanding staff, fellows and associates committed to the mission, values and vision of the Institute
	<p>GOAL 2</p> <p>To connect the programmatic offer with financial affordability in order to foster a sustainable operational model of the Institute</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5) Apply for grants and sponsorships to continue the work that embodies the values of Institute 6) Embark on fundraising 7) Review bursary policy to reflect values and priorities 8) Ensure that the MAs’ workload/teaching allocation is considered within the Anglia Ruskin University Oversight Group (as part of periodic review and management of the programmes); 9) (RLI) Explore joint funding opportunities
	<p>GOAL 4</p> <p>To build effective institutional (local and international) collaborations to enhance the Institute’s programmes and increase its profile within the wider (global) Catholic Church community and society in general</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10) Connect Centre for Ecclesial Ethics (CEE) Religious Life Institute (RLI) and Margaret Beaufort Association (MBA) with the three strands and identify outlets for showcasing the Institute’s work; 11) Use MBA contacts such as those generated by the Pearl Anniversary and Diocesan and Bishops Conference contacts
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12) Ensure some women-only courses 13) Develop support for Catholic Women Leaders 14) Continue developing MBA <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Foster relationships between alumni and students b) Empower MBA to take a leading role in supporting promotion of women in ministry 15) (RLI) Explore and build greater synergy between the RLI and each of the three strands of MBI activities

		16) Develop targeted collaboration
B. Supporting research and innovative pastoral practice	GOAL 3 To facilitate exchange with culture, art, professional practice, and common good initiatives to inform teaching, research and practice	17) (R) Continue whole-church approach to research. 18) (R) Intensify the appointment of future research associates who are dedicated to the mission of MBI 19) (T) (R) (PO) Possible areas of focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Women leaders in the Catholic Church ii. Ethical Leadership iii. Pastoral Outreach and catechetical issues iv. (CEE): Theological impoverishment & poor quality of relationships in the Church 20) (R) and (T) Identify research associates who could potentially work as supervisors for postgraduate degrees. 21) (R) and (CEE) Increase synergy with CEE, possibly including Synodal Fellowship(s) funded by the grant from the Canonesses of St Augustine. 22) Collaborative research grant applications (e.g. with St Mary's Catholic University Twickenham – the Wisdom/Sophia project). 23) Increase visibility of research community, including website profiles 24) (PO) Work with Diocesan Pastoral Council
	GOAL 4 To build effective institutional (local and international) collaborations to enhance the Institute's programmes and increase its profile within the wider (global) Catholic Church community and society in general	25) Identify and build a network of collaborators: (PO) Potential collaboration with the London Jesuit Centre (MBI's provision of Virtual Learning Environment); Reach out to religious orders and establish partnerships, especially with the local and Diocesan Catholic bodies 26) Develop opportunities for showcasing and sharing pastoral and practical theological work of the Institute
C. Providing enrichment opportunities for leaders in Church and world	GOAL 4 To build effective institutional (local and international) collaborations to enhance the Institute's programmes and increase its profile within the wider (global) Catholic Church community and society in general	27) Develop ethical coaching and connect it with pastoral supervision 28) Develop formation for leaders (ecclesial, social, charity and corporate) - ethical and contemplative leadership framework