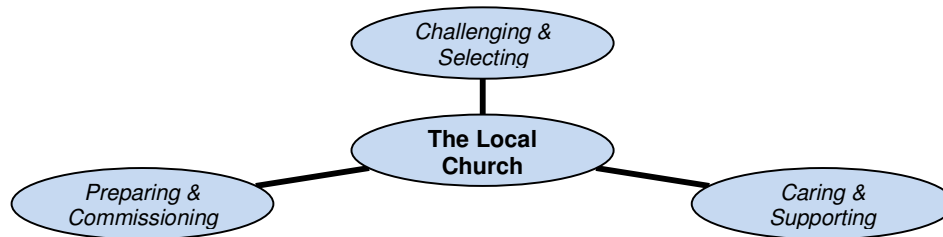


WORLD FOCUS TEAM

Assisting Local Churches and Christians in World Mission



Resource Paper 9

Pre-field Training, Orientation and Preparation Options for Missionary Candidates

Churches commissioning members for cross-cultural, overseas, ministry need to assure themselves that their members receive adequate training and orientation for that service. That training should include, at least, the following components:

- ❖ maintaining spiritual vitality
- ❖ living and working cross-culturally
- ❖ guidelines on behaviour and relationships
- ❖ team dynamics and conflict resolution
- ❖ the cultural and religious context of the region/country
- ❖ security and risk assessment
- ❖ health and hygiene 'musts'
- ❖ handling finances sensitively in the light of the income disparities of national and expatriate colleagues.

The length of the overseas service in view and prior cross-cultural experience, or lack thereof, should be taken into account in determining the extent of training/orientation to be undertaken by the candidate.

Typically, Mission Agencies have an ongoing programme of cross-cultural training of candidates. This training may be spread over pre-departure, arrival on the field, first-term mentoring and during the first home leave period, such is the importance of equipping members for overseas service. In cases where church members are to serve under the auspices of an established mission agency, confirmation should be sought from the agency that adequate training and preparation is provided.

In cases where church members are to serve independent of mission agencies (or where less than adequate, preparation is provided by the agency they are to serve with), it is recommended that the commissioning church enquire of Affinity Associate Mission Agencies as to whether or not they are able to provide training and orientation of such members. If this is not possible, it is important that churches identify, and support their member's participation in, an appropriate preparation course.

A full year of training for cross-cultural mission is to be seriously considered whenever possible and such courses are offered by a number of Christian colleges. However, for those unable to devote a full year of study to Mission training it is considered that preparation courses of **less than 4 weeks duration will not be adequate**. Such is the importance of preparation if they are to serve well in their new sphere of service and be able to cope with the inevitable stresses that they will face.

This paper focuses on such **shorter courses**.

Sections A and B outline a selection of shorter training/orientation options available in the UK.

Section C outlines some other resources available to churches guiding members preparing for overseas service.

Throughout this document the provider's website address is given where further information can be found.

[It should be noted that, in addition to pre-service preparation of members, commissioning churches need to undertake post-field de-briefing. See Resource Paper 8 in the World Focus section of this website.]

A. COURSES OF 1 TO 3 MONTHS DURATION:

1. Redcliffe College - 'Across the Cultures' Course www.redcliffe.org

This **12 week** course runs from March to June each year and selects the most appropriate modules from the college's Applied Theology Diploma to provide a course that focuses specifically on cross-cultural mission.

2. Redcliffe College - 'Pick and Mix' Course www.redcliffe.org

The 'Pick & Mix' course is less structured than the above 12 week 'Across the Cultures' course and offers between **one and four terms (6 weeks or more)** of study. This course allows the trainee to select the most appropriate subjects from the Applied Theology Diploma.

For both of the above options there are 20 modules to **select from** including:

- Living and Working Cross-culturally
- Personal Development and Developing Spirituality
- Bible Study Methods/Group Bible Study
- Nurturing Evangelism and Discipleship Skills
- Teams – Leading and Participating
- Developing Public Communication Skills
- Biblical Basis of Mission/Trends in Mission/Modernism and Postmodernism/Urban Mission/Church Growth
- Theology of Religions; Primal Religion/The Spirit World/Hinduism-Buddhism/Islam
- Development Studies
- Children's & Youth Ministry

Topics of specific personal interest can also be studied under the guidance of Redcliffe tutors.

3. All Nations Christian College - 'En route' Course www.allnations.ac.uk

'En route' is a **10 week** intensive programme providing a basic foundation for cross-cultural service. The course is delivered using a variety of training methods by a team of experienced mission practitioners.

'En route' will provide the trainee with a biblical foundation for every part of life and ministry and the means to develop an understanding of culture, current trends, contemporary issues and how to relate and integrate across cultures. Equal emphasis will be given to developing and maintaining healthy relationships and effective team working. Tools will be provided for programme planning and management and for the practical issues of transition.

The trainees will have the opportunity to learn about specific countries and cultures; the college library is fully equipped with resources to help find out as much as possible about the cultures they will be engaging with.

For those who feel called to work in a cross-cultural environment but are not sure where to serve or if they

are just exploring the possibility of a cross-cultural experience and want to test that call, the 'En route' training team will help students to discern where God may be calling.

4. All Nations Christian College - 'En route Online' www.allnations.ac.uk

'En route online', lasting **14 weeks**, is a new foundational mission training course covering all the essential elements of the 'En route' course. It is ideal for those who cannot get to college in person, but who plan to go out on cross-cultural mission service. Commencement dates are late September, early January or April in any academic year.

5. The 'Wycliffe' Language And Culture Acquisition Course www.eurotp.org

This **6 week** course aims to prepare people to become effective communicators in a second language and culture. No specific language is taught but, rather, students are given tools to learn any language and culture. The course is about learning to learn experientially and to interact with other people. Trainees should leave this course confident that, if they have access to a community of speakers of another language, they can learn that language whether or not there is a formal language school. To this end trainees are taught how to organise and manage their own learning and to learn from experience. Effective cross-cultural communication is built on good interpersonal communication skills, and self-awareness is the first step toward reaching this end.

By the end of the '**Language and Culture Acquisition**' Course the participant has:

- Planned and carried out a successful programme of self-directed language learning
- Used a variety of techniques for language learning and worked with a language resource person
- Interacted well with people of other cultures, based on acceptance of different underlying values
- Chosen language and culture learning techniques that fit their learning style
- Used computers and software as language learning helps including online resources
- Located language learning materials that are already available for learning a given language
- Monitored their progress in language learning and carried out self- assessments
- Taken a pro-active approach to maintaining high motivation
- Developed the attitude of "life-long" language learning.

6. Belfast Bible College - Three Month Certificate www.belfastbiblecollege.com

Individuals can attend for one teaching semester of **3 months** duration (*September to December or February to May*). Students are invited to put together a course from the various modules on offer in consultation with the Director of Studies. **Modules** cover the following categories:

- Biblical Studies
- Mission Studies
- Historical & Theological Studies
- Practical Studies
- Languages

7. International Christian College Courses www.icc.ac.uk

A wide range of mission-related courses are offered some of which are listed below. A selection of these can be taken over the course of a **3 month** semester.

- The Bible and the Mission of God
- Gospel, Culture & Contextualisation
- Secularism, Pluralism and Christian Mission
- Cross-Cultural Life and Ministry
- Mission and the Rise of World Christianity
- Primal Religion and New Religious Movements
- Encountering Islam

NOTE: The following Affinity Associate colleges will customise courses for missionary candidates and/or arrange for individual modules to be audited over a semester or an agreed period:

B. OTHER SINGLE - FOCUS AND/OR STAND ALONE COURSE OPTIONS:

All Nations Christian College Short Courses www.allnations.ac.uk

All Nations offer a variety of stand alone courses. They are run through the year by a combination of college staff and other experts. They provide insights into contemporary cross-cultural issues affecting mission today.

1. 10/4 Window

For those unable to devote a full year of study to Mission training, this course offers the opportunity for students to attend for a single term, gaining experience of All Nations life, and the chance to complete **four units of study** over **10 weeks**.

2. Islamics - Responding to today's challenge

This course takes place each December for **10 days**. It aims to train Christians to respond to the challenge of the growth of Islam today. It examines Islam's theological claims and its criticisms of Christianity so as to teach Christians to communicate the Good News to Muslims with intelligence, boldness and humility. If you are preparing to work in Muslim countries or among ethnic minorities in the West, then you will find this course invaluable. As well as lectures, the programme includes opportunities for group interaction, private study and sharing of personal experiences and insights.

3. World Worship Weekend - looking at the use of music in worship across the cultures.

It will contain real stories and instruction from the college's cross-cultural practitioner in global worship and ethnomusicology. Student will take part in practical song learning, instrument playing, and global worship sessions. There will be an emphasis on helping churches to develop the "heart music" of God's people in familiar forms and languages where the trainees will serve. This is a very exciting task for musicians and missionaries involved in church planting.

Outline of Content:

- Heart Music and How it Works
- Learning and Promoting Non-Western Music
- Regional Music Ensembles
- Song Workshops
- Why Multicultural Worship
- Practical Demonstrations and Performances
- A Celebration of Global Worship

'Wycliffe' 1 week Courses www.eurotp.org

1. Chronological Bible Storying seminar

- *Do you need to communicate the Bible as Story?*
- *Eager to do this with greater understanding?*

This **1 week** seminar on Chronological Bible Storying is for those working cross-culturally overseas or in the UK.

We are also aware that Storying connects well with a postmodern generation, so this topic is relevant to all. If you have an interest in developing this kind of ministry or already have opportunity to tell the Bible as story, we warmly encourage you to attend.

2. Learning that Lasts

This **1 week** workshop is aimed at training trainers. It is ideal for those training others in the developing world, and may be applied in both *one-on-one* and *large group* settings for training. There are no formal

prerequisites for taking this course.

Learning that Lasts is based on **Jane Vella's** approach to training adults and, in particular, on principles she puts forward in her book ***Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach***.

These principles are organised in this workshop as:

- **Learner-centered**
- **Action with reflection**
- **Solving problems**
- **Teamwork**
- **Self-discovery /self-direction**

Effective learning takes place when these trans-cultural principles are applied in a wide variety of situations.

Much of the workshop's content is based upon the expressed needs of the participants. Each person has an opportunity to practise these principles by working in teams of two to present some learning material in a 40 minute session.

3. God's Word and God's World: Literacy, Education, Development & Mission

This **1 week** course aims to help you develop an understanding of the interrelationship between Literacy, Education, Development and Mission. It is intended for those who:

- currently work in the development sector (whether secular *or* Christian);
- are hoping to work in the development sector (whether secular *or* Christian) in the future.

No formal prerequisites apply, but please do come prepared for lively discussion!

Reminding ourselves that the Gospel of the Kingdom announces the King's blessings in all areas of life, we will examine the global need for holistic human and community development in light of our mission as citizens of His Kingdom. Given that almost half of the human race lives in abject poverty (living on less than one pound per day), we might ask: What factors impact such holistic human and community development?

- community development appears to be an inescapable *Kingdom responsibility*;
- *Education* is integral to it;
- *Literacy* is at the heart of education;
- *Minority people groups* contain many who are uneducated.

This course will thus look at the world situation in terms of these factors, within the context of an understanding of Christian Mission.

C. OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES FOR THOSE PREPARING FOR OVERSEAS SERVICE:

1. Global Connections www.globalconnections.co.uk

The following guidelines are to be found in the '**Resources**' section of the GC website. They are designed for agencies or churches sending staff or volunteers overseas for either long or short-term service although different procedures might be needed in each context. The principles should be applied to missionaries, national/local staff and agency or church staff visiting field locations. They have been formed specifically with cross-cultural contexts in mind.

"HIV Policy Guidelines" – guidelines for developing policies and procedures in relation to HIV infection for UK based organisations or churches sending staff or volunteers overseas.

"Crisis Management and Prevention" – guidelines for crisis management and prevention including working in high risk areas.

"TCK Guidelines" i.e. 'third culture kids' – guidelines for developing policies and procedures for families and children serving overseas.

2. Health advice services:

i. Healthlink360 www.healthlink360.org

Services available:

During the selection process. People should go abroad feeling confident that they have prepared well to avoid any health problems - physical, spiritual and emotional. Healthlink assist in this by providing a full medical and psychological assessment, identifying and dealing with potential medical problems and preventing crises later on. They help people to:

- Learn how best to manage medical issues while abroad
- Understand their strengths and weaknesses and how the new situation may affect them
- Learn ways of coping with the stresses of a new environment
- Learn how better to support their spouse/family/colleagues.

Provide health advice, vaccines, anti-malarials or medications specific to where people will be.

On return home. A full medical review and personal debrief is recommended for all the family. There can be particular stresses in readjusting to home culture and alteration in role. Young people who have grown up in another culture can find this a difficult time. Both individual and family support can be offered critical incident debriefing, post-trauma support and more in depth counselling.

Travel care. Healthlink's travel clinic service provides:

- Access to up to date international health information and advice on all travel-related aspects of health care
- A full range of vaccines, anti-malarials and other travel related medications.

Post-travel. Healthlink offer 'Tropical illness' screening.

ii. InterHealth www.interhealth.org.uk

Services available:

Medicals & Screening

Medical check-ups and investigations, emergency consultations, screening, liaison with and referral to GPs. For subscribers based overseas, 'tele-medicine' advice via email telephone and fax. Enquiries about complex health problems can be fast-tracked to specialists in the UK for rapid reply overseas.

Travel Clinic

A full range of immunisations is available including Yellow Fever, Rabies, Japanese and Tick Encephalitis. Nurse specialists will advise on which immunisations you require, the intervals between doses, the level of protection they give you and advice about malaria and which anti-malarials are recommended for your particular overseas assignment. They will give you tips on how to keep healthy overseas.

Psychological Health Services (PHS)

Offers a number of services including: Trauma management, Counselling, Work-life balance, Psychiatric health, Pre-deployment PHS services, Mid and Post assignment PHS services.

Travel Supplies & Medicines

Providing supplies and resources to help you to stay healthy overseas. InterHealth have carefully put together a travel kit, specifically designed to cover the most basic items you will need for your trip. This is ideal to be used for minor medical eventualities and to help you stay healthy whilst overseas.

3. OSCAR the UK information service for world mission www.oscar.org.uk

The **logistics section** of the Oscar **Service Zone** includes information that will help churches and individuals plan and organise the practicalities of overseas placement. The topics covered include:

- Travel agents & Flights
- Passport, visas, medical and other document requirements
- What to take, purchasing supplies for overseas use & VAT refunds, shipping items overseas
- Taking or purchasing a vehicle overseas
- Driving overseas
- Moving house to an overseas location.